

the time when he will come, and mentions in order the princes of the intermediate space, and the number of the years, and the signs of his appearance. And because Porphyry saw all these things to have been fulfilled, and could not deny that they had actually come to pass, he was compelled to say as he did; and because of some similitude of circumstances, he asserted that the things foretold as to be fulfilled in Antichrist at the end of the world, happened in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. Which kind of opposition is a testimony of truth; for such is the plain interpretation of the words, that to incredulous men the prophet seems not to foretell things to come, but to relate things already past.—“*Notes on the Book of Daniel*,” *Albert Barnes. Introduction, pp. xi, xii. New York: Leavitt and Allen, 1859.*

Daniel, Book of, ITS RELATION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION.—He who would enter the temple of truth must be content to do so by the divinely given door. The Old Testament is certainly the entrance to the New, and in a special manner the book of Daniel in the Old Testament is the porch or passage leading to the Apocalypse. In his “Observations on the Prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse of St. John.” Sir Isaac Newton says: “Among the old prophecies Daniel is most distinct in order of time and easiest to be understood, and therefore in those things which relate to the last times he must be made the key to the rest.” On the connection of Daniel and Revelation he says: “The Apocalypse of John is written in the same style and language with the prophecies of Daniel, and hath the same relation to them which they have to one another, so that all of them together make but one complete prophecy.” The Apocalypse should thus be regarded as the New Testament sequel to the book of Daniel. The books of Daniel and Revelation may be considered as parts one and two of a single prophecy—a prophecy relating to the same subject, and presenting that subject in the same symbolic form. They unfold earlier and later portions of the same great story.—“*Key to the Apocalypse*,” *H. Grattan Guinness, D. D., pp. 17-19. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1899.*

Daniel.—See French Revolution, 173, 174; Increase of Knowledge, 221, 223; Little Horn; Mass, 300; Papacy, 327, 328; Revelation; Rome, 431, 432, 436; Seventy Weeks.

Dark Day (1780), DESCRIBED IN A CURRENT NEWSPAPER.—The observations from the first coming on of the darkness, to four o'clock P. M., were made by several gentlemen of liberal education at the house of the Rev. Mr. Cutler, of Ipswich Hamlet [Massachusetts]. There are some things worth noticing before and after this time.

The hemisphere for several days had been greatly obscured with smoke and vapor, so that the sun and moon appeared unusually red. On Thursday afternoon and in the evening, a thick cloud lay along at the south and southwest, the wind small. Friday morning early the sun appeared red, as it had done for several days before, the wind about southwest, a light breeze, and the clouds from the southwest came over between eight and nine o'clock. The sun was quite shut in and it began to shower, the clouds continuing to rise from the southwest and thicken. From the thickness of the clouds, and the confusion which attended their motions, we expected a violent gust of wind or rain; the wind, however, near the earth continued but small, and it rained but little.

About eleven o'clock the darkness was such as to demand our attention, and put us upon making observations. At half past eleven, in a room with three windows, twenty-four panes each, all open toward

the southeast and south, large print could not be read by persons of good eyes.

About twelve o'clock, the windows being still open, a candle cast a shade so well defined on the wall, as that profiles were taken with as much ease as they could have been in the night.

About one o'clock, a glint of light which had continued to this time in the east, shut in, and the darkness was greater than it had been for any time before.

Between one and two o'clock the wind from the west freshened a little, and a glint appeared in that quarter. We dined about two, the windows all open, and two candles burning on the table.

In the time of the greatest darkness some of the dunghill fowls went to their roost. Cocks crowed in answer to one another as they commonly do in the night. Woodcocks, which are night birds, whistled as they do *only* in the dark. Frogs peeped. In short, there was the appearance of midnight at noonday.

About three o'clock the light in the west increased, the motion of the clouds more quick, their color higher and more brassy than at any time before. There appeared to be quick flashes or coruscations, not unlike the Aurora Borealis.

Between three and four o'clock we were out and perceived a strong, sooty smell, some of the company were confident a chimney in the neighborhood must be burning, others conjectured that the smell was more like that of burnt leaves.

About half-past four our company which had passed an unexpected night very cheerfully together, broke up.

I will now give you what I noticed afterwards.

I found the people at the tavern near by very much agitated; among other things that gave them surprise, they mentioned the strange appearance and smell of the rain water, which they had saved in tubs. Upon examining the water, I found a light scum over it, which rubbing between my thumb and finger, I found to be nothing but the black ashes of burnt leaves. The water gave the same strong sooty smell which we had observed in the air; and confirmed me in my opinion that the smell mentioned above was occasioned by the smoke, or very small particles of burnt leaves, which had obscured the hemisphere for several days past, and were now brought down by the rain.

The appearance last mentioned served to corroborate the hypothesis on which we had endeavored to account for the unusual darkness. The vast body of smoke from the woods, which had been burning for many days, mixing with the common exhalations from the earth and water, and condensed by the action of winds from opposite points, may perhaps be sufficient causes to produce the surprising darkness.

The wind in the evening passed round further north where a black cloud lay, and gave us reason to expect a sudden gust from that quarter. The wind brought that body of smoke and vapor over us in the evening (at Salem) and perhaps it never was darker since the children of Israel left the house of bondage. This gross darkness held till about one o'clock, although the moon had full but the day before.

Between one and two the wind freshened up at northeast and drove the smoke and clouds away which had given distress to thousands, and alarmed the brute creation.—*Letter from “Viator,” dated May 22, in the Boston Gazette and Country Journal, May 29, 1780.*

Dark Day, AS OBSERVED BY A HARVARD PROFESSOR.—The time of this extraordinary darkness was May 19, 1780. It came on between the hours of ten and eleven A. M., and continued until the middle of the next night, but with different appearance at different places.

As to the *manner* of its approach, it seemed to appear first of all in the southwest. The wind came from that quarter, and the darkness appeared to come on with the clouds that came in that direction.

The *degré* to which the darkness arose was different in different places. In most parts of the country it was so great that people were unable to read common print, determine the time of day by their clocks or watches, dine, or manage their domestic business, without the light of candles. In some places the darkness was so great that persons could not see to read common print in the open air, for several hours together; but I believe this was not generally the case.

The *extent* of this darkness was very remarkable. Our intelligence in this respect is not so particular as I could wish; but from the accounts that have been received, it seems to have extended all over the New England States. It was observed as far east as Falmouth [Portland, Maine]. To the westward we hear of its reaching to the furthest parts of Connecticut, and Albany. To the southward it was observed all along the seacoasts, and to the north as far as our settlements extend. It is probable it extended much beyond these limits in some directions, but the exact boundaries cannot be ascertained by any observations that I have been able to collect.

With regard to its *duration*, it continued in this place at least fourteen hours; but it is probable this was not exactly the same in different parts of the country.

The *appearance* and *effects* were such as tended to make the prospect extremely dull and gloomy. Candles were lighted up in the houses; the birds, having sung their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent; the fowls retired to roost; the cocks were crowing all around, as at break of day; objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance; and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night.—*Samuel Williams, A. M., Hollis Professor of Mathematics and Philosophy in the University of Cambridge, Massachusetts, in "Memoirs of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences," to the end of the year 1783, Vol. I, pp. 234, 235. Boston: Adams and Nourse, 1785. (See also "Our First Century," R. M. Devens, pp. 90-92.)*

Dark Day, UNPRECEDENTED FOR ITS GREAT DARKNESS.—The 19th of May, 1780, was unprecedented in New England for its great darkness. . . . The darkness extended over several thousand square miles, though differing much in intensity in different places. Nowhere, perhaps, was it greater than in this vicinity. The day was appropriately called and is still known as The Dark Day.—*"History of the Town of Hampton, New Hampshire," Joseph Dorr, Salem, Mass., Vol. I, p. 217. Salem Press and Printing Co., 1893. (Boston Public Library.)*

"Twas on a May day of the far old year
Seventeen hundred eighty, that there fell
Over the bloom and sweet life of the spring,
Over the fresh earth and the heaven of noon,
A horror of great darkness. . . .

Men prayed, and women wept; all ears grew sharp
To hear the doom blast of the trumpet shatter
The black sky, that the dreadful face of Christ
Might look from the rent clouds, not as he looked
A loving guest at Bethany, but stern
As Justice and inexorable as Law.

—*J. G. Whittier's Poems, "Abraham Davenport."*

Dark Day, DESCRIBED BY LONDON VISITOR.—This day [May 19, 1780] has been rendered very remarkable by an extraordinary phenomenon, which demands a particular relation. An unusual darkness came on between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning, and continued to increase. Your friend, having been accustomed to dark days in London, and frequently observed from his study the bright shining sun gradually, and at length totally, eclipsed, as it descended behind the thick vapor which hung over the city, regarded it with no special attention till called to do it by his neighbors who were much alarmed. He dined by candlelight about one. After that it grew much lighter, and he walked about five o'clock to a tavern, a mile distant, on the road to Boston, to meet a select committee of Roxbury, on special business. When they had finished, about eight at night, he set out for home, not suspecting but that, being fully acquainted with every foot of the road, he should easily return, notwithstanding its being extremely dark.

There were houses all the way, though at a considerable distance from each other. He marked the candlelight of one, and with that in his eye went forward till he got up to it; but remarked that the appearance of the place was so different from what was usual, that he could not believe it to be what it was, had it not been from his certain knowledge of its situation. He caught the light of a second house, which he also reached; and thus on. At length, the light being removed from the last he had gained a sight of, ere he was up with it, he found himself in such profound darkness as to be incapable of proceeding, and therefore returned to the house he had passed, and procured a lantern. Several of the company, having farther to go, were on horseback. The horses could not see to direct themselves; and by the manner in which they took up and put down their feet on plain ground, appeared to be involved in total darkness, and to be afraid lest the next step should plunge them into an abyss.

The gentlemen soon stopped at another tavern, and waited for the benefit of the moon; but after a while, finding that the air received no accession of light from it, when they were certain it was risen, they had recourse to candles to assist them in getting home. In some instances horses felt the forcible operation of the darkness so strongly that they could not be compelled by their masters to quit the stable at night, when wanted for a particular service. The shifting of the wind put an end to it, and at midnight it was succeeded by a bright moon and starlight.

The *degré* to which it arose was different in different places. In most parts of the country it was so great in the daytime, that the people could not tell the hour by either watch or clock, nor dine, nor manage their domestic business, without the light of candles. The birds, having sung their evening songs, disappeared and were silent; pigeons and fowls retired to roost; the cocks crew as at daybreak; objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance; and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night.

The *extent* of the darkness was extraordinary. It was observed as far east as Falmouth. To the westward it reached to the farthest part of Connecticut, and to Albany. To the southward it was observed along the seacoasts; and to the north as far as the American settlements extend. We are told that a vessel at sea found herself inclosed for a while in a cloud of this darkness, and as she sailed, passed instantly from the verge of it into a clear light.—*"The History of the Rise, Progress, and Establishment of the Independence of the United States of America" (3 vol. ed.), William R. Gordon, D. D., Vol. III, pp. 56, 57. New York, 1801. (Lenox Library, New York.)*

Dark Day, IN THE CONNECTICUT LEGISLATURE.—It is related that the Connecticut legislature was in session at this time, and that so great was the darkness, the members became terrified, and thought that the day of judgment had come; a motion was consequently made to adjourn. At this, Mr. Davenport arose and said: "Mr. Speaker, it is either the day of judgment or it is not. If it is not, there is no need of adjourning. If it is, I desire to be found doing my duty. I move that candles be brought, and that we proceed to business."—"Our First Century," R. M. Devens, chap. 4, "The Wonderful Dark Day—1780," p. 90. Springfield, Mass.: C. A. Nichols & Co., 1876.

Meanwhile in the old Statehouse, dim as ghosts,
Sat the lawgivers of Connecticut,
Trembling beneath their legislative robes.
"It is the Lord's great day! Let us adjourn,"
Some said; and then, as if with one accord,
All eyes were turned to Abraham Davenport.
He rose, slow cleaving with his steady voice
The intolerable hush. "This well may be
The day of judgment which the world awaits;
But be it so or not, I only know
My present duty, and my Lord's command
To occupy till he come. So at the post
Where he hath set me in his providence
I choose, for one, to meet him face to face,—
No faithless servant frightened from my task,
But ready when the Lord of the harvest calls;
And therefore, with all reverence, I would say,
Let God do his work, we will see to ours.
Bring in the candles."

—J. G. Whittier's Poems, "Abraham Davenport."

Dark Day, VERBATIM ACCOUNT FROM A DIARY.—May 19th, 1780
Was a Thunder shower in the morning and was followed by an uncommon darkness such as is not remembered it was so dark That one could not know a man but at a small distance, and Were obliged to keep a light in the chimney to see to go about and the night was Extraordinary dark until one o'clock, that a person could not see their hand when held up nor even a white sheet of paper the day and night was cloudy the clouds in the day did not seem thick and was of a lightening up cower our almanack makers have given no account of the matter the cause unknown The works of the Lord are great and marvellous past finding out until he Graciously pleases to Reveal them.—"The Diary of Matthew Patten, of Bedford," New Hampshire, from 1754 to 1788, p. 414 (verbatim et literatim). Published by the town, Concord, N. H.: The Rumford Printing Company, 1903. (New Hampshire State Library.)

Dark Day OF 1780, AS SEEN AT SEA.—I have also seen a very sensible captain of a vessel, who was that morning about forty leagues southeast of Boston. He says the cloud which appeared at the west was the blackest he ever saw. About eleven o'clock there was a little rain, and it grew dark. Between one and two he was obliged to light a large candle to steer by.

There had been to this time a gleam, or *glint*, as he called it, in the east. It was now wholly shut in, and the greatest obscuration was between two and three. He further observes that the air was uncom-

monly thick, and afforded an unusual smell. Between nine and ten at night, he ordered his men to take in some of the sails, but it was so dark they could not find the way from one mast to the other.

Gentlemen from Connecticut tell me the smell which they observed was like that of burnt leaves or old stubble.

Coasters from the eastward say the darkness was very inconsiderable farther than Cape Elizabeth. . . .

Various have been the sentiments of people concerning the designs of Providence in spreading the unusual darkness over us. Some suppose it portentous of the last scene. I wish it may have some good effect on the minds of the wicked, and that they may be excited to prepare for that solemn day. Some suppose it emblematical of the moral darkness which has spread over these ends of the earth. But however bad we are, I cannot suppose we are so much worse than the rest of the world.—*Letter in the Boston Independent Chronicle, June 15, 1780.*

Dark Day, FOLLOWED BY NIGHT OF DARKNESS.—During the whole time a sickly, melancholy gloom overcast the face of nature. Nor was the darkness of the night less uncommon and terrifying than that of the day; notwithstanding there was almost a full moon, no object was discernible, but by the help of some artificial light, which when seen from the neighboring houses and other places at a distance, appeared through a kind of Egyptian darkness, which seemed almost impervious to the rays.

This unusual phenomenon excited the fears and apprehensions of many people. Some considered it as a portentous omen of the wrath of Heaven in vengeance denounced against the land, others as the immediate harbinger of the last day, when "the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light."—*Thomas's Massachusetts Spy; cited in the Boston Independent Chronicle, June 8, 1780.*

The darkness of the following evening was probably as gross as ever has been observed since the Almighty fiat gave birth to light. It wanted only palpability to render it as extraordinary as that which overspread the land of Egypt in the days of Moses. And as darkness is not substantial, but a mere privation, the palpability ascribed to that by the sacred historian must have arisen from some peculiar affection of the atmosphere, perhaps an exceeding thick vapor, that accompanied it. I could not help conceiving at the time, that if every luminous body in the universe had been shrouded in impenetrable shades, or struck out of existence, the darkness could not have been more complete. A sheet of white paper held within a few inches of the eyes was equally invisible with the blackest velvet. Considering the small quantity of light that was transmitted by the clouds, by day, it is not surprising that by night a sufficient quantity of rays should not be able to penetrate the same strata, brought back by the shifting of the winds, to afford the most obscure prospect even of the best reflecting bodies.—*Letter of Dr. Samuel Tenney, dated Exeter, N. H., December, 1785; cited in "Collections of Massachusetts Historical Society," Vol. I, 1792.*

The darkness of the following night was so intense that many who were but a little way from home, on well-known roads, could not, without extreme difficulty, retrace the way to their own dwellings.—"Sketches of the History of New Hampshire," John W. Whiton, p. 144, 1834. (New Hampshire State Library.)

Dark Day, "TRUE CAUSE . . . NOT KNOWN."—*The Dark Day*, May 19, 1780—so called on account of a remarkable darkness on that day extending over all New England. In some places, persons could not see to read common print in the open air for several hours together. Birds sang their evening songs, disappeared, and became silent; fowls went to roost; cattle sought the barnyard; and candles were lighted in the houses. The obscuration began about ten o'clock in the morning, and continued till the middle of the next night, but with differences of degree and duration in different places. For several days previous, the wind had been variable, but chiefly from the southwest and the northeast. The true cause of this remarkable phenomenon is not known.—*Noah Webster's Dictionary (edition 1869), under Explanatory and Pronouncing Vocabulary of Noted Names of Fiction, etc.*

Dark Day, CAUSE UNKNOWN.—On the 19th of May, 1780, an uncommon darkness took place all over New England, and extended to Canada. It continued about fourteen hours, or from ten o'clock in the morning till midnight. The darkness was so great that people were unable to read common print, or tell the time of the day by their watches, or to dine, or transact their ordinary business without the light of candles. They became dull and gloomy, and some were excessively frightened. The fowls retired to their roosts. Objects could not be distinguished but at a very little distance, and everything bore the appearance and gloom of night.

The causes of these phenomena are unknown. They certainly were not the result of eclipses.—*The Guide to Knowledge, or Repertory of Facts,* edited by Robert Sears, p. 428. New York, 1845.

Dark Day, NOT CAUSED BY AN ECLIPSE.—That this darkness was not caused by an eclipse, is manifest by the various positions of the planetary bodies at that time; for the moon was more than one hundred and fifty degrees from the sun all that day, and, according to the accurate calculations made by the most celebrated astronomers, there could not, in the order of nature, be any transit of the planet Venus or Mercury upon the disc of the sun that year; nor could it be a blazing star—much less a mountain—that darkened the atmosphere, for this would still leave unexplained the deep darkness of the following night. Nor would such excessive nocturnal darkness follow an eclipse of the sun; and as to the moon, she was at that time more than forty hours' motion past her opposition.—*Our First Century,* 1776-1876, R. M. Devens, chap. 4, "The Wonderful Dark Day—1780," p. 95. Springfield, Mass.: C. A. Nichols & Co., 1876.

Dark Day of 1780, DR. SAMUEL STEARNS ON CAUSE OF.—That the darkness was not caused by an eclipse is manifest by the various positions of the planets of our system at that time; for the moon was more than one hundred fifty degrees from the sun all that day. . . . The heat of the sun causeth an ascension of numerous particles, which consist of different qualities, such as aqueous, sulphurous, bituminous, salinous, vitreous, etc. . . . Fat combustible, oily matter, from the various kinds of earths, the juice of trees, plants, and herbs . . . are exhaled into the regions of the air. . . .

It was undoubtedly a vast collection of such particles that caused the late uncommon darkness. [Some process of wind currents, he suggests, condensing them.] . . .

The primary cause must be imputed to Him that walketh through the circuit of heaven, who stretcheth out the heaven like a curtain.

who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind. It was he, at whose voice the stormy winds are obedient, that commanded these exhalations to be collected and condensed together, that with them he might darken both the day and the night; which darkness was, perhaps, not only a token of his indignation against the crying iniquities and abominations of the people, but an omen of some future destruction.—*Letter from Dr. Samuel Stearns, in Independent Chronicle, Boston, June 22, 1780.*

Dark Day, NOT CAUSED BY FOREST FIRES.—That the smoke of burning forests cannot be the cause may be rendered very certain. . . . Had the woods from the 40th degree of latitude in America to the 50th been all consumed in a day, the smoke would not have been sufficient to cloud the sun over the territory covered by the darkness on the 19th of May (1780). Any person can judge of this who has seen large tracts of forest fire. That thirty or forty miles of burning forest should cover five hundred miles with impenetrable darkness, is too absurd to deserve a serious refutation.—*A Brief History of Epidemic and Pestilential Diseases; with the Principal Phenomena of the Physical World, Which Precede and Accompany Them,* Noah Webster, (2 vol. ed.) Vol. II, pp. 91-93. Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1799.

NOTE.—There was no agreement among the current writers as to the cause of this unparalleled darkness, but entire agreement as to the extraordinary character of it. Any suggestion of a natural cause or causes for the darkness can in no wise militate against the significance of the event. Sixteen and a half centuries before it occurred, the Saviour had definitely foretold this twofold sign, saying, "In those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light." Mark 13: 24. These signs occurred exactly as predicted, and at the time indicated so long before their occurrence. It is this fact, and not the cause of the darkness, that is significant in this connection. When the Lord would open a path for his people through the sea, he did it by "a strong east wind." Ex. 14: 21. Was it for this reason any less miraculous? When the bitter waters were made sweet (Ex. 15: 23-25), was the divine interposition any less real because certain natural means were used having apparently some part, under divine direction, in rendering the water fit for drinking? In like manner even though it were possible for science to account for the remarkable darkness of May 19, 1780, instead of merely speculating concerning it, the event would not be discredited thereby as a merciful sign of the approaching end of probationary time.—EDS.

Dark Day, FEARS OF JUDGMENT DAY AWAKENED.—This strange darkness increased until by noon the people had to light candles to eat their dinners by! Lights were seen in every window, and out of doors, people carried torches to light their steps. Everything took a different color from what it had by sunlight, and consequently the strange reflections of the torchlights were in keeping with the marvelous and changed appearance of everything.

Hosts of people believed the end of the world had begun to come; men dropped to their knees to pray in the field; many ran to their neighbors to confess wrongs and ask forgiveness; multitudes rushed into the meetinghouses in towns where they had such, where pious and aged ministers, pleading repentance, interceded with God in their behalf; and everywhere throughout this day of wonder and alarm, the once careless thought of their sins and their Maker!

At this time the legislature of Connecticut was in session, and when the growing darkness became so deep that at midday they could not see each other, most of them were so alarmed as to be unfit for service. At this juncture, Mr. Davenport arose and said:

"Mr. Speaker, it is either the day of judgment or it is not. If it is not, there is no need of adjourning. If it is, I desire to be found doing my duty. I move that candles be brought and that we proceed to business."

The darkness somewhat increased all day, and before time of sunset, was so intense that no object whatever could be distinguished. Anxiously and tremblingly, people waited for the full moon to rise at nine o'clock, and even little children with strained eyes, sat silently watching for its beautiful beams to appear. But they were disappointed, the darkness being unaffected by the moon. The most feeling prayers ever prayed in Antrim were at the family altars that night. Children never had more tender blessing than these mothers gave them that night. They slept soundly for the most part, but the parents chiefly sat up all night to wait and see if the glorious sun would rise again. Never dawned a lovelier morning than that 20th of May! Never were hearts more thankful on the earth! Even thoughtless people praised God!

So much were the whole population affected by this event, that, at the succeeding March meeting, the town voted, March 9, 1781, to keep the next 19th of May as a day of fasting and prayer.—*History of the Town of Antrim, New Hampshire*, Rev. W. R. Cochrane, pp. 58, 59. Published by the town, Manchester, N. H.: Mirror Steam Printing Press, 1880. (New Hampshire State Library.)

Dark Day, MEN FILLED WITH AWE AND ALARM.—Dark Day: refers especially to May 19, 1780, which was very dark in Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey, causing great alarm.—*The Universal Cyclopaedia*, art. "Dark Day." New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1900.

"The dark day of New England," so familiar to old and young, came May 19, 1780. . . . Near eleven o'clock, it began to grow dark, as if night were coming. Men ceased their work; the lowing cattle came to the barns, the bleating sheep huddled by the fences, the wild birds screamed and flew to their nests, the fowls went to their roosts. . . .

Men, ordinarily cool, were filled with awe and alarm. Excitable people believed the end of the world had come; some ran about saying the day of judgment was at hand; the wicked hurried to their neighbors to confess wrongs and ask forgiveness; the superstitious dropped on their knees to pray in the fields, or rushed into meetinghouses to call on God to preserve them. . . .

At night it was so inky dark that a person could not see his hand when held up, nor even a white sheet of paper.—*History of Weare, New Hampshire*, 1735-1888, Wm. Little, Lowell, Mass., p. 276. Printed by S. W. Huse & Co., 1888. (Boston Public Library.)

Dark Day, "MEN PRAYED AND WOMEN WEPT."—Friday, May 19, 1780, will go down in history as "the dark day." . . . Fear, anxiety, and awe gradually filled the minds of the people. Women stood at the door looking out upon the dark landscape; men returned from their labor in the fields; the carpenter left his tools, the blacksmith his forge, the tradesman his counter. Schools were dismissed, and tremblingly the children fled homeward. Travelers put up at the nearest farmhouse. "What is coming?" queried every lip and heart. It seemed as if a hurricane was about to dash across the land, or as if it was the day of the consummation of all things. . . .

Dr. Nathanael Whittaker, pastor of the Tabernacle church in Salem, held religious services in the meetinghouse, and preached a sermon in which he maintained that the darkness was supernatural. Congregations came together in many other places. The texts for the extemporaneous sermons were invariably those that seemed to indicate that the darkness was consonant with Scriptural prophecy. Such texts as these were used: Isa. 13: 10; Eze. 32: 7, 8; Joel 2: 31; Matt. 24: 29, 30; Rev. 6: 12.

Devout fathers gathered their families around them in their homes, and conducted religious services; and for a few hours Christians were stirred to activity, and non-professors earnestly sought for salvation, expecting "to hear the thunder of the wrath of God break from the hollow trumpet of the cloud."—*The Essex Antiquarian*, Vol. III, No. 4, pp. 53, 54; Salem, Mass., April, 1899. (Boston Public Library.)

Day, THE BIBLE.—See Calendar, 95-97.

Decretal Letters, ORIGIN OF.—Another practice commenced by Syricius, the immediate successor of Damasus, contributed greatly to augment the influence of the Roman See. This was the writing of letters purporting to be expositions of church law. The first of these documents, known as the Decretal Epistles, was promulgated by Syricius in the very beginning of his episcopate. A letter had reached Rome from Himerius, a Spanish bishop, soliciting instruction on various points of ecclesiastical discipline. Damasus, to whom it was addressed, was now dead; but his successor submitted the communication to a meeting of his colleagues assembled, probably, on the occasion of his ordination; and, in a long reply, dictated with an air of authority, Syricius gave specific directions in reference to the several questions suggested by this Spanish correspondent. One of the inquiries of Himerius related to the propriety of clerical celibacy; and it is somewhat remarkable that the earliest decretal letter contains an injunction "forbidding to marry."—*The Old Catholic Church*, W. D. Killen, D. D., p. 342. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1871.

Decretals.—See Isidorian Decretals; Caths.

Demonism.—See Spiritualism.

Diets, ORIGIN OF.—The origin of the diet, or deliberative assembly, of the Holy Roman Empire must be sought in the *placitum* of the Frankish empire. . . . The imperial diet (*Reichstag*) of the Middle Ages might sometimes contain representatives of Italy, the *regnum Italicum*; but it was practically always confined to the magnates of Germany, the *regnum Teutonicum*. Upon occasion a summons to the diet might be sent even to the knights, but the regular members were the princes (*Fürsten*), both lay and ecclesiastical. . . . The powers of the medieval diet extended to matters like legislation, the decision upon expeditions (especially the *expeditio Romana*), taxation, and changes in the constitution of the principalities or the empire. The election of the king, which was originally regarded as one of the powers of the diet, had passed to the electors by the middle of the thirteenth century.—*The Encyclopædia Britannica*, Vol. VIII, art. "Diet," pp. 211, 212, 11th edition.

Diets, NATURE OF.—Great political affairs were settled at the diets. These constituted the center of legislation and general administration. Here was the imperial tribunal, and here the ban of the empire was pronounced, which latter was the political counterpart of ecclesiastical excommunication. Thus the imperial constitution was, to quote from Ranke, "a mixture of monarchy and confederation, the latter element, however, manifestly predominating." One evidence that such was the fact is furnished by the great importance of the imperial cities: these like the princes, sent their envoys to the diets, and, conjointly with the former, opposed a compact corporation to the power of the emperor.—*History of the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland Chiefly*, Dr. K. R. Hagenbach, Vol. I, p. 31. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1878.