

The Approaching End of the Age by H. Grattan Guinness – Part III. Foretold and Fulfilled. Chapter I.

Continued from [Part II. Progressive interpretation. Chapter III.](#)

THE PROPHECIES OF "BABYLON," AND "THE BEAST,"—REASONS FOR THE EXAMINATION OF THESE TWO PROPHECIES. FUNDAMENTAL, DIVINELY INTERPRETED; PRACTICALLY IMPORTANT,—BABYLON THE GREAT REPRESENTS THE APOSTATE CHURCH OF ROME.

THE scope of this work, prevents our attempting to enter into a detailed examination, of the symbols of the Apocalypse. The book itself, as we have seen, interprets some of them, and other parts of Scripture interpret others. It would not be difficult to form a tolerably complete dictionary, of the meaning of the Apocalyptic symbols, by placing over-against each, passages of Scripture in which the same symbol is employed in contexts which indicate its meaning; or in historical narratives, ceremonial observances, or legal enactments, which throw light upon it. To search the Scriptures, is to find the solution of many a difficulty in this book, for it is more closely related to the rest of the Bible, than would by superficial readers be supposed.

We proceed, however, briefly to examine, two of the leading prophecies of the Revelation, a clear understanding of which, is of itself, sufficient to determine its whole scope and character. They are two of the most important symbolisations in the entire series, they occupy several whole chapters, and are alluded to in others; they are closely related to each other, and one of them is *divinely interpreted*. This is the vision of BABYLON THE GREAT, in the seventeenth chapter of the book, a prophecy which by its synchronical connection with almost all the other predictions of the Apocalypse, furnishes a most valuable clue to the meaning and application of the whole series of visions. This prophecy has besides a solemn practical importance, rendering it peculiarly needful that it should be rightly interpreted.

Immediately prior to the fall of Babylon, described in the 18th chapter of Revelation, a voice from heaven cries, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, that ye receive not of her plagues; for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Is it not all-important that Christian people, should be very clear, as to the system thus solemnly denounced by a voice from heaven? And similarly, immediately after the fall of Babylon, "a great voice as of much people in heaven," is heard saying, with reference to it, "Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his judgments: for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." If this symbol represents an evil so gigantic, that heaven itself is moved to psalms of praise, on the occasion of its overthrow, should not the

church on earth be anxious to recognise it, and to avoid all connection with it?

The deep depravity attributed to "Babylon the Great," the peculiarly solemn adjuration to God's people to come out of her, and the utter and awful destruction denounced against her, all combine to attach great practical importance to the inquiry, *what system is intended by this symbol?*

A perusal of the 17th and 18th chapters of the Book of Revelation, shows that "Babylon the Great" represents a system which should last long, exert a subtle and extensive influence, and be guilty of exceeding iniquity and cruelty. This system must *still be in existence*, seeing its destruction takes place, simultaneously with "the marriage of the Lamb," an event which we know to be, still future; and seeing also that up to the moment of its destruction, or very nearly so, children of God will be found, more or less closely connected with it, so that a need will exist, for the urgent call, *"Come out of her, my people."*

This system is prefigured as a cruelly persecuting one, as one that would "shed the blood of saints, and martyrs of Jesus," one on whom the Lord God would "avenge the blood of his servants." The Lord Jesus Christ, who loves His church, foreseeing the existence and career of this terrible system, forewarned, and thus fore-armed her by this prophecy. He furnishes her with abundant marks whereby the foe may be recognised, and solemnly warns her against making any truce or compromise, while He stimulates and encourages her for the long and bitter conflict, by a view of the final result. He would have his people in no perplexity or doubt on so momentous a question, so He has made this prediction peculiarly clear; has placed it in marked and intentional *contrast* with another prophecy, which makes its meaning still clearer; and He has added besides, *an explanation* which leaves no room for the candid student to err.

Let the reader note the contrasted features of the two symbolic prefigurations.

"THE WHORE THAT SITTETH UPON MANY WATERS."

"BABYLON THE GREAT."

"There came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying, Come hither; I will show unto thee the judgment of THE GREAT WHORE that sitteth upon many waters.

"So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

"THE BRIDE, THE LAMB'S WIFE."

"THE HOLY JERUSALEM."

"There came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee THE BRIDE, the Lamb's wife.

"And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me," (the bride, the Lamb's wife, under another symbol). (Rev. xxi.)

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, BABYLON THE Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

"And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Rev. xvii, 1-6).

"To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints" (Rev. xix. 8).

This Bride is described as "THE HOLY JERUSALEM, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light like unto a stone most precious" (Rev, xxi.).

The dragon "persecuted the woman," and "the dragon was wrath with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. xii. 13-17).

As to Babylon, John adds, "when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman. . . . The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. The waters, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. . . . And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth" (Rev. xvii. 7).

These prophecies present, two broadly contrasted *women*, identified with two broadly contrasted *cities*, one reality being in each case, doubly represented, as a *woman*, and as a *city*; the harlot and Babylon are one; the bride and the heavenly Jerusalem are one.

It is evident that the true interpretation of either of these double prefigurations, must afford a clue to the true interpretation of the other.

The two women are contrasted in every particular that is mentioned about them; the one is pure as purity itself, "made ready" and fit for heaven's unsullied holiness: the other, foul as corruption could make her, fit only for the fires of destruction.

The one belongs to the Lamb, who loves her as the bridegroom loves the bride; the other is associated with a wild beast, and with the kings of the earth, who ultimately hate and destroy her.

The one is clothed with fine linen, and in another place is said to be clothed with the sun, and crowned with a coronet of stars; that is, robed in Divine righteousness, and resplendent with heavenly glory; the other, is attired in scarlet and gold, in jewels and pearls, gorgeous indeed but with earthly splendour only.

The one is represented as a chaste virgin, espoused to Christ, the other is mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

The one is persecuted, pressed hard by the dragon, driven into the wilderness, and well-nigh overwhelmed; the other is drunken with martyr

blood, and seated on a beast which has received its power from the persecuting dragon.

The one sojourns in solitude in the wilderness, the other reigns "in the wilderness" over peoples and nations and kindreds and tongues,

The one goes in with the Lamb to the marriage supper, amid the glad hallelujahs of heaven; the other is stripped, insulted, torn, and destroyed, by her guilty paramours.

We lose sight of the bride, amid the effulgence of heavenly glory and joy, and of the harlot amid the gloom and darkness, of the smoke that "rose up for ever and ever."

It is impossible to find in Scripture, a contrast more marked; and the conclusion is irresistible, that whatever the one may represent, the other must prefigure *its opposite*. They are not two disconnected visions, but a pair—a pair associated, not by likeness, but by contrast.

Now Scripture leaves us in no doubt, as to the signification of the emblematic bride, the Lamb's wife, the heavenly Jerusalem. We read, "Husband, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." The purpose of Christ's love, as regards his blood-bought church, is, that she should be with Him, and be one with Him for ever; that she should behold and share his glory, being perfectly conformed to his image. Here in prophetic vision, we see this blessed design accomplished, and the complete and perfectly sanctified church, clad in spotless robes of righteousness, brought to the marriage supper of the Lamb. We see her persecuted like her Lord, and like her Lord and with her Lord, glorified. Beyond all question, the New Jerusalem bride represents *the true church of Christ*.

What then must the contrasted symbol, the Babylonian harlot represent? Surely some *false and apostate church*, some church which, while professing to belong to Christ, is in reality given up to fellowship with the world, and linked in closest union, with the kings of the earth; a worldly church, which has left her first love, forgotten her heavenly calling, sunk into carnality and sin, and proved shamelessly and glaringly faithless to her Lord.

Be it observed, that these symbols, a woman and a city, prefigure definite systems, corporate bodies, not merely a multitude of similar, but disconnected individuals. The tares of a wheat-field, the bad fish in the net, may represent such; "but here we have neither true Christians nor worldly professors, as *individuals*, but two corporations, two definite bodies. The true church of Christ is a body; its members are united in the closest union to their Head and to each other; one life animates them: "because I live, ye shall live also;" one spirit dwells in them, they are one habitation of God. The link that unites them is however a *spiritual* one; the body, is consequently invisible *as such*. A false church can have no such

spiritual link. The bond that unites *it* must therefore be carnal, outward, visible; the church represented by Babylon, must be a *visible church*, an earthly corporation, and as such capable of being discerned and recognised. Nor can the symbol comprise all false and faithless churches: to the harlot is expressly assigned a local connection—the woman and the city are one—if we can discover the name of the city, we shall be able to identify the church intended.

The last words of the angel to John, seem to leave no possibility of mistake as to the city. "The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth . . . and the woman which thou sawest is *that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.*" What city was that? There was but one great city, which in John's day reigned over the kings of the earth. It was Rome; and Rome is the *only* city which was great then, *has been* great, in one way or other, ever since, and *is* so still. And Rome was seated on seven hills, "the seven mountains on which the woman sitteth."

Her common name with the classic writers of St. John's age, is "the seven hilled city;" an annual festival used to be held in honour of the "seven hilled city;" every Latin poet of note during a period of five hundred years, alludes to Rome's seven hills; their names were the Palatine, the Quirinal, the Aventine, the Celian, the Viminal, the Esquiline, and the Janiculum hills. The medals and coins of the day, *represent Rome* as a woman sitting on seven hills; and her titles show with sufficient clearness, how thoroughly she *reigned*. She was styled "the royal Rome;" "the mistress of the world;" "the queen of nations." Her sway was all but universal. She was the metropolis of that fourth great empire which Daniel had foretold would break in pieces and subdue all things, "dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly;" and at the time of the Apocalyptic visions, her power was at its height. Rome, and no other city can be intended here; the woman is in some way identified with Rome. We previously saw that she must represent a church, now we know what church. The harlot is the *Church of Rome*; for simple minds there seems no escape from this conclusion. And it is a singular and notable fact, that no other city but Rome, has ever given its name to a church, which has embraced many kindreds and nations. Many countries have done so, and even individuals; but as far as we are aware, no other *city*. We have the Greek Church, the Armenian and the Coptic Churches, the Lutheran Church, the Protestant Churches of various countries, the English Church, the Scotch Church, etc.; but the papal system is styled, not so much the Latin Church, as the CHURCH OF ROME. "The woman which thou sawest is that great city" (not empire or country) "which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

The question, however, naturally suggests itself, if the woman be identified in some way with Rome, why is her brow emblazoned with the name of BABYLON? The answer is evident; the Apocalypse is a book of mysteries; things are represented by signs; realities are veiled; and it would have been altogether inconsistent with the whole style of this prophecy to have written ROME on the harlot's brow. The woman is a figure of a church, a corrupt idolatrous church, that is, the *symbol* seen by John was suggestive of something widely different from itself; so the name with which that symbol was stamped, was also suggestive of something widely different from itself, though

mysteriously similar. The harlot is "Mystery, Babylon the Great." That the *literal* Babylon was not intended, is perfectly clear, since that city was neither built on seven hills, nor reigning over the kings of the earth, in John's day. But that the literal Babylon was a most appropriate symbol for Rome, is equally evident. Analogies of the most remarkable kind, geographical, historical, and moral, existed, which fully account for the selection. Both were situated in the midst of vast plains, both largely built of brick made out of their own soil, the one had been Queen of the East, the other was then Queen of the West, Babylon of old had called herself "the golden city," "the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency," and claimed eternity as well as universal supremacy. (Isa. xiv. 4-7.) Rome similarly styled herself "the eternal city," "the mistress of the world." But especially, both had been employed by God, as scourges for the guilty city of Jerusalem and people of Israel; and to each in its turn, had the sacred vessels of the Temple been carried as spoil; Belshazzar abused them at his banquet, and Titus engraved them on his arch.

Even had the plan of the Apocalypse not demanded it, circumstances would have rendered it needful, for St. John to use a mysterious designation, in speaking as he here does of Rome. It would not have been safe in the days of Nero and Domitian, to expose the corruption, and predict the downfall and utter overthrow of their capital. Persecution was already bitter enough, as St. John was experiencing in Patmos; and reserve on such a subject was evidently needful. But in spite of reserve and mystery, the true meaning of this symbolic name "Babylon," was early perceived by the Christians, and divined even by their enemies. Irenaeus, who was a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of John himself, says, that "Babylon" in the Apocalypse signifies Rome; and Tertullian says, "names are employed by us as signs, Samaria is a sign of idolatry . . . Babylon is a figure of the Roman city, mighty, proud of its sway, and fiercely persecuting the saints." So Jerome and others, in unbroken sequence, to the present day. When accused by their heathen Roman adversaries of holding sacred, predictions of the downfall of Rome, the early Christians *never denied the charge*, but merely replied, that they were far from **desiring** that downfall, since, little as *Rome* favoured Christianity, the *Antichrist* whom they expected immediately to succeed, would do so still less.

BABYLON, then, in this prophecy means ROME; even Roman Catholic writers are constrained to admit this. Bellarmine and Bossuet do not attempt to deny that these predictions concern Rome. They admit it freely, but assert that they refer to Rome as a *heathen city merely*, and not as a Christian church; and they maintain that the prophecy of the fall of Babylon, was fulfilled in the destruction of Rome, by the Goths, in the fifth century. "Babylon," say they, is *Rome Pagan*, not *Rome Papal*; and they defend this position with considerable skill, and some show of reason. This interpretation originated with Bossuet in the 16th century; till that time it had never been supposed by any expositor, that the fall of Rome under Alaric, exhausted the prediction about the fall of Babylon. But as soon as the Protestant application of this prophecy to the *Church* of Rome, was felt to be a tremendous weapon against that church, its advocates were driven in self-defence, to find some interpretation which should turn its edge.

It must not be supposed, however, that the interpretation now called *Protestant*, originated out of the party feeling and antagonism produced by the Reformation. On the contrary, the view that Babylon meant the Church of Rome, was held long prior to the Reformation, and may be said, to some extent, to have produced it. As soon as the Church of Rome began to put forth her unscriptural claims, and to teach authoritatively her unscriptural doctrines, so soon did the faithful begin to recognise her, as the predicted Babylon of the Apocalypse. The earliest fathers of the church, who lived while Rome was Pagan, could not, of course, hold such a view. Little did *they* dream that Rome, the persecuting pagan city, would ever become the seat and centre of a Christian church. Nor could this application of the prophecy arise, while Rome remained a faithful and pure Christian church; but at the close of the 6th century, Pope Gregory the First made a strong protest against the assumption of the title of "*universal bishop*." He went so far as to assert that "the first bishop who should assume it, would thereby deserve the name of Antichrist." From that time to the present day, the testimony that the Church of Rome is Babylon, has *never been dropped*; and though, through all the middle ages, this view was held at great risk and peril, we can trace an unbroken succession of witnesses, each one bolder and more decided than the last, up to the time when Luther and the Reformers sounded aloud over Europe the trumpet-call, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

The argument, therefore, that the Protestant interpretation is a modern innovation, unknown to the first fathers of the Christian church, is valueless. We must now briefly examine the considerations which prove it to be the true view.

And first, seeing the rise, pretensions, persecutions, domination, and decay, of the Papal Church, have been beyond all controversy *the greatest and most important facts in church history*, is it not incredible, that the prophecy intended to guide and sustain the church all through its course, should not allude to these facts, or even glance at the existence of this church? And yet, if Babylon be *not* the Papal Church, we must agree with Bossuet, that that church is *not so much as mentioned* in the whole Apocalypse.

And wherefore should so elaborate a prophecy, have been given about the character and doom of Rome Pagan, which was sacked by Alaric A.D. 410? Was it for a brief period of about 300 years only, that the Apocalypse was to afford guidance, support, and instruction to the church? Even admitting this improbability, what were the few, who in this case were alone to benefit by the prophecy to learn from it? To shun heathen idolatry? Not to bow down to the many gods of the Pantheon? Not to burn incense to Jupiter? But it did not need the Apocalypse to teach them that. Surely the martyrs who died in multitudes before this last prophecy was given to the church, had learned that lesson without its aid! The early Christians were in no danger of relapsing into *heathen* idolatry; but a *Christian* idolatry was to arise; Antichrist was to sit on the throne of Christ, in God's temple; a fearful apostasy was to take place in the church itself; it was an object well worthy of Divine inspiration, to indicate *this new and specious form of evil*, which, rising slowly and imperceptibly, was destined to attain such gigantic

proportions, and to endure for more than a thousand years.

But there are statements in the prophecy itself, which entirely preclude its application to Pagan Rome, and its Gothic destruction. This harlot city, Babylon, rules and rides upon the Roman beast in its *ten horned state*. Now the ten crowned horns, or ten kingdoms, of the Roman empire, did not make their appearance until *after* the barbarian eruptions, and the sack of Rome by Alaric. Rome Papal, on the other hand, rose into power simultaneously with these ten kingdoms, who "gave their power and strength" to her. Rome Papal ruled rulers, who voluntarily submitted to her authority, as is here predicted. Rome Pagan never did any such thing, she put down all kings, and ruled over them *against their will*. When did ten kingdoms agree to give their power to Imperial Rome? Never! To Papal Rome? *Throughout the dark ages!* By her alluring devices, she obtained their *willing* subjection, and she still *claims* it as her due. To every Pontiff who assumes the tiara she says, "Know thyself to be the father of kings and princes, the ruler of the world."

The prophecy further represents, that the harlot shall ultimately be destroyed by the ten kingdoms which had previously supported her. The destruction of Rome Pagan was not by old friends, but by new enemies, who had never been in subjection to it, and cannot therefore be regarded as a fulfilment of this prophecy.

A further proof is found, in the condition to which Babylon is, as represented here, reduced by her overthrow. She becomes "the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Now if the fall of Babylon be the sack of Rome by Alaric, this *subsequent* condition must denote the state of *Rome Christian*, a portrait Roman Catholics will hardly care to appropriate. It is added, that Babylon is to be burnt with fire and become utterly desolate, and that she is to be plunged like a great millstone into the sea. But neither of these prophecies were fulfilled, in the Gothic destruction of Rome, and they must therefore be still unfulfilled; in other words, their fulfilment must occur, in connection with *Rome Papal*, and not with Rome Pagan.

St. John saw this Babylonian harlot in a state of intoxication, "drunken with the blood of saints, and of the martyrs of Jesus;" at which he says he "wondered with great admiration." This is a proof that *he* did not conceive the symbol to prefigure *heathen* Rome. It could have caused him no astonishment that the *heathen city* should persecute Christianity. He was painfully familiar with that characteristic of the Roman Empire, having seen thousands of his fellow-Christians martyred, and been all but a martyr himself. But that Rome should not only become a Christian church, but, *being such*, should be also a bitterer persecutor of Christians, than ever heathen Rome had been, *this* was indeed astonishing, and John might well wonder!

That the Church of Rome deserves pre-eminently to be stigmatized as "drunk with the blood of saints," cannot be disputed. What other church ever established an Inquisition, instigated a St. Bartholomew (massacre of Protestants), and gloried in her shame in having done so? What other Christian church has slain *many millions* of Christians for *no crime but Christianity*, as she has done?

The Babylonian harlot is represented as enthroned upon many waters, which are nations and peoples. She is not only a church, but *a church ruling nations*; that is, she claims a temporal as well as a spiritual sway. She governs the beast and his ten horns; and so unites a civil and a religious supremacy. Now this is one of the most striking characteristics of the Church of Rome, and of that church only. Other churches may be so united to the State, that the State assumes the unlawful right to govern them; but no other church assumes the right to govern the State, yea, and *all States*, and to make all men her subjects. Rome did this, and does so still, even in her decrepitude and decay. She claims two swords, she holds two keys, she crowns her Pontiff with two crowns, the one a mitre of universal bishopric; the other, a tiara of universal dominion. "There is indeed a mystery on the forehead of the Church of Rome, in the union of these *two supremacies*; and it has often proved a *mystery of iniquity*. It has made the holiest mysteries subservient to the worst passions; it has excited rebellion on the plea of religion; it has interdicted the last spiritual consolations to the dying, and Christian interment to the dead, for the sake of revenge, or from the lust of power. It has forbidden to marry, and yet has licensed the unholiest marriages. It has professed friendship for kings, and has invoked blessings on regicides and usurpers. It has transformed the anniversary of the institution of the Lord's Supper, into a season of malediction, . . . and fulminated curses according to its will.

Pius IX., in the year 1848, addressed the people of Rome thus, "It is one of the many great blessings which God has lavished on Italy, that *our three millions of subjects should have two hundred millions of brother subjects of every language and nation.*"

So that to the present day, Rome, by her extravagant and guilty claims, does all in her power to identify herself with the harlot of the Apocalypse, who sits upon many waters, which are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

The title emblazoned on the brow of this mystic woman, is not only "Babylon the great"; but "mother of harlots and ABOMINATIONS of the earth." This word "*abominations*" designates, as is well known, *idols*.* The literal ancient Babylon, was the mother of almost all the *literal* idolatries, that the earth has ever known. The spiritual Babylon is here charged with being a source and fountain of spiritual idolatry. In other words, it is here predicted, that the Church of Rome would be an *idolatrous church*.

* See Hyslop's "Two Babylons."

It needs but to recall a few of the world-wide and long-enduring customs of that church, to prove how strikingly this prediction has been fulfilled. Rome enjoins the worship of a bread-god—the wafer, or sacrament; and anathematizes all who refuse to render it. The Council of Trent plainly declares the doctrine of transubstantiation, that the bread and wine in the sacrament are "changed into our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man," and adds, "there is therefore now no room to doubt, that all the faithful in Christ, are bound to venerate this holy sacrament, and to render thereto the worship of *latría*, which is due to the true God. . . . If any one shall say, that this holy

sacrament should not be adored, nor carried about in processions, nor held up publicly to the people, to adore it, or that its worshippers are idolaters, *let him be accursed.*" This worship is rendered to "the Host" by Roman Catholics, not only when it is elevated at the time of the sacrament, but whenever it is carried in procession in the streets. All persons are by the sound of a bell, admonished to worship the passing God, and accursed if they refuse. On all the millions of her members in every land, Rome enjoins as a solemn and indispensable duty, the adoration of a bit of bread which a man may eat or a mouse may nibble.

Millions of martyrs have perished for protesting against this idolatry, and asserting that it is blasphemy to say, man can first make God, and then eat him; a creed more degrading than any that the heathen hold. In the days when the "Corpus Christi" procession was a most imposing and dazzling ceremony, when friars, and monks, and priests, and prebends, and canons, and bishops, and archbishops, in varied and splendid costumes attended the bread-god through the streets of crowded cities, amid the clang of bells, bands of military music, choral hymns, and clouds of incense, it was no easy matter for a heretic to escape detection. From the moment the Host came in sight, until it had passed right out of the range of vision, the multitudes were commanded to bow in profound adoration and awe! And woe to the man who dared to do otherwise, the Inquisition speedily became his home, and the *auto da fé* (execution for heresy) his portion.

Nor is this the worst form of Rome's idolatry: her mariolatry—her worship of the Virgin, is worse. We hesitate to record the profane blasphemies found in the writings of the Popes, prelates, and divines of Rome on this subject. Entire litanies of supplication are addressed to the Virgin; attributes which are the glory of God alone, are ascribed to her; the most extravagant and fantastic devotions are offered at her shrines; the whole of the hundred and fifty Psalms of David, have been altered, so as to substitute for the Great Jehovah, the Virgin Mary, as an object of prayer and praise and holy trust: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit, O Lady, in thee have I reposed my hope! Blessed is the man that loveth thy name, O holy Virgin, thy grace shall strengthen his soul. In thee, O Lady, have I hoped, I shall never be put to shame." This "Psalter of Bonaventura, Cardinal Bishop of Albano," has never been disowned, or prohibited by the Church of Rome.

How completely the human mother has taken the place of her Divine Son, in the minds of Roman Catholics, may be gathered from a favourite story recorded by St. Francis. A monk had a vision; he saw two ladders: one red, at the summit of which was Jesus Christ; and the other white, at the top of which presided His blessed mother. He observed, that many who endeavoured to ascend the first ladder, after mounting a few steps, fell down; and on trying again, were equally unsuccessful, so that they never attained the summit; but a voice having told them to make trial of the white ladder, they soon gained the top, the blessed Virgin having held forth her hands to help them! False doctrines, such as the fabulous "assumption of the Virgin" and the unscriptural "immaculate conception," are freely invented by the Church of Rome, to justify this idolatrous adoration of the creature; the latter, promulgated so lately as 1854, by the Pope in St. Peter's, in the presence of

two hundred bishops, filled the Catholic Church with joy. The following passage is from an encyclical letter of Pius IX.:--

"But that our most merciful Lord may the more readily lend an ear to our prayers, and grant our petitions, let us ever call upon the most holy mother of God, the immaculate Virgin Mary, to intercede with Him; for she is the fond mother of us all, our mediatrix, our advocate, our securest and greatest hope, than whose interposition with God, nothing can be stronger, nothing more influential!"

The "Te Deum" itself, has been parodied, in honour of Mary, "We praise thee, O Mother of God! We acknowledge thee, O Virgin Mary! All the earth doth worship thee, the spouse of the everlasting Father! Holy, holy, holy, Mary, Mother and Virgin. The church throughout all the world joins in calling on thee, the Mother of the Divine Majesty!" And the creeds, have in like manner been parodied.

Nor is it the Virgin alone who is worshipped. Images of her—mere dolls, are also adored; witness the degrading ceremony of the annual "coronation of the Virgin," in which the Pope himself takes part; witness the worship of the "Madonna of the Augustinians" and other Madonnas. Mariolatry, among the ignorant masses, is pure image worship, idolatry in its most sensual and childish form, the adoration of a doll!

Space forbids more than a passing allusion to the other forms of idol worship, characterizing the Romish Church, the worship of the "wooden cross," the worship of the "bambino," the worship of the image of St. Peter, the worship of saints, the worship of relics, and similar profanities. When the subject is even superficially examined, the conviction that Rome Papal has exceeded Rome Pagan, in the degradation of her idolatries, becomes irresistible; and the mind is overwhelmed with admiration of the wisdom and foreknowledge of the inspiring Spirit, who prefigured, ages before it existed, the Church of Rome, as the "mother of abominations" or "idols."

To conclude—in the true and eloquent words of another— "The Holy Spirit, foreseeing, no doubt, that the Church of Rome would adulterate the truth by many gross and grievous abominations; that she would anathematize all who would not communicate with her, and denounce them as cut off from the body of Christ and the hope of everlasting salvation; foreseeing also that Rome would exercise a wide and dominant sway for many generations, by boldly iterated assertions of unity, antiquity, sanctity, and universality; foreseeing also that these pretensions would be supported by the civil sword of many secular governments, among which the Roman empire would be divided at its dissolution, and that Rome would thus be enabled to display herself to the world in an august attitude of imperial power, and with the dazzling splendour of temporal felicity; foreseeing also that the Church of Rome would captivate the imaginations of men, by the fascinations of art allied with religion, and would ravish their senses, and rivet their admiration, by gaudy colours, and stately pomp, and prodigal magnificence; foreseeing also that she would beguile their credulity by miracles and mysteries, apparitions and dreams, trances and ecstasies, and would appeal to such evidence in support of her strange doctrines; foreseeing likewise that she would enslave men, and

(much more) women, by practising on their affections, and by accommodating herself with dangerous pliancy to their weakness, relieving them from the burden of thought, and from the perplexity of doubt, by proffering them the aid of infallibility; soothing the sorrows of the mourner by dispensing pardon, and promising peace to the departed; removing the load of guilt from the oppressed conscience, by the ministries of the confessional, and by nicely poised compensations for sin; and that she would flourish for many centuries in proud and prosperous impunity, before her sins would reach to heaven, and come in remembrance before God; foreseeing also that many generations of men would thus be tempted to fall from the faith, and to become victims of deadly error; and that they who clung to the truth would be exposed to cozening flatteries, and fierce assaults, and savage tortures, from her; the Holy Spirit, we say, foreseeing all these things, in his Divine knowledge, and being the ever blessed Teacher, Guide, and Comforter of the church, was graciously pleased to provide a heavenly antidote, for all these dangerous, wide-spread, and long-enduring evils, by dictating the Apocalypse.

In this Divine book, the Spirit of God has portrayed the Church of Rome, such as none but He could have foreseen that she would become, and such as, wonderful and lamentable to say, she has become. He has thus broken her magic spells: He has taken the wand of enchantment from her hand; He has lifted the mask from her face, and with his Divine hand, He has written her true character in large letters, and has planted her title on her forehead, to be seen and read of all, "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth."

The Church of Rome holds in her hand the Apocalypse, the Revelation of Jesus Christ; she acknowledges it to be Divine. Wonderful to say, she founds her claims on those very grounds which identify her with the faithless church, the Apocalyptic Babylon. As follows:—

1. The Church of Rome boasts of universality:
And the harlot is seated on many waters, which are nations and peoples and tongues,
2. The Church of Rome arrogates indefectibility:
And the harlot says that she is a queen for ever.
3. The Church of Rome vaunts of temporal felicity, and claims supremacy over all:
And the harlot has kings at her feet.
4. The Church of Rome prides herself on working miracles:
And the minister of the harlot makes fire to descend from heaven.
5. The Church of Rome points to the unity of all her members in one creed, and to their subjection under one supreme visible head:
And the harlot requires all to receive her mark, and to drink of her cup.

Hence it appears that Rome's notes of the church, are marks of the harlot; Rome's trophies of triumph, are stigmas of her shame; the very claims which she makes to be Zion, confirm the proof that she is Babylon.

We have been contemplating the two mysteries of the Apocalypse. The word "mystery" signifies something spiritual; it here describes a church, The first mystery is explained to us by Christ Himself: "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest; the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest, are the seven churches." The second mystery is explained also: "I will tell thee the mystery of the woman. The woman is *that great city* which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

The first mystery is the mystery of the seven stars.

The second mystery is the mystery of the seven hills.

The first mystery represents the universal church in its sevenfold fulness, containing within it all particular churches.

The second mystery represents a particular church, the church on seven hills, the Church of Rome, claiming to be the church universal.

The first mystery represents *the universal church*, liable to defects, but not imposing errors as terms of communion; and, therefore, by virtue of the word and the sacraments, held together in apostolic communion with St, John, and with Christ, who walketh in the midst of it, and governed by an apostolic ministry, shining like a glorious constellation, in the hand of Christ.

The second mystery represents *the particular Church of Rome*, holding the cup of her false doctrines in her hand, and making all nations to drink thereof.

The first is a mystery of godliness,

The second is a mystery of iniquity.

The foregoing is quoted from an admirable pamphlet, entitled, "Babylon; or, the Question examined, Is the Church of Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse?" by Chr. Wordsworth, D.D., Canon of Westminster (present Bishop of Lincoln). This book may fairly be called an unanswerable argument for an affirmative reply to the above inquiry. In 1850 the author challenged the Church of Rome to answer his argument in the following words: "If any minister or member of the Church of Rome, can disprove this conclusion, he is hereby invited to do so, If he can, doubtless he *will*; and if none attempt it, it may be presumed that they cannot; and, if they cannot, then, as they love their salvation, they ought to embrace the truth which is preached to them, by the mouth of St. John, and by the voice of Christ." Sixteen years ago, when the above work was published, the author reiterated the challenge, and no reply has as yet been made to it by any member of the Church of Rome!" "Speechless!" "Guilty before God."