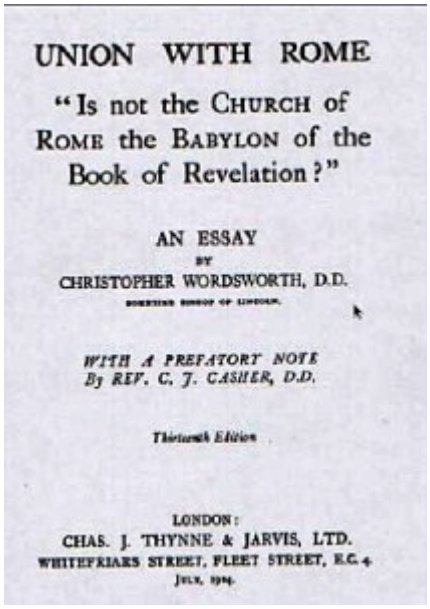
Union with Rome – Christopher Wordsworth


UNION WITH ROME

"Is not the CHURCH of ROME the BABYLON of the Book of Revelation?"

AN ESSAY
BY
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WITH A PREFATORY NOTE
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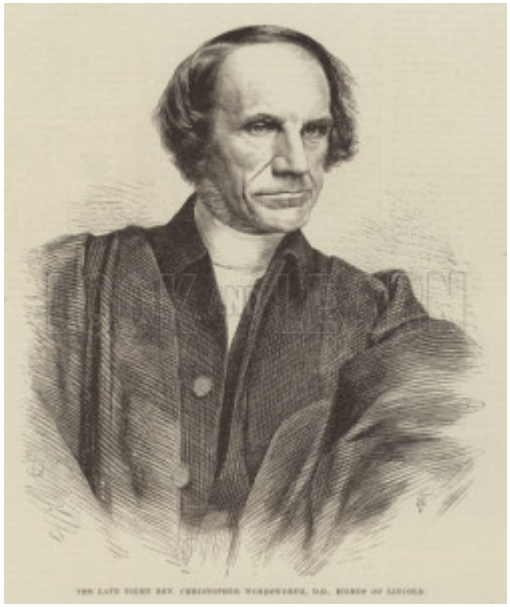
According to Wikipedia, Christopher Wordsworth (30 October 1807 – 20 March 1885) was an English intellectual and a bishop of the Anglican Church, the Bishop of Lincoln. There are two Christopher Wordswords and I'm sure I got the right one because the PDF file from which I got this text says he's the Bishop of Lincoln. It's very interesting that Wikipedia makes no reference to Wordworth's book, Union with Rome! It tells me it's a banned book that has information the rulers of this world do not want us to know.



Christopher Wordsworth

A received this book from my good cyberspace friend and brother in Christ, Andrew, who found it on the Internet and proofread it. He sent it to me in

PDF format. Some of the footnotes on the pages of the PDF file were graphics, and it was just too much work for me to add those graphics. If you want to see them, please download the PDF file Wordsworth – UNION WITH ROME and see the contents on your PC.

The subject of our Inquiry is:–

Whether the Prophecies in the Apocalypse (Ch.xiii, xiv, xvi, xvii, xciii, xix), or Revelation of St. John, respecting Babylon, concern Rome as she now is?

This Question divides itself into two parts;

First; Do these prophecies concern the **City** in which the Bishop of Rome holds his See?

Secondly; Do these prophecies concern that **City** in her spiritual as well as her temporal character; that is, do they concern her as a Church, as well as a City? And as exercising power, not merely at Rome and in Italy, but in many other countries, and over many other nations of the world?

Let us begin with the consideration of the former of these two questions.

Do these prophecies concern the **City of Rome**?

Here let me premise, that the Authorities to which I shall refer on this subject, will be derived from Scripture, Christian Antiquity, and Pagan and Jewish writers; and that I shall abstain from adopting any thing from any quarter, that can be suspected of any bias against the Church of Rome.

1) We may now proceed to observe, first, these Apocalyptic prophecies, which describe the Woman who is called Babylon, and is seated on the Beast with seven heads and ten horns, do not concern the older, literal, Assyrian Babylon. The inscription on the Woman's forehead is Mystery (Rev 17:5,7) [1] ; indicating a *spiritual* meaning.

[1] Mystery, i.e. Something sacred and secret, which is designed to convey to the mind more than meets the ear; see Casaubon, Exerc. Baron. 16 ad A:D: 43; and cf. Heidegger. Myst. Bab. II. p. 79-80.

This word had been used by St. John's brother Apostle St. Paul, in his description of the *Mystery of iniquity*, opposed to the *Mystery of Godliness* (2 Thess.ii.7, and 1 Tim.iii.16); and St. John adopts the word from St. Paul, and appears to apply it to the same object as that which had been portrayed by that Apostle (2 Thess.ii.7)

Again, the Babylon of the Apocalypse is described as a City existing and reigning in St. John's age (Rev.xvii.18); but the literal, or Assyrian, Babylon had long ceased to be a reigning city when St. John wrote. Therefore the Babylon of the Apocalypse cannot be the literal or Assyrian Babylon.

2) What, then, is the **City** of which St. John speaks?

It is called by him a **Great city** (Rev.xvii.18), and it is one which existed [1] in his age; and would continue to exist for many centuries, certainly to our own times; as is evident from the fact, that its destruction, as described in the Apocalypse, is represented there as accompanied by events, which, however near they may now be, no one can say have yet taken place.

The Babylon of the Apocalypse is, therefore, some Great City which existed in St. John's age, and which still exists in our own.

Now almost all the Great Cities of his age have fallen into decay; almost the *only great* ***City*** which then existed, and still exists, is **Rome**.

3) Thirdly, we read in the Apocalypse: Here is the mind, or meaning, which hath wisdom (Rev. 17:9) (words which appear to predict, that however plain they may be, they would be made by some to bear meanings which have not wisdom, in spite of the criterion here given) ; *Here is the mind which hath wisdom; the Seven heads of the Beast are* ***Seven Mountains****, on which the Woman sitteth.*

In St. John's age there was One City, a Great City, built on Seven Hills, —Rome. The name of each of its Seven Hills is well known [2]: in St. John's time Rome was usually called "the Seven-hilled City." She was celebrated as such in an annual national Festival. And there is scarcely a Roman Poet of any note who has not spoken of Rome as a

[1] Rev. 17:18, "that great city which reigneth."
[2] Palatine, Quirinal, Aventine, Cælian, Viminal, Esquiline, Janiculan

City seated on Seven Mountains. Virgil, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius, Ovid, Silius, Italicus, Statius, Martial, Claudian, Prudentius — in short, the unanimous Voice of Roman Poetry during more than five hundred years, beginning with the age of St. John, proclaimed Rome as "*the Seven-hilled City*."

Nor is this all. The Apocalypse is illustrated, in this respect, from another source, equally common (obvious) to the world — Coins.

On the Imperial Medals of that age, which are still preserved, we see Rome displayed as a Woman sitting on Seven Hills, as she is represented in the Apocalypse.

4) Fourthly, St. John give another criterion by which the Apocalyptic City is to be identified. *The Woman which thou sawest (he says) is that Great City, which* ***Reigneth*** *over the Kings of the Earth* (Rev.xvii.18).

If we refer to the Latin Poets of St. John's age, we find that the Epithets commonly applied to Rome are T*he great, The mighty, The royal, Rome; The Queen of Nations; The Eternal City; The Mistress of the World*.

If again, we contemplate the public feelings of the World as expressed on the coins of that period, we there see Rome, as the great City, deified, crowned

with a mural diadem, holding in her palm a winged figure of Victory, which bears in its hand a Globe, the symbol of Rome's Conquests and Universal Sway.

Rome, then, was that Great City; Rome reigned over the Kings of the Earth. Therefore the Woman is Rome.

5) Let us pass to another characteristic. The Woman, described by St. John as sitting on Seven Hills, and as reigning over the Kings of the Earth, is called **Babylon**. *Upon her forehead was a name written – Mystery,* ***Babylon*** *the Great* (Rev.xvii.5). This name, as we have seen, is not to be taken literally; it cannot designate the Assyrian City on the Euphrates; but it designates some other great city which was like Babylon, and is therefore called by that name.

To apply this *geographically*; Babylon has found a remarkable parallel in Rome. Babylon (as S. Augustine says [1]) was the Eastern Rome: and Rome, the Western Babylon.

Babylon was situated in a vast plain: and everyone has heard of the Campagna of Rome. Both cities are intersected by rivers. The soil of Babylon is described in Scripture as productive of clay for brick, and slime, or bitumen, for mortar (Gen.xi.3). Witness the Inspired History of the building of Babel in that region. And the enormous brick Walls of Babylon have passed into a proverb.

Turn now to Rome. We there contemplate (recognize) a resemblance in these respects, in the long arched aqueducts of brick which still stretch across the Roman Campagna, and connect the City with the distant hills; and in the roads, paved with bituminous blocks, which joined the capital to the coast.

[1] S. Augustine. de Civ. D. xvi. 17 xviii. 2.22. His words are, "Roma altera in Occidente Babylonia".

Again: the city of Babylon [1] was surrounded with pools, which, when it was destroyed, stagnated into swampy morasses, and now greatly increase the dreariness and unhealthiness of its desolate plain.

Let us now direct our eyes to the Campagna of Rome, formerly peopled with cities, and alive with the hum (stir) of men. From the inundations of the Pomptine marshes, and from the inveterate malaria of many centuries, and from the fetid miasma brooding over its sulphurous springs and brooks, it is now scarcely habitable; and by its wild and lonely aspect presents a sad prognostic of its future destiny; and seems to sound a solemn alarm and warning into the ear of Faith, that the likeness will one day be stronger between Babylon and Rome.

Here are some striking similitudes; and we must not neglect the historical parallel between Babylon and Rome. Babylon had been and was the Queen of the East, in the age of the Hebrew Prophets; and so Rome was the Mistress of the West, when St. John wrote. Babylon was called the Golden City, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency (Isa.xiii19; xiv.4). She claimed Eternity and Universal Supremacy. She said in her heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God

(Isa.xiv.13). I shall be a Lady for ever. I am, and none else beside me; I shall not sit as a Widow, neither shall I know the loss of children (Isa.xlvii.7,8).

In these respects also, Babylon was imitated by Rome. She also called herself the Golden City, the Eternal City.[2]

Again; the King of Babylon was the rod of God's anger, and the staff of His indignation (Isa.x.5) against Jerusalem for its rebellion against Him. Babylon was employed by God to punish the sins of Sion, and to lay her walls in the dust. So, in St. John's own age, the Imperial legions of Rome had been sent by God to chastise the guilty City which had crucified His beloved Son.

[1] See the authorities collected by Rennell, Geogr. of herodotus, sect. xvi. and heeren's Researches, vol. 2, p. 122, 174.
[2] The words ROMAE ÆTERNAE are found om the imperial coins of Rome, e.g. on those of Gallenius, Tacitus, Probus, Gordian, and others. The pope is called Urbis Æternae Episcopus, by Ammian. The Juspiter of Vigil speaks the national language when he says, (Æn. i. 278) "His ego nec metas rerum nec tempora pono ; IMPERIUM SINE FINE DEDI."

Again: the Sacred Vessels of God's Temple at Jerusalem were carried from Sion to Babylon, and were displayed in triumph on the table at the royal banquet in that fatal night, when the fingers of a man's hand came forth from the Wall (Dan.v.5,6) and terrified the King.

So, the Sacred Vessels of the Jewish Temple, which were restored by Cyrus, and the book of the Law, and the Golden Candlestick [1], and the Table of Shew bread, were carried captive in triumphal procession to the Roman Capitol: and even now their effigies may be seen at Rome, carved in sculpture on one of the sides of the triumphal Arch of Titus, the Imperial Conqueror of Jerusalem.

And what now, it may be asked, was the language of St. John's own age on this subject? Did it, or did it not, recognize Rome in Babylon?

To speak, first, of the Jews. So strong was their sense of the analogy between these two Cities, that the name which they commonly gave to Rome was Babylon.[2] They felt that in their own history God had identified the two. And, it may be added, as remarkable, that, as the Restoration of the Jews by Cyrus did not take place till Babylon was taken, and then ensued immediately, so it is, and has long been, a deeply-rooted opinion and a common proverb among the Jews, that "the Redemption of Israel will not be accomplished, before Rome is destroyed."

Next, how were these Chapters of the Apocalypse (concerning Babylon) understood by Christian writers succeeding St. John? Before this question is answered, one remark may be made. When St. John wrote, Rome was Queen of the World, and whenever she looked on Christianity, it was with an evil eye.

[1] At the time when the victorius Persians rushed into the city, the princes of Babylon were enganged in festivities. The reader may compare Daniel 5: 1-30, and the terrible description (Isa. 21) with Xenophon, Cyr. 7. 5 (P. 403, ed. Oxon. 1820) who says, that the guards of the palace were intoxicated.

[2] Joseph. Bell. Jud. 7.5, where he describes the candlestick. The Apocalyptic phrase, “I will remove thy Candlestick,” (Rev. 2:5) receives a remarkable illustration from this procession: and may be added to the other internal proofs that the Revelation was written after the taking of Jerusalem. The Jewish Candlestick is figured on a coin of Vespasian. Gessner, Tab. 1viii. with the legend “HIEROSOLYMA CAPTA.”

St. John himself was a martyr in will for the faith; he wrote the Apocalypse in banishment in Patmos, to which he was sent (as) a prisoner, for the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev.1.9). He could not speak clearly concerning Rome without exasperating her. The same observation applies to the early Interpreters of the Apocalypse. To identify Rome with Babylon would probably have been represented as treason against her. And we know that the followers of Christ were commonly regarded by Roman writers as ill affected to her, and even as the cause of her calamities.

Now, mark the reply which was made to such allegations as these by the ancient advocates of Christianity. They did not deny that Rome was aimed at in their inspired prophecies; but they averred that it was their bounden duty and interest to wish well to the existing Empire of Rome; because, to use St. Paul’s language to the Thessalonians (2 Thess.2:6,7), the Imperial Government letted,— that is, hindered, prevented, or postponed,— the rise of another Power in its place, to which they could not wish well, inasmuch as it would be more injurious to the Gospel, than the heathen Empire of Rome.

Let these things be candidly considered, and it will appear remarkable, that we should have so large an amount of assertion from the early Christian Church that the Babylon of the Apocalypse is Rome.

We find that among the early Christians some were so much impressed with this identity, that they even supposed, that the Babylon from which St. Peter dates his first Epistle, was Rome. This supposition was doubtless caused by the common belief among Christians, as well as the Jews, concerning the typical relation of Babylon to Rome, and proves how strong that belief was.

A very ancient witness on this subject is Irenaeus. He was one of the disciples of Polycarp, the scholar of St. John, and one of the most learned among the writers of the Eastern Church of that age; and he lived and died in the West, at Lyons in Gaul, of which he was Bishop. Referring to the Apocalypse, he says that the world must wait till the Roman Empire is divided into several kingdoms, signified by the ten Horns of the Beast; and that, when these kingdoms are increasing in might, then a great Power will arise, which will overawe these kingdoms, and will be the Abomination of Desolation, and will be characterized by the number of the Name of the Beast predicted by St. John. And, proceeding to speak of this number, he adds, it is wiser to be patient, till the Prophecy is fulfilled, than to pronounce confidently upon it; but that, in his own opinion, the word Lateinos Latinus, which contains the requisite number, expresses that power. And why, it may be asked, does he fix upon this word? “Because the Latins (he says, or Romans) are they who now reign”; alluding manifestly to the words of St. John, The Woman which thou sawest is that great City, which reigneth over the Kings of the Earth.

It is therefore clear, that S. Irenaeus interpreted the prophecies of St. John, concerning the Woman on the Seven Hills, the Woman which reigneth, the Woman which is Babylon the Mother of fornications, of (as) no other City than Rome; and, we might add, he did not confine them to Rome as Pagan, for he says that the lawless Power, which is represented by that name, was not yet come.

One of the most learned of the Christian Fathers of the Latin Church of that age was Tertullian. He affirms that the Christians of his day pray for the duration of the Roman Empire. And why? Because its fall would be succeeded by the rise of a great and terrible power. And in two places of his works he uses these words:—"Names are employed by us as signs. Thus Samaria is a sign of Idolatry, Egypt is a symbol of Malediction, and in like manner, in the writings of our own St. John, Babylon is a figure of the Roman City, mighty, proud of its sway, and fiercely persecuting the Saints."

If also we refer to those ancient writers who composed Commentaries on the apocalypse, we find the same interpretation meeting us from various quarters, and from the earliest times, and continued in an uninterrupted series down to our own day.

The earliest extant Commentary on the Apocalypse is by a Bishop and Martyr of Pannonia, Victorinus, in the third century. He says, "the city of Babylon, that is, Rome; the City on seven hills, that is, Rome; and the Kings of the Earth will hate the Harlot, that is, Rome."

Not to mention more authorities, the same language is echoed from the East in the commentaries of two Bishops of Cappadocia, Andreas and Arethas; the former of whom expounded the Apocalypse in the sixth century; and from Italy and Rome itself by Cassiodorus, first a Senator of that city, and then an Ecclesiastic; and from Africa by Primasius, a Bishop of Adrumetum, in the sixth century.

Thus an appeal has been made to the best Expositors in the best age of the Church — of whom some lived before Rome had become Christian, and some after — who were exempt from the partialities and prejudices of modern times, and who, to say the least, had no personal reasons for inventing and promulgating such and interpretation as this, but had many inducements to suppress it — and we find that they declare, that the Babylon of the Apocalypse is Rome. To sum up the evidence on this portion of the enquiry; We have in our hands a Book, dictated by the Holy spirit to St. John, the beloved Disciple, the blessed Evangelist, the last surviving Apostle, — a Book predicting events from the day in which it was written even to the end of time; a Book designed for the perpetual warning of the Church, and commended to her pious meditation in solemn and affectionate terms. In it we behold a description, traced by the divine finger, of a proud and prosperous Power, claiming universal homage, and exercising mighty dominion: A Power enthroned upon *many waters, which are Peoples, and Multitudes, and Nations, and Tongues* (Rev.xvii. 1, 15): a Power arrogating Eternity by calling herself a Queen for ever; a Power, whose prime agent, by his Lamb-like aspect (Rev.xiii. 11), bears a semblance of Christian purity, and yet, from his sounding words and cruel deeds, is compared to a Dragon: a Power beguiling men from the pure

faith, and trafficking in human souls (Rev. 17:13), tempting them to commit spiritual adultery, alluring them to herself by gaudy colours and glittering jewels, and holding in her hand a golden cup of enchantments, by which she intoxicates the world, and makes it reel at her feet.

This power, so described in the Apocalypse, is identified in this Divinely inspired Book with

1. a Great City; and that City is described as
2. seated on seven hills. It is also characterized as
3. that Great City, which reigned over the Kings of the Earth in the time of St. John. And
4. it is called *Babylon*

Having contemplated these characteristics of this prophetic description, we pause, and consider,—what City in the world corresponds to it?

It cannot be the *literal* Babylon, for she was not built on seven hills, nor was she the Queen of the earth in St. John's age. It is some Great City which then existed, and would continue to exist to our age. Among the very few Great Cities which then were, and still survive, One was seated on Seven Hills. She was universally recognized in St. John's age as the Seven-hilled City. She is described as such by the general voice of her own most celebrated writers for five centuries; and she has ever since continued to be so characterized. She is represented as such on her own Coinage, the Coinage of the World. This same City, and no other, then reigned over the Kings of the Earth. She exercised Universal Sovereignty, and boasted herself Eternal. This same City resembled Babylon in many striking respects; —in dominion, in wealth, in geographical position, and in historical acts, especially with regard to the Ancient Church and People of God. This same City was commonly called Babylon by St. John's own countrymen, and by his disciples. And, finally, the voice of the Christian Church, in the age of St. John himself, and for many centuries after it, has given an almost unanimous verdict on this subject;—that the Seven-hilled City, that Great City, the Queen of the Earth, Babylon the Great of the Apocalypse, is none other than the city of **ROME**.

We now advance a step further in the argument; and our present Enquiry is; Whether the Apocalyptic prophecies, which have been specified, refer to Rome in her *spiritual* as well as in her *temporal* character; that is, whether they concern her, not only as a **City**, but as a **Church**?

1. **The Great City**, the city on the Seven Hills, the City which in the age of St. John *reigned* over the Kings of the Earth, the mystical Babylon enthroned upon many waters, this, we have seen, is the City of Rome. And *Rome* it is acknowledged to be by the concurrent voice of the Christian Church in the age of St. John, and even to this day.

2. So strong, indeed, is the evidence of this identity, that the Divines of Papal Rome have not been able to resist it. It is enough to mention three most eminent among them, — Cardinal Bellarmine, Cardinal Baronius, and the

famous French Bishop, Bossuet.

“St. John in the Apocalypse,” says Cardinal Bellarmine, “calls Rome *Babylon*; for no other city besides Rome *reigned* in his age over the Kings of the Earth, and it is well known that Rome was seated upon *Seven Hills*.”

“It is confessed by *all*,” says Cardinal Baronius, 3 “that Rome is signified in the Apocalypse by the name of *Babylon*.”

And the language of the celebrated French Prelate, Bossuet, in his Exposition of the Book of Revelation, is: “The features (in the Apocalypse) are so marked, that it is easy to decipher Rome under the figure of *Babylon*.”

Such is the avowal of the most learned Divines of papal Rome.

3. Here then, we see, the question is brought into a narrow compass. The Babylon of the Apocalypse, it is allowed by Romish as well as Protestant writers, is the *City of Rome*.

4. But, it may now be asked; Since such heavy judgments are denounced on Babylon in the Apocalypse, how could any persons acknowledge Rome to be the Apocalyptic Babylon, and yet regard her as the Mother and Mistress of Churches?

The answer is, the Divines of Rome affirm that what St. John predicted of Babylon, concerns Rome *only* as a *City*, but not as *a Church*. And, they add, that it concerned *ancient heathen* Rome, but does not refer to it as *Christian*.

In support of this opinion it is alleged by them, for instance by Bossuet, who has most laboured this point, in his Commentary on the Apocalypse, that the Ancient Christian Fathers did indeed identify the Apocalyptic Babylon with the *City* of Rome; but he affirms, that they did not identify it with the *Church* of Rome; and he adds that every person of judgment will prefer the interpretation of the ancient Fathers to that of modern Expositors who identify Babylon with *the City and Church* of Rome.

5. But on this allegation it may be observed — The Fathers who lived in the first three centuries, that is, who flourished *before* Rome became Christian, recognized the *City* of Rome in the Apocalyptic Babylon; so did the Fathers who lived in the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, when Rome was becoming, and in the end did become, Christian. And we follow the Fathers, as far as they go. We, with them, see the City of Rome in Babylon. But the question is — Must we not see something *more*?

And here we make a distinction. St. John was inspired by the Holy Ghost; he was a prophet, and was enabled to foresee and to foretell what the Church of Rome would become. But the Fathers were not Prophets; they knew Rome only as she was in their own age; and we do not pretend that the Church of Rome was then, what she is now.

The Fathers could not foresee that [in the sixteenth century after Christ], Rome, [at the Council of Trent] would add Twelve Articles to the Nicene

Creed, and that she would impose those articles on all men, as terms of communion, and as necessary to salvation. The Fathers could not have presupposed this, [that in the nineteenth century after Christ the Church of Rome would add another new article to "the faith once delivered to the Saints" (Jude 3) by decreeing that the Blessed Virgin Mary was exempt from original sin.] They would have recoiled from such a notion, as incredible. Indeed one of our strongest objections to the Church of Rome is, that she enforces doctrines which the Ancient Fathers never knew, and which (as the Romish advocates of the Doctrine of Development allow) she herself did not explicitly profess for many centuries. And, if she had held these doctrines in the days of the ancient Fathers, then our argument against the novelty of these doctrines would fall to the ground.

Our answer therefore is: — We do not pretend, that, in the age of the Fathers, the Church of Rome was Babylon; but the question to be considered is, whether she did not become Babylon, by adopting and enforcing doctrines which neither nor she held or dreamt of in their age; and whether, by now holding those doctrines, and by anathematizing all who do not receive them, she does not identify herself with the Apocalyptic Babylon, who requires all men to drink of her cup (Rev.xiv.8; xvii.3). And we think that if the Fathers were alive, they would join with us in the inquiry, whether she is [not] Babylon?

6. The truth also is, that Bossuet misrepresents the interpretation which identifies the Church of Rome with Babylon. He calls it "a Protestant interpretation"; by which he means that it is a modern interpretation, contemporary with, or subsequent to, the Reformation [in the sixteenth century].

But this is an oversight. For no sooner did the Church of Rome begin to put forth her present claims, and enforce her modern creed, than it was proclaimed by many witnesses, that by so doing she was identifying herself with the Babylon of the Apocalypse.

Dating from Pope Gregory the First, who made a prophetic protest against the title of Universal Bishop at the close of the sixth century, we can trace a succession of such witnesses to this day. In that series we may enumerate the celebrated Peter of Blois, the Waldenses, and Joachim of Calabria, Ubertinus de Casali, Peter Olivi 3, Marsilius of Padua, and the illustrious names of Dante and Petrarch.

So far from it being the case that the interpretation, which identifies the Church of Rome with the Apocalyptic Babylon, dates from the Reformation, the truth is rather, that it did much to produce the Reformation. [The interpretation, which identifies the Church of Rome with the Apocalyptic Babylon, does not date from the Reformation; the truth is, that it was prior to the Reformation, and did much to produce the Reformation.]

The fact undoubtedly is, that, in the seventh and following centuries, the *Church* of Rome was united with the *City* of Rome by the junction of the temporal and spiritual Powers in the Person of the Roman Pontiff; and when the Church of Rome began to put forth her new doctrines, and to enforce them

as necessary to salvation, then it was publicly affirmed by many, (although she burnt some who affirmed it), that she was fulfilling the Apocalyptic prophecies concerning Babylon. And though the destruction of heathen Rome by the Goths in the fifth century was a most striking event, yet not a single 1 witness of any antiquity can be cited in favor of the Exposition of Bossuet and his co-religionists, who see a complete fulfillment of the predictions of the Apocalypse concerning the destruction of Babylon, in the fall of heathen Rome by the sword of Alaric.

Indeed, that exposition is a modern one; it is an afterthought; and has been devised by Bossuet and others to meet the other, which they call the Protestant, interpretation. The identification of the Apocalyptic Babylon with ancient Heathen Rome, as its adequate antitype, is an invention of *modern Papal Rome*.

7. Let us now suppose, for argument's sake, with Bossuet and the great body of Romish Interpreters, that the predictions [prophecies] of the Apocalypse concerned Rome only as a City, a pagan City, and do not concern her now both as a City and a Church. And let us also suppose with them, that Rome is what they affirm her to be, the "Mother and Mistress of all Churches"; and that there is one thing needful for all men — as all Romish Divines assert — namely, to be in communion with Rome.

What then is the state of the case?

1) Here is the Apocalypse, a prophetical Book, as they allow, dictated by the Holy Ghost, revealing the History of Christianity from the Apostolic age to Christ's Second Advent, and designed for the edification and comfort of the faithful members of the Church in the dangers, trials, difficulties, and perplexities which awaited them. Under such circumstances as these, nothing would have been more natural, nothing, we may almost add, more necessary, than that St. John should have said to the followers of Christ, — You will, I foresee, be assailed by violence from without, and by heresies and schisms from within; you will be tempted to swerve from the faith. But be of good cheer, you need not be distressed, you need not be perplexed. There is one Church, which cannot err, and will never fail, — the Church of Rome. Rome is now a Heathen City, the Queen of the Gentile World; but Rome will, ere long, become the Capital of Christendom. And the Church of Rome is, by Christ's appointment, the Mother and Mistress of Churches. He, who now rules at Rome, is a Pagan Prince; but when a few years have elapsed, the sovereignty of Rome will pass into other hands: it will be swayed for more than a thousand years by the Bishop of Rome. He is Infallible; he is the Arbiter of the Faith; his chair is the Center of Unity; he is the Vicar of Christ. One thing is indispensable: remain in communion with him. Obey him; then nothing can harm you, nothing can disturb you. You will be safe, you will be blessed, for ever.

What a simple rule! How easy of application! Can it be imagined, that the Author of the Apocalypse would not have commended it? Can it be imagined that St. John — or, rather, the Spirit of God [Who wrote by him], — would have been silent on this most momentous matter? That He, when writing a prophetic history of the Church, would not have breathed a syllable about it? And yet,

if the Church of Rome is not the Harlot City, if she is not Babylon, then she is not even once mentioned in the Apocalypse! Indeed it is affirmed by Bossuet, that there "is not a single trace of the Church of Rome in this whole book 1." Her very existence is ignored. And yet we are assured by all Romish Divines and Roman Pontiffs, that Rome is "the Mother and Mistress of Churches," and that communion with the see of Rome, and subjection to her laws is necessary to salvation! … How incredible!

2) Let us again put the same case. Let these prophecies of the Apocalypse be imagined to concern Rome only as a *City*, a *pagan City*, and not as the *Papal Church*.

What then? Here are divine prophecies – prophecies large and full – commended in solemn terms to the pious meditation of the Church, even till Christ comes (Rev. 1:3; 17:19-20); and yet they can afford warning and comfort only to a few, for a short period after they were published. For Pagan Rome was sacked by Alaric and the Goths in the year of our Lord 410, little more than three hundred years after the Apocalypse was written; and then, we are told by Bossuet and other Romish Divines, [that] Babylon fell!

What a lame fulfillment of these predictions! Give every advantage to the supposition. Allow that they were believed by the early Christians to be consummated in Heathen Rome; – which is not the case; – then what follows? Some ancient Christians were instructed by them; and, instructed to do what? To shun the idolatry of Heathen Rome. Not to sacrifice to Jupiter! Not to burn incense to the statue of the roman Emperor! Did they need a new, large, and elaborate prophecy to teach then that? St. Peter and St. Paul and all the Apostolic martyrs had done this. The Apocalypse was not necessary to save them from Apostasy. No; with reverence be it said, here was no worthy crisis for the intervention of the Holy Spirit of God.

3) But now change the hypothesis. Suppose Babylon to be, not a pagan City, but a corrupt Church, putting forth her claims, and veiling her corruptions, under the most specious and alluring colors: hiding them under the fair forms of Antiquity, Sanctity, Unity, and Universality. Then the case is different. Here is a new form of evil requiring a new remedy. Here is an Antichrist 1 sitting in the Church, and teaching error disguised as Truth; and Anti-Christ speaking in the name of Christ. Here is a strong delusion, one that may ensnare the world. Here is a critical occasion, and urgent exigency, for the intervention of the Holy Ghost. Here is a profitable exercise of His Divine Office of prophecy, guidance and warning to the Church. Here is a fit Mission for the Comforter.

And, if such a Church as we have now described has existed, and if it has continued to exist for many centuries, and does now exist in the world; if it has so existed, and does still exist, at Rome; and if, by the union of the secular power with the spiritual, the Roman Church is, and has long been, identified with the Roman City; and if the Apocalyptic Babylon is allowed on all hands to be the City of Rome, then we here see a proof, that the Babylon of the Apocalypse, which is confessed by Romish Divines to be the Roman City, is not only the Roman City, but is [also] the Roman Church.

4) At this point, a few words may be addressed to some persons, who affirm that the real conflict of our own times is not between one form of Christianity and another, but between Christianity and Infidelity; and who either overlook these prophecies of the Apocalypse altogether, and seem to forget that they exist in the Word of God, and that the Holy Spirit pronounces those "blessed, who read and keep the words of this prophecy," and denounces a malediction on all who take away from them; or else draw these prophecies aside from their aim, and are impatient with us [those] who retain them in that direction which they believe, and think they can prove, to be the true one.

It cannot be defined, that we have much to dread from Infidelity; their fears in this respect are ours.

We allow also that the Anti-Christ briefly noticed by St. John in two of his Epistles is an Infidel Power.

But it is not the main end and aim of Prophecy, to warn men now against Infidelity, any more than it was formerly against Paganism. The Power described by St. Paul and St. John in the Apocalypse is expressly called a Mystery. But Infidelity proclaims itself: it is no "Mystery." And Christ has pronounced His sentence, once for all, against Unbelief: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). No subsequent voice could add force or clearness to this divine Verdict.

But it is the legitimate aim and end of Christian Prophecy, to warn the world against the insidious designs and mysterious workings of deadly error, masked in the garb of Religion; for Satan is never so much to be feared as when he is "transformed into an Angel of Light" (2Cor. 11:14).

And even because Infidelity is be dreaded, this warning against corrupt Religion was necessary to be given; for the state of those who use Religion as a cloak for sin and error is worse than that of Heathens. Superstition is the most prolific source of Atheism. When a People sees Religion allying itself with imposture, they soon regard Religion as a fraud, and become eager to destroy it as an insult to themselves. Thus Superstition drives them on to Irreligion [Unbelief], and tempt them to blaspheme Christianity. [This, as the Author of this Essay knows too well from personal observation, is the danger of Italy and France at this time.]

Looking, then, at the declarations of Scripture concerning Infidelity, and at the true ends of Christian Prophecy, and at the perils of the World from Infidelity, and at the language and spirit of these Apocalyptic prophecies, we see reason to believe, even on this account, that the form of Anti-Christianism contemplated by them is not a *heathen*, or *infidel*, but a *religious*, one.

5) Another objection may be considered here. Some persons have alleged, that since Prophecy is best interpreted by its fulfilment, and since all do not agree in interpreting these Apocalyptic prophecies in such a manner as to apply them to Rome, and since Rome denies that they are applicable to

herself, therefore they ought not be so interpreted.

But a little consideration will show the fallacy of this allegation.

It is indeed true, that Prophecy is best interpreted by its fulfilment; and, if it cannot be proved to the satisfaction of candid, intelligent, and attentive inquirers, that these Prophecies have been partly fulfilled in the Church of Rome, then assuredly there is a strong presumption that they have not been so fulfilled.

But,—because the fulfilment is not universally acknowledged, and, particularly, not acknowledged by the Church of Rome,—it is therefore not true, that they have not been fulfilled.

All Christians agree, that the Prophecies of the Old Testament, concerning the Messiah, have now been fulfilled for near two thousand years in the person of Jesus Christ. And yet, up to this hour, the heathens do not believe this; and, what is more, the Jews, [who held those prophecies in their hands], and were the most concerned in the accomplishment of those prophecies, and had, in some respects, the best opportunities of judging of it, do not acknowledge their fulfilment, but obstinately deny it.

But, let us ask,—Does this denial of that accomplishment in any degree invalidate the truth of those prophecies, or render their fulfilment less certain? Assuredly not. Nay, it *confirms* it. For, this incredulity of the Jews was predicted in those prophecies: Lord, who hath believed our report? (Isa. 53:1; John 12;38).

In like manner, it is futile to allege, that these prophecies of the Apocalypse do not point at the Church of Rome, because the Church of Rome does not acknowledge that they concern her. Indeed this her scepticism concerning them is a corroboration of the proof of their fulfilment. Just as it was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, that the Jews would not believe their fulfil ment, so in like manner it is foretold in those of the Apocalypse, that she whom they do concern will not believe them, and will not repent (Rev. 9:20; 16:9-11) but will be stricken with judicial blindness, and be hardened by God’s judgments; in a word, that Babylon will be Babylon to the end.

Therefore, if the Church of Rome is Babylon, we have no reason to be surprised that she does not acknowledge, and have no reason to expect that she will acknowledge, that she herself is the subject of these prophecies, and is there portrayed as Babylon.

Let us observe here the mysterious dealings of God. The Jews hold in their hands, and revere as divine, the Old Testament. And from the Old Testament the Church of Christ proves her own cause against the Jews. And so the Church of Rome holds in her hands the Apocalypse; she acknowledges it to be the work of St. John, and requires all men to receive it as divinely inspired 1. And may not perhaps the Church of Christ prove from it her own cause against Rome?

The true question therefore, we see, is —not whether the Church of Rome acknowledges,—no, nor whether persons of our own Communion acknowledge, that these prophecies have been already fulfilled, or are being fulfilled, and will be completely fulfilled, in the Church of Rome, —but, whether there is evidence to convince an unprejudiced mind that such is the case.

This is the question before us.

6) Let us pass to another point. [Let us therefore proceed with our argument]. The Woman, called the "Harlot 2," and "Babylon," or "the Great City," the "City on Seven Hills," the City of Rome, sits on the Beast as on a throne, that is, governs it, and is supported by it. The Beast is represented as having ten Horns 3 bearing Crowns 4, which, we are taught, are ten Kings, or Kingdoms; and these, it is added, had not received power in St. John's age, but were afterwards to receive it with the Beast.

Now, if, with Bossuet and his co-religionists, we imagine the Woman on the Beast to be Heathen, and not Christian, Rome, then let us ask, Where, in that case, were these Ten Kingdoms, which did not exist in St. John's age, and which were to arise and receive power together with Rome? Heathen Rome reigned alone, and was destroyed, before any such kingdoms arose. None can be found to correspond to St. John's description.

But now adopt, again, the other supposition. Let the Beast, with the Woman enthroned upon it, represent the City and Church planted on the Seven Hills on which the Woman sits. Let it represent the Church of Rome. Then all is plain. When the heathen Empire of Rome fell, new Kingdoms arose from its ruins. These were the horns of the Beast which then sprouted up; then the Church of Rome increased in strength; and these Kingdoms received power with her.

Look again at the prophecy. These kings, we read, give their power and strength to the Beast. They reign, as kings, at the same time with the Beast. As kings—that is, they are called kings—but the Beast is the real Sovereign of their subjects. And what is the fact? The European Kingdoms, which arose at the dissolution of the Roman Empire, did surrender themselves to the dominion of the Church of Rome, and were, for many centuries, subject to the Papacy. The Woman, who sat upon the Beast, had her hand upon the Horns, and held them firmly in her grasp. She still treats them as her subjects. The Papal Coins proclaim this. "Omnes Reges servient ei." "Gens et Regnum, quod tibi non servierit, peribit." Such are her claims; declared at the Coronation of every Pontiff: "Know thyself to be the Father of Kings and Princes, Ruler of the World." These are the words which he assumes to himself, when the papal Tiara is placed on his brow. Thus in the claim of the Church of Rome to exercise sway over the Kings of the earth, and in that amplitude of dominion and plenitude of felicity, to which she has appealed for so many generations as a proof that she is favoured by Heaven, we recognize another proof that the Babylon of the Apocalypse, the Woman on the Beast, to whom Kings were to give their power and strength, is no other than the Church of Rome.

Still further: It is prophesied in the Apocalypse that some of the Horns, of kingdoms, which were to receive power together with the Beast, will one day

rise against her, and eat the flesh of the Harlot, and burn her with fire (Rev. 17:16).

Now, again suppose, for argument's sake, that the Woman on the Beast was Heathen Rome. Then, we readily allow, that Alaric with his Goths, Attila with his Huns, Genseric with his Vandals, Odoacer with his Heruli, did indeed sack the City of Rome 1. But when did they ever receive power together with Rome? [Or even before?] when did they give their power and their strength to Heathen Rome? Never. If, therefore, the Woman upon the Beast is only the City of Pagan Rome, then the Prophecy of St. John has failed; which, since it is from God, is impossible.

[But Pagan Rome has long since ceased to be. Therefore, these predictions cannot concern Pagan Rome. But they do concern the Seven-hilled City, Rome; and, therefore, they point at that City in which the Bishop of Rome now rules.] And the marvel predicted by the Apocalypse is this—and a stupendous mystery it is— that some of the Powers of the Earth, which received strength with the Beast, and [at one time] gave up their might to it, will [would], under the overruling sway of God's retributive justice, one day arise against the Woman seated on the Beast, and "tear her flesh," and burn her with fire (Rev. 17:16). And, what is still more marvellous, they will do this, although, in the first instance, they have been leagued with the Beast and with the False Prophet (Rev. 17:13-14; 19:19), or False Teacher, [who is] the Ally of the Beast, on whom the Woman sits as a Queen, in opposition to Christ: and they will destroy Rome in a mysterious transport of indignation, and in a wild ecstasy of revenge.

Such is the prophecy of St. John. This latter portion of it remains to be fulfilled. But Pagan Rome has long since ceased to be. Therefore there predictions cannot concern Pagan Rome. But they do concern the Seven-hilled City, Rome; and, therefore, they point at the City wherein the Bishop of Rome now rules: and the Woman upon the Beast is the City and Church of Papal Rome.

7) Besides, the destruction of the Great City, the Mystical Babylon, is represented in the Apocalypse as a punishment for her sins, when brought to a head. Now be it observed that Rome when taken by Alaric had given great encouragement to Christianity: so much so, that the invasion of the Goths was represented by her heathen writers 1 as a consequence of the anger of the heathen deities against the city for its neglect of the old religion, and for the favour shown by it to the Gospel. Rome as compared with herself any former period of her history was then not remarkable for her sins, but for her piety.

Therefore, again, the capture of Rome by Alaric cannot have been the destruction foretold in the Apocalypse.

[Edited: And let us ask the candid reader,—Is not this prophecy even now in course of fulfillment, in the eyes of the World?

Of all the princely houses of Europe that were once devoted to the Roman Papacy, none was a more abject vassal of it, than the house of Savoy. In the seventeenth century, A.D. 1655, it executed with ruthless obsequiousness the

sanguinary mandates of Rome, exhorting it to exterminate the Vaudois—the Protestant communities of the Alps—with fire and sword. Such was its eagerness in the work of destruction, that Oliver Cromwell wrote a letter of expostulation to the Duke of Savoy, and sent an ambassador from England to deprecate this crusade of desolation; and Milton then wrote his famous sonnet, which has proved almost prophetic, "On the late Massacre in Piedmont, "Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold."

And what is now the case, at the present time?

A Prince of that same house, the house of Savoy, has now been raised up to the Throne of Italy, Victor Emmanuel; and he has "torn the flesh" of Rome, he has despoiled her of the greater part of her temporal dominions; France (which is now virtually mistress of Rome), Spain, and Portugal, have recognized him as King of Italy; he has suppressed her Monasteries, and has thus deprived Rome of her most powerful spiritual Army; and it is not improbable, that either his dynasty or that of some other secular Potentates formerly devoted to the Papacy, may be employed as an instrument for inflicting more chastisements on Papal Rome.]

8) Further, let us look forward, and examine the Apocalyptic Prophecy, which describes what the state of the mystical Babylon will be after her fall.

Her condition, we are taught in the Apocalypse, will then be like that of the literal, the Assyrian Babylon, after its destruction. Concerning the literal Babylon, Isaiah prophesied thus: Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there, and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there (Isa. 13:21). And Jeremiah predicted that Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and a hissing (Jer. 51:37).

So St. John in the Apocalypse prophesies of the mystical Babylon: Babylon the great (he says) is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (Rev. 18:2). For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her; for her sins have reached to heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.(Rev. 18:3,5)

Now, take, again, the supposition of Bossuet, and other Romish Theologians, and let it be imagined, for argument's sake, that Babylon is only the Heathen City of Rome. Rome was taken, at several times, by the Goths and the Vandals; let its capture be, as is alleged by those Romish Divines, the fulfilment of St. John's Prophecy, Babylon is fallen. Rome having been Pagan, became Papal. What then is the consequence? Rome—Papal Rome—is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit!….Will this be allowed by Romish Divines? Rome the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, the cage of every unclean and hateful bird!

No: we do not say this; and in their language Rome is " the Capital of Christendom," "the Holy City," the "spiritual Sion." They call her Sovereign

” the Supreme Pontiff,” “Holy Father”; his States are ” the States of the Church”; and his throne, “the Holy See.”

Therefore these Apocalyptic prophecies were not fulfilled in Pagan Rome.

But it is allowed by Romish Divines that they concern Rome. Therefore they do not concern Rome as Pagan, but as Papal.

9. Again; it is prophesied in the Apocalypse that Babylon will be burnt with fire, and become utterly desolate. Now, let Babylon be imagined to be only the heathen City of Rome. How then, let us ask, can the prediction be reconciled with the fact? How can it be said, the Rome has been burnt with fire, and that the smoke of the burning ascends to heaven? (Rev. 18:8,9). Has the voice of harpers and musicians ceased within her? has she been taken up, like a great millstone, and plunged in the sea? (Rev. 18:21). No: the voice of melody is still heard in her princely palaces; they are still adorned with noble pictures and fair statues. The riches of her purple and silk and scarlet, and pearls and jewels (Rev 17:4; 18:12-16), are still displayed in the splendid attire of her Pontiff and his Cardinals in their solemn conclaves. Cavalcades of horses and chariots, (Rev. 18:13) with gorgeous trappings, and long trains of religious processions, still move along her streets; clouds of frankincense still float in her Temples, which on high festivals are hung with tapestry and brocade and gay embroidery; her precious vessels still glitter on her Altars; her rich merchandise of gold and silver is still purchased; her dainty and goodly things are not yet departed from her. She still sits as a Queen, and glorifies herself, and says, I am no Widow, and shall see no sorrow.(Rev. 18:7). She still claims the title of Divinity, and calls herself **ETERNAL**.

[Let any one refer to the confident language she used, and to the gorgeous splendour in which she displayed herself on December 8, 1854, when she promulgated, in St. Peter’s Church, the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; and on Whitsunday, June 8, 1862, when she canonized the Japanese Martyrs,—a ceremonial associated with her own claims to Supremacy, spiritual and temporal, and he will admit these statements as unquestionable.]

Here, therefore, we are brought to the same conclusion. The Babylon of the Apocalypse is [allowed on all hands to be] Rome. Pagan Rome it cannot be. It is therefore Papal Rome.

10) But it may here be said: True, the Apocalyptic Prophecies have failed of their effect, if Babylon be interpreted as representing only the City of Rome as Heathen. Still, it may be alleged, it does not necessarily follow, that they concern Papal Rome, inasmuch as it is possible that the City of Rome may cease to be Papal, and that it may, at some future time, become infidel, and then be destroyed in the manner described in the Apocalypse.

This is the theory of some Romish Expositors 1, who perceive the insurmountable difficulties embarrassing the hypothesis, which has now been examined; and which has been, and still is, maintained by their most eminent Divines.

Here then we may observe—

Romish Divines agree with us, that Babylon is the city of Rome. But they are not agreed among themselves, whether Babylon is the Rome of 1500 years ago, or a Rome still future! And yet they say that they have, in the Roman Pontiff, an infallible Guide for the exposition of Holy Scripture! How is it, that this unerring Guide has not yet settled for them the meaning of the prophecies concerning his own City? Here was a worthy occasion for the exercise of his powers. How is it, that the Bishop of Rome has left the Church of Rome in a state of uncertainty and of variance with regard to these awful prophecies which refer to the City of Rome? Is this unity? Is this infallibility? Is it not evident that by claiming for himself Infallibility (which is an attribute of God) he is rebuked and condemned by these Prophesies, which, his own Divines allow, concern his own City?

[How is it, that he allows some Romish Divines to say that these prophecies refer to a Rome of more than a thousand years ago, and permits others to say that they relate to a Rome still future? Is this Unity? Is this Infallibility?]

Let us now examine the hypothesis of these Roman Divines, who say that the Apocalyptic Babylon is Rome future; Rome becoming hereafter heathen and infidel.

A) Rome heathen and infidel! What then becomes of their assertion, that no Heresy has ever infected the Church of Rome, and that every Church must conform to her?

B) Babylon is described in the Apocalypse, as persecuting the saints, as drunk with the blood of the saints, and as making all to drink of her cup (Rev. 17:6,2).

Now, that Rome will again become heathen, and that she will propagate heathenism with the sword; this assuredly is an alternative to which no advocate of the Church of Rome could be driven, except by desperation. But, however this may be, this Exposition is irreconcileable with the words of St. John, and cannot therefore be sound. [And why? Because, as we have seen, St. John refers to Rome reigning over the Kings of the Earth in his own day. He then proceeds to reveal her future History. No intimation is given of any break in the thread of his prophecy. But if Babylon is some future Rome, as well as the Rome of St. John’s age, there must be a chasm in that history of nearly two thousand years!

C) For, as we have seen, St. John refers to Rome reigning over the Kings of the Earth in his own day. He the proceeds to reveal her future History. No intimation is given of any break in the thread of his Prophesy. But if Babylon is some future Rome, as well as the Rome of St. John’s age, there must be a chasm in that history of nearly two thousand years!

D) Let us refer again to the Apocalypse. There it is said that the Beast on which the Woman sitteth, is the eighth head or king (Rev 17:10-11); and that five heads had already fallen in St. John’s age, that the sixth was then in

being, that the seventh would continue only for a short time, and then the eighth would appear; and that the eighth head is the Beast on which the Woman sits.

If Kings are here used to signify individuals, then the eight head, i.e. the Beast and the Woman on it, must have arisen soon after St. John's age. But let us allow, that kings are here used for forms of government, as is common in Scripture Prophecy (Dan. 7:17,23,24; Hos. 3:3). Then the eight heads are the eight successive forms of Government in the City of Rome. Five of these had followed one another, and had passed away, in St. John's age. Therefore five heads are said to have fallen. The sixth or imperial head was then in being. But the imperial head also fell. It perished with Romulus Augustulus, A.D. 476. It was to be followed by the seventh. And the seventh was to be of brief duration, it was only to continue for a short space (Rev. 17:10). The eight was to arise from the seven (Rev. 17:11); that is, without interruption, after the seventh; and the eighth is the Beast on which the Woman sitteth (Rev. 17:3,8,11).

Therefore the Beast with the Woman sitting upon it has appeared long ago.

These Prophecies concern that Woman: this Woman is the City Rome: and they therefore concern Rome, not future, but such as she has long been, and now is.

We have seen that the Apocalyptic Babylon is not Pagan Rome. We now pass on to the positive part of our argument, and let us inquire more particularly, whether the Babylon of the Apocalypse is or is not Christian Rome, under the dominion of Popes; and whether it is Rome, as Rome is now?

Here we may observe first, the City seated on the Beast is called a *Harlot*. This is the scriptural name of a faithless *Church*.

Such is Christ's love for His *faithful* people, that He is pleased to speak of His own relation to them under the term of marriage. The Church is His Spouse (John 3:29; Eph. 5:23-32). I have espoused you as a chaste virgin to Christ, says St. Paul to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:2) Hence spiritual *unfaithfulness* to Christ is represented in Scripture as *adultery*.

This idea runs through the whole Book of Revelation. In the Church of Pergamos there are said to be some who hold the doctrines of Balaam, and cause others to commit fornication (Rev. 2:14). At Thyatira there is a Jezebel, who, by her false teaching, seduces Christ's servants; and they who commit adultery with her are threatened with tribulation (Rev. 2:20,22). And, on the other hand, the faithful who follow the Lamb—i.e. Christ —whithersoever He goeth, are said to be Virgins, [and not to have been defiled with women]; that is, not sullied with the stain of spiritual harlotry (Rev. 14:4).

The name Harlot, therefore, describes a Church, which has fallen from her first love, and gone after other lords, and given to them the honour due to **Christ** alone; [and if the Roman Church gives to other beings any of the

worship which is due to Christ alone (and surely she ascribes to; the Blessed Virgin Mary almost equal honour as to Christ), then this name is applicable to the Church of Rome.]

But here it is said by Romish Divines,—If a faithless Church had been intended by St. John, then

A) He would not have called her a harlot, but an adultress; and

B) He would not have designated her by the name of a heathen city, Babylon, which never owned the true God, but by the name of some city, such as Samaria which once knew Him, and afterwards fell away from Him.

These [above] are Bossuet's allegations. We may reply to them as follows:

A) We allow that a faithless Church may be called an Adulteress because she forsakes God; but she may also be, and often is, called in Scripture a Harlot, when she mixes false doctrine and worship with the true faith.

Thus Isaiah exclaims concerning Jerusalem, the ancient Church of God (Isa. 1:21), "How is the faithful City become a harlot!" And Jeremiah, "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers" (Jer. 3:1). And Hosea, "Though Israel play the harlot, let not Judah offend" (Hosea 4:15).

The original word which is uniformly used for harlot by St. John in the Apocalypse is Porné. And this same word or its derivatives, is used in the passages just quoted, and is employed in the Septuagint Version of the Prophets of the Old Testament, at least fifty times 3, to describe the spiritual fornication, that is, the corrupt doctrine and practice of the Churches of Israel, which Bossuet specifies as the proper parallel, is charged with harlotry.

Therefore the word harlot does designate a Church; and if the Church of Rome is described by that name in the Apocalypse, then the word harlot, as applied to her, indicates the multitude of her sins.

Besides, the Harlot's name in the Apocalypse is Mystery (Rev. 17:5,7). This word, Mystery, is used more than twenty times in the New Testament, and is never applied to any object openly infidel, but is always applied to something sacred and religious,—such as a Church.

B) To consider Bossuet's second objection:—We readily allow that a faithless Church might be called Samaria; but we affirm that it may also with greater propriety, under certain circumstances, be termed Babylon. Thus Isaiah addresses the ancient Church of God by two heathen names, Sodom, and Gomorrah. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah" (Isa.1:10). And again, he says, "they declare their sin as Sodom" (Isa. 3:9). So Ezekiel calls Jerusalem a sister of Sodom; and Sodom more righteous than her (Ezek. 16:48. Compare 2 Pet. 2:6. Jude 7). It is clear that the words Sodom and Gomorrah, two heathen names applied to Churches, denote here great flagrancy of guilt in those Churches.

In the Apocalypse, also itself, a false teacher in a Church is called not

only a Balaam, but a Jezebel (Rev. 2:14. 20), that is, is compared to a heathen patron of idolatry.

Therefore, Babylon may represent a faithless Church; one which, having been a Bethel, or House of God, becomes a Bethaven, or House of Idols (Hosea 10:5,15). And if the Apocalyptic Babylon be a Church, and if the church of Rome be that Church, then the heathen name Babylon, ascribed to her, is designed by the Holy Spirit to show the enormity of her guilt.

The Harlot is named Babylon. And Babylon is called the Great City. She is so named twelve times in the Apocalypse, and no other city is called in this book The Great City. Now, the Great City, which is the city of the Beast, who persecutes the Witnesses, and in whose street their body lies (Rev. 11:8), which City is called, spiritually, Sodom and Egypt, is also called the City in which their Lord was crucified (Rev. 11:8). That is, it is also spiritually called a Jerusalem, i.e. it is called a Church of God.

Therefore, again we see, the Harlot is a Church.

This is also clear from the following considerations. The Apocalypse abounds in contrasts. For example, the Lamb, who in St. John's Gospel is always called Amnos, and never Arnion, is called Arnion, and never Amnos, in St. John's Apocalypse, in which Arnion occurs twenty-nine times. And why does HoAmnos here become To Arnion? To contrast Him more strongly with To Therion; that is, to mark the opposition between the Lamb and the Beast.

And as the Lamb is contrasted with the Beast, so is the Spouse of the Lamb, or the Bride, contrasted with the Harlot who sits on the Beast.

Thus, on one side we see the faithful Woman (Rev. 12:1), clothed with the Sun, Which is Christ, and treading on the Moon, that is, surviving all the changes and chances of this world; and having her brows encircled with Twelve stars—the diadem of Apostolic faith. She is a Mother; and her child is caught up to heaven.

On the other side, we see a faithless Woman, arrayed in worldly splendour, and having on her forehead the name Mystery; and called "Mother of Abominations of the Earth."

Again; On the one side, we see the faithful Woman driven into the wilderness and persecuted by the Dragon.

On the other side, we see the faithless Woman, enthroned on seven hills, sitting on many waters which are peoples and nations; persecuting, and sitting on the Beast, who receives his power from the Dragon.

The former Woman (as affirmed by all the best ancient Expositors) is the faithful Church, which is truly Catholic or Universal.

The latter Woman, who is contrasted with her, and is called the Harlot, is a faithless Church, which claims to be Catholic, but is not.

Let us pursue the contrast.

The faithful Woman appears again, after her pilgrimage in the wilderness of this world is over. Her sufferings have ceased. Look upward. Her glory is revealed at the close of the Apocalypse. The Woman which was in the wilderness has now become the Bride in Heaven. She is Christ's Church glorified, His Spouse purified. She is arrayed in fine linen, pure and white. She is called the Holy City, the new Jerusalem (Rev. 19:7,8; 21:2,9,10).

Now look below at the faithless Woman, or Harlot, sitting on the Beast. She is arrayed in scarlet and pearls, and jewels, and gold. She is called Babylon, the Great City (Rev. 17:4,5; 11:8), the Jerusalem in which Christ is crucified (Rev. 11:8).

Behold once more. What is the end?

Look upward: Heaven opens its golden portals to receive the Bride.

Look downward: Earth opens its dark abyss to engulf the Harlot.

How striking is this contrast!

And what is the conclusion from all this?

As the former Woman, the Bride, the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, represents the faithful Church, so the second Woman, the Harlot, the great City, the City on Seven Hills, which reigned in St. John's age, the mystical Babylon, the reprobate Jerusalem, represents a faithless Church.

The question now is,—What Church?

At this point, the evidence, stated in the former Chapter, comes in with irresistible force. It was then proved that the City on seven hills— the City which reigned in St. John's age—the City called Babylon in the Apocalypse,—is the City of Rome; and this (as we have also seen) is not denied, but generally allowed by Romish Divines.

The answer, therefore, is: The second Woman, the Harlot, represents the faithless Church in the City of Rome.

Is this result confirmed by facts? Let us inquire.

The Woman enthroned on the Beast is represented in the Apocalypse as holding a golden cup in her hand, with which she intoxicates men, and of which she requires all to drink (Rev. 14:8; 17:4; 18:6). Does this apply to the Church of Rome? Certainly it does: this appears as follows:

(1) Almighty God has distinguished man from the rest of the creation by the endowments of Reason and of Conscience; and He commands them to use them, and not to give them away. But the Church of Rome requires men to sacrifice them to her will. And then she pours into their minds a delirious draught of strange doctrines, with which she makes the head dizzy, and the eyes swim, and the feet stagger: and this swoon-like trance she calls Faith. [which cannot be found in Holy Scripture, and which were unknown to the Apostles, and to the Apostolic Churches of Christ.] She requires all to drink of this

cup (Rev. 14:8; 17:4; 18:6). She says of her Trent Creed, “This is the Catholic Faith, out of which there is no salvation.”

(2) Again: the faithless Woman [in the Apocalypse] is represented as drunken with the blood of Saints. And when I saw her, says St. John, I wondered with great admiration (Rev. 17:6).

Now, if the Woman had been heathen Rome, past or to come, why should St. John wonder? It is not wonderful, that a heathen city should persecute the Saints of God. St. John had seen the blood of Christians spilt by imperial Rome. She had beheaded St. Paul, and had crucified St. Peter. He himself had been a martyr in will, and was now an exile, by her cruelty. Therefore he could not have wondered with great admiration, if the Harlot was heathen Rome. But it was a fit subject for surprise, that a Christian Church—a Church calling herself the “Mother of Christendom,” “the spiritual Sion,” “the Catholic Church”—should be drunken with the blood of the saints; and at such a spectacle as that St. John might well have wondered with great admiration.

Has, then, the Church of Rome ever stained herself with the blood of Christians?

Yes; she has erected the prisons, and prepared the rack, and lighted the fires, of what she calls “the Holy Office of the Inquisition” in Italy, Spain, America, and India. At this day she lauds one of her Popes, whom she has canonized, Pius the Fifth, in her Breviary 4, for being an inflexible Inquisitor. She has engraven the massacre of St. Bartholomew’s day on her coins 5 , and represents it as a work done by an Angel from heaven; and her Pontiff 6 went into a public procession to Church to return thanks to God for that savage and treacherous deed. She has inserted an Oath in her Pontifical, by which she requires all her Bishops to “persecute 1 and wage war against” all whom she calls heretics.

[Germany France, Holland, England, Scotland, Belgium, Poland, Croatia, Hungary. She commanded the ancestors of Victor Emmanuel to persecute to the death the Christians of Piedmont. One of her Popes, whom she has canonized, Pius the Fifth, is praised in her liturgical offices, for being an inflexible Inquisitor.]

What would St. John have said to this? Would he not have justly wondered with great admiration, that such acts should be done under the auspices of one who calls himself the Vicar of Christ?

(3) Again: the Woman is represented as enticing the Kings of the Earth to commit fornication with her (Rev. 17:2; 18:3); and they are said to give their power and strength to the Beast (Rev. 17:13), on which she sits.

This assuredly does not apply to heathen Rome. She received the gods of other Nations into her Pantheon. Even the reptile deities of Egypt found a place there. She would have opened her doors to Christianity, if Christianity had been content to be enshrined with Heathenism.

But these words of the Apocalypse are strikingly characteristic of Papal

Rome. She has trafficked and tampered with all the Kings and Nations of the Earth.

In the words of the judicious Hooker (Hooker, serm. v. 15), “she hath fawned upon Kings and Princes, and by spiritual cozenage hath made them sell their lawful authority for empty titles.” She has caressed and cajoled them with amatory gifts of flowers, pictures, and trinkets, beads and relics, crucifixes and Agnus Deis, and consecrated plumes and banners. She has drenched and drugged their senses with love-potions of bewitching smles and fascinating words; and has thus beguiled them of their faith, their courage, and their power. Like another Delilah, she has made the Samsons of this world to sleep softly in her lap (Judges 16:19), and then she has shorn them of their strength. She has captivated, and still captivates, the affections of their Prelates and Clergy, by entangling them in the strong and subtle meshes of Oaths of vassalage to herself, and has thus stolen the hearts of subjects from their Sovereigns, and has made Kingdoms to hang upon her lips for the loyalty of their People; and so in her dream of universal Empire she has made the World a fief of Rome.

So strong is the spell with which she still enchains Nations, that even we [in England] who are excommunicated by her, and whose heroic Virgin-Queen was anathematized by her as an Usurper 1 , and whose land is now partitioned out into Papal Dioceses 2 , as if it were a Roman Province, and the names of whose greatest Cities—our Westminsters and our Liverpools—are given away by her as titles as if they were Italian villages, have been fain to seek intercourse with her without requiring a retraction of the unrighteous oaths which she imposes on English subjects, or a revocation of the imprecatory anathemas which she has denounced, and still denounces on English Sovereigns 3 ; and as if it were possible for us to sever what she declares indissolubly united—her temporal and spiritual sway!

(4) Again: The Woman is described as sitting on a scarletcoloured Beast, full of names of Blasphemy (Rev. 17:3).

Has not Rome fulfilled this prophecy? The colour here mentioned is reserved by her to her Pontiff and Cardinals. And how does she designate herself? As Infallible, Indefectible, Eternal. And are not these names of Blasphemy ? Some persons appear to imagine that names of Blasphemy must indicate an infidel power. But this notion is erroneous. “Blasphemy,” in the New Testament, denotes an assumption of what is divine. And the names which Rome claims for herself, are usurpations of the [God’s] incommunicable Name. “When that which is temporal claims Eternity, this,” says St. Jerome, “is a name of blasphemy.” And when she [Rome] withholds the Holy Scripture from her people and she has never printed at Rome a single copy of either Testament in its original language! —and when she bestows honour on those who revile Scripture, calling it “imperfect, ambiguous, a mute Judge, a leaden Rule,” and by other opprobrious names 1 , is she not guilty of Blasphemy against the Divine Author of Scripture? And when, with the Cup of her sorceries in her hand, she takes away the Cup of Blessing in the Lord’s Supper which Christ has commanded to be received by all (John 6:53, Matt. 26:26,27. Mark 14:23); and when she makes men drink of the one, and will not allow them to drink of the other, is not this an act of Blasphemy against the Son of God?

(5) Again: the Harlot in the Apocalypse exercises temporal and spiritual sway. She is enthroned upon many waters, which are Nations and Peoples (Rev. 17:15). She has kings at her feet. She makes them drink of her Cup. She trades in the souls of men (Rev. 18:13). The Beast on which she sits as a Queen, and of which she is the Governing Power, uses the agency of the second Beast, or false Prophet or Teacher, and this false Teacher causeth all, both small and great, to receive his mark, and that no one may buy or sell, save he who has the mark, the name of the Beast, or the number of his name (Rev. 13:16,17).

[This lamb-like creature may be speaking of something other than this]

It is very observable, that this False Prophet or Teacher is said in the Apocalypse to have two horns like the horns of a Lamb (Rev. 13:2). Now the word Lamb is used twenty-nine times in the Apocalypse, and in every one of these places it relates to Christ, the Lamb of God. Hence it is clear, that the False Prophet or Teacher, who is the ally of the Beast on whom the Harlot sits, is not a heathen or infidel power, but makes a profession of Christianity. He comes [like a Lamb] with the specious words of Christian innocence and Love. He is therefore the Minister of some form of Christianity, or Church. Therefore, again, the Harlot is a Church. And the Church of which he is a Minister (as is evident from the passage of the Apocalypse just cited), puts forth a claim to universal temporal and spiritual sway; and this union of civil and religious Supremacy is a very striking characteristic.

Does not this characteristic apply to the Church of Rome,—and to the Church of Rome *alone*? Assuredly it does.

The Church of Room sits as a Queen upon many waters, which are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues (Rev. 17:15). She claims two swords. Lord, behold! here are two swords (Luk. 22:38); one of her Pontiffs has interpreted these words of St. Peter as authorizing her double sway, [temporal and spiritual]. She holds in her hands two keys—the emblems, as she asserts, of her universal power. The Roman Pontiff is twice crowned, once with the Mitre, his symbol of a universal Bishopric, and once with the Tiara, in token of Universal Imperial Supremacy. He wears both diadems. 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 ininterment to the dead, for the sake of revenge, or from the lust of power. It has forbidden to marry—and yet it has licensed the unholiest Marriages 4. It has professed friendship for Kings, and has invoked blessings on Regicides and Usurpers. It claims to be the only dispenser of the Word and Sacraments, and it has transformed the anniversary of the Institution of the Lord’s Supper into a season of malediction 5. It has changed the hill of the Vatican into a spiritual Ebal (Deut. 27:13), from which it has fulmined curses according to its will.

Hence we come to the same conclusion: vix. that the Harlot City is the Church of Rome. Other characteristics may now be noticed.

(6) The Woman in the Apocalypse is said to be seated on a scarlet beast (Rev. 17:3); to be also clad in scarlet and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls (Rev. 17:4); and her merchandise is said to be in gold and silver, and precious stones, and pearls and fine linen, and purple and silk, and scarlet (Rev. 18:12); and after her destruction they who weep over her cry, Alas! alas! the Great City, which was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls (Rev. 18:16)

This description of the Woman's vesture is so definite, and is repeated with such emphasis, that it is manifestly intended for the purpose of identification.

Such, let us note, is her *attire*.

Next we find in the Apocalypse that divine honour is given to the Beast on which she sits: They worshipped the Beast, saying (Rev. 13:4), Who is like unto the Beast?

The word here interpreted to worship is one *proskunein* which literally signifies to adore by prostration and by kissing; as described in the divine words, Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth which hath not (1 Kings 19:18) kissed him.

This word *proskunein* ("to bow down") occurs twenty-four times in the Apocalypse. In ten of these instances, it designates Adoration paid to Almighty God: in nine others, it describes the adoration claimed for the Beast and his image; and thus it shows, that he exacts what is due to God, and (as the Angel warns St. John) not due to Angels, but to God alone (Rev. 19:10; 22:9); and this is Blasphemy.

Observe, next, the votaries of the Beast say, Who is like unto the Beast? This is a challenge to God Himself. Lord, says the Psalmist (Ps. 35:10), Who is like unto Thee? and again (Ps. 71:19); 113:5), O God Who is like unto Thee? and Among the gods, there is none like unto Thee, O Lord; there is not one that can do as Thou doest (Ps. 86:8). It is also a parody of the name of the Angel Prince, the conqueror of Satan and his angels, Michael, whose name means Who is as God? Let us remember, too, that this expression, Who is like unto the Beast? the watchword of the worshippers of the Beast, affords a striking contrast to the words emblazoned on the standard of the Maccabees, those courageous soldiers against Antiochus Epiphanes,—Who among the gods is like unto Thee, Jehovah? from which badge [according to some] the Maccabees derived their name.

Recollect, now, that Babylon is a type of Rome; and it is said to the King of Babylon, How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven; I will exalt my Throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the Mount of the congregation; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell (Isa. 14:12-15).

Here, the Mount of the congregation, wherein the King of Babylon sits, is the

Temple of God.

Let it be remembered also that the Woman sitting on the Beast is called the Mother of abominations (Rev. 17:4,5). The word abomination *Bdelugma* specially designates an object of idolatrous Adoration; and the prophecy of Daniel, predicting the pollution of God's Temple by the setting up in it of the abomination of desolation, was fulfilled in the first instance (B.C. 168) by Antiochus Epiphanes, who placed an idol upon the altar of God in the Temple at Jerusalem: or, as the Book of Maccabees expresses it, set up the abomination of desolation on the Altar: thus defiling God's House, and making it desolate; that is, banishing from it God's true worship, and His faithful worshippers.

This prophecy was to have a second fulfilment in Christian times. For our Lord speaks of it as referring to an event still future, [as follows—]

When ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, stand in the **Holy Place**; whoso readeth, let him understand (Matt. 24:15).

This prediction of our Lord had, no doubt, a partial fulfilment when Jerusalem was occupied, and its Temple profaned, by factious assassins professing zeal for God. But it will have another fulfilment in the Christian Sion, or Church. This opinion is confirmed by the prophecy of St. Paul, concerning the Mystery of Iniquity. Then, says the Apostle, shall the Man of sin, or that **Lawless One** *Anomos*, be revealed, the Son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the **TEMPLE of God**, showing himself that he is God (2 Thess. 2:3,4).

The words here rendered, so that he sitteth in the Temple of God *Kathisai eis naon*, are remarkable. *naon*, the word rendered Temple, is the holier part of the Temple,—the Sanctuary, where the Altar is; and *Kathisai eis naon* are words involving motion, and signify to be conveyed or to convey himself and take a seat in the Holy Place of the Temple of God, or the Christian Church.

Let us now pause, and review the evidence before us.

The abomination of desolation, as we have seen, was the placing of an **IDOL** upon the **ALTAR** in God's **TEMPLE**; and our Lord speaks of the Abomination of desolation, as still to be expected, and to be manifested in the Holy Place (Matt. 24:15; Mark 13:14); and St. Paul predicted the appearance of a Power, which he calls Mystery, claiming Adoration in the Christian Temple,—taking his seat in the Sanctuary of the Church of God, showing himself that he is God.

Let us also remember that Daniel's word abomination, which describes an object of idolatrous worship, is adopted by the Apocalypse; and that, in like manner, St. Paul's word Mystery is adopted in the Apocalypse; and that both these words are combined in this book, in the name of the Woman, whose attire is described minutely by St. John, and whose name on her forehead is "Mystery (Rev. 17:5,7), Babylon the Great, Mother of abominations of the Earth."

Let us enquire now, — Whether this description is applicable to the Church of Rome? [Is this description applicable to the Church of Rome?]

For an answer to this question, let us refer—not to any private sources—but to the official "Book of Sacred Ceremonies" of the Church of Rome.

This Book, sometimes called "Ceremoniale Romanum," is written in Latin, and was compiled three hundred and forty years ago, by Marcellus, a Roman Catholic Archbishop, and is dedicated to a Pope, Leo X. Let us turn to that portion of this Volume, which describes the first public appearance of the Pope, on his Election to the Pontificate.

We there read the following order of proceeding: "The Pontiff elect is conducted to the Sacrarium, and divested of his ordinary attire, and is clad in the Papal robes." The colour of these is then minutely described. Suffice it to say, that five different articles of dress, in which he is then arrayed, are scarlet. Another vest is specified, and this is covered with pearls. His mitre is then mentioned; and this is adorned with gold and precious stones.

Such, then, is the attire in which the Pope is arrayed, and in which he first appears to the World as Pope. Refer now to the Apocalypse. We have seen that scarlet, pearls, gold, and precious stones are thrice specified by St. John, as characterizing the Mysterious Power portrayed by himself.

But we may not pause here. Turn again to the "Ceremoniale Romanum." The Pontiff elect, arrayed as has been described, is conducted to the Cathedral of Rome, the Basilica, or Church of St. Peter. He is led to the Altar; he first prostrates himself before it, and prays. Thus, he declares the sanctity of the Altar. He kneels at it, and prays before it, as the seat of God.

What a contrast then ensues! We read thus:

"The Pope rises, and, wearing his mitre, is lifted up by the Cardinals, and is placed by them upon the Altar—to sit there. One of the Bishops kneels, and begins the 'Te Deum.' In the meantime the Cardinals kiss the feet and hands and face of the Pope."

Such is the first appearance of the Pope in the face of the Church and the World.

This ceremony has been observed for many centuries; and it was performed at the inauguration of the present Pontiff, Pius IX; and it is commonly called by Roman writers the "Adoration". It is represented on a coin, struck in the Papal mint with the legend, "*Quem creant, adorant*,"—"Whom they create (Pope), they adore."… What a wonderful avowal!

The following language was addressed to Pope Innocent X 1, and may serve as a specimen of the feelings with which the Adoration is performed:—

"Most Holy and Blessed Father, Head of the Church, Ruler of the World, to whom the keys of the Kingdom of heaven are committed, whom the Angels in Heaven Revere, and [whom] the gates of hell fear, and [whom] all the World

adores, we specially venerate, worship, and adore thee, and commit ourselves, and all that belongs to us, to thy paternal and MORE than divine disposal".

What more could be said to Almighty God Himself?

But to return. Observe the nature of this 'ADORATION.' It is performed by kneeling, and kissing the face and hands, and feet. And what is St. John's word, nine times used to describe the homage paid to the Mysterious rival of God? It is *proskunein*, to kneel before and kiss.

Next, observe the place in which this adoration is paid to the Pope. The Temple of God. [The principal Temple at Rome, St. Peter's Church.] Observe the attitude of him who he receives it. He sits. Observe the place on which he sits. The Altar of God.

Such is the inauguration of the Pope. He is placed by the Cardinals on God's Altar. There he sits as on a Throne. The Altar is his footstool; and the Cardinals kneel before him, and kiss the feet which trample on the Altar of the Most High.

Let us now turn to St. John. The Power described by him is Mystery, and is called the mother of Abominations. And the word Abomination in Scripture often means Idols; and, in the prophecies of Scripture, it describes a special form of idolatry. The Abomination of desolation, as we have seen, prefigures the setting up an object of idolatrous adoration on the **ALTAR** in the **TEMPLE** of God.

Such was the Idol set up by Antiochus in the Jewish Temple. And our Lord describes the Abomination of desolation as standing in the Holy Place. And the Apostle St. Paul predicts that the fall of the Roman Empire will be succeeded by the rise of a power which he calls **MYSTERY**, exalting itself above all that is called God, or is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God—or is conveyed to the sanctuary of God, and there placed to sit—showing himself that he is God.

7. The following questions therefore arise here:—

a) Has not the Church of Rome fulfilled the Apocalypse in the eyes of men, has she not proclaimed, and does she not now proclaim, her own identity with the [faithless] Woman in the Apocalypse, at every election of every Pontiff, even by the outward garb of scarlet, gold, precious stones, and pearls, in which she then invests him, and in which she then displays him to Christendom and the world?

b) And has she not fulfilled the Apocalypse, and does she not proclaim her own identity with that [faithless] Woman whose name is Mystery, Mother of Abominations, by publicly commencing every Pontificate with making the Pontiff her own Idol, by lifting him up on the hands of her Cardinals, and by making him sit on God's Altar, and by kneeling before him, and kissing his feet?

c) By her long practice of this form of Abomination, which she calls "Adoration," has she not identified herself with the Apocalyptic power, whose

name is Mystery, and also with the “Mystery of Iniquity,” described by the Apostle St. Paul as enthroned in the Temple of God?

d) By placing her Pontiff to be adored, like the Most High, in God’s presence, on God’s Altar in a Christian Church — in her own principal Church at Rome, St. Peter’s — as Antiochus Epiphanes placed an idol to be adored on God’s Altar in the Temple at Jerusalem, does she not identify [make] the Pope of Rome with the [to be like to the] King of Babylon, whose pride and fall are portrayed by Isaiah, and to the Abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, and by our Blessed Lord Himself?

(8) Let us pause here, and sum up what has been said.

Either the claims of the Church of Rome are just — or they are not.

If they are,— she is infallible, and indefectible. She is the Mother and Mistress of Churches. Her Pontiff is the Universal Pastor; the Centre of Unity; the Father of the Faithful; the Supreme Head, and Spiritual Judge of Christendom, and (as he himself asserts) it is necessary for every one to be in communion with him, and to be in subjection to him. Out of his Communion (he says) there is no salvation.

Now, we hold in our hand the Apocalypse of St. John, the Revelation of Jesus Christ (Rev. 1:1), the Voice of the Spirit to the Churches (Rev. 2:7,11,17, etc.); the prophetic History of the church from the Apostolic age to the Day of Doom.

In it St. John places us at Rome; he points to its Seven Hills (Rev. 17:9): he shows us the City enthroned upon them: he retains us there, while he reveals to us Rome’s future history, even to its total extinction, which he describes (Rev. 18:1-24).

a) If now, [as Rome affirms] Christ has instituted a spiritual supremacy, and an Infallible Authority anywhere, which all men are obliged to acknowledge, and to which all must bow, and with which all must be in communion on pain of everlasting damnation, it may reasonably be supposed, that the Holy Spirit, in revealing the future History of the Church [as He does in the Apocalypse], and in providing guidance and comfort for Christians, under their trials, which He predicts, would not have failed to give some notice of such spiritual supremacy and infallible authority in the Church.

b) If Christ has settled that spiritual Pre-eminence and Supremacy at Rome, it may reasonably be concluded, that the Holy Spirit, when speaking specially and copiously of Rome, and tracing her history [as He does in the Apocalypse, and as Romish divines allow that He does], even to the day when she will be burnt with fire, and her smoke ascend to heaven, — would not have omitted to mention that Pre-eminence and Supremacy supposed to exist at Rome.

c) If the Church of Rome is,— as she herself affirms,— the true Spouse of Christ, the Mother and Mistress of all Churches in Christendom, and if communion with her is necessary to salvation, assuredly the Holy Spirit would have taken great care that no reasonable man should be able to impute to the

Christian Church of Rome what He intended for the Heathen City of Rome. And, since by the Union of the supreme civil authority with the spiritual in the person of the Bishop, who is also the Sovereign of Rome, and by the consequent incorporation of the City of Rome in the Church of Rome, there was great probability of such a confusion – which the Holy Spirit could foresee – He would have guarded against it, and have taken care, that the Character He draws of the Harlot, and the awful description which He gives [in the Apocalypse] of her future doom, could not possibly be applied by any reasonable man to the Church of Rome.

9) Now, what is the fact?

a) Not a word does the Holy Spirit say, in the Apocalypse, of the existence of any Supreme Visible Head or Infallible Authority in the Church.

b) Not a word does He say of the Church of Rome being the Centre of Unity – the Arbitress of Faith – the Mother and Mistress of Churches. Not a word does he speak in her praise. Indeed the advocates of the church of Rome (who all allow that [in the Apocalypse] He speaks largely of the Roman City) say that He does not mention the Roman Church at all!

How unaccountable is all this, if, as they affirm, Christ has instituted such a Supremacy; and if He placed it at Rome!

10) But now let us take the other alternative. Let the claims of the church of Rome be unfounded; then it must be admitted that they are nothing short of blasphemy: for they are claims to Infallibility, Indefectibility, and Universal Dominion, spiritual and temporal, which are Attributes of **Almighty God**.

And now again let us turn to the Apocalypse. What do we find there?

We see there a certain City portrayed – a great City – the great City – the Queen of the Earth when St. John wrote – the City on Seven Hills – the City of *Rome*.

At Rome, then, we are placed by St. John. We stand there by St. John's side. This city is represented by him as a Woman; it is called the Harlot. It is contrasted [by him] with the Woman in the Wilderness, crowned with the Twelve Stars, the future Bride in Heaven, the new Jerusalem; that is, it is contrasted with the faithful Apostolic Church, now sojourning on earth, and to be glorified hereafter in heaven.

The Harlot persecutes with the power of the Dragon; the Bride is persecuted by the Dragon: the Harlot is arrayed in scarlet; the Bride is attired in white: the Harlot sinks to an abyss; the Bride mounts to heaven. The Bride is the faithful Church; the Harlot contrasted with her, is a faithless Church.

The Great City, then, which is [allowed to be Rome, is] called a Harlot, and a Harlot is a faithless Church, therefore that Great City is the Church of Rome.

This Harlot-City is represented as seated upon many waters, which are

Peoples, and Nations, and Tongues. Kings gave their power to her, and commit fornication with her. She vaunts that she is a Queen for ever. She is displayed as claiming a double Supremacy.

Now, look at Rome. She, she alone of all the Cities that are, or ever have been, in the world, asserts universal Supremacy, spiritual and temporal. [She wields two swords.] She wears two Diadems. And she has claimed this double power for more than a thousand years. "Ruler of the World" – "Universal Pastor" – "Father of Kings and Princes" – these are the titles of her Pontiff. She boasts that she is the Catholic Church; that she is "alone, and none beside her" on earth: she affirms that her light will never be dim, her Candlestick never removed. And yet she teaches strange doctrines. She has broken her plighted troth, and forgotten the love of her espousals. She has been untrue to God. She has put on the scarlet robe and gaudy jewels and bold look of a harlot, and gone after other gods. She canonizes men,– [as she did the other day -June 8, 1862], and then worships them. She would make the Apostles untrue to their Lord, and constrain the Blessed Mother of Christ to be a rival of her Divine Son. She adores Angels, and thereby dishonours the Triune God, before Whose glorious Majesty they veil their faces. She deifies the Creature, and thus defies the Creator.

St. John, when he calls us to see the Harlot-City, the seven-hilled City, fixes her name on her forehead – Mystery – to be seen and read by all. And he says, Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy (Rev. 1:3; 17:7).

Her title is Mystery, a secret spell, bearing a semblance of sanctity: a solemn rite which promises bliss to those who are initiated in it: a prodigy inspiring wonder and awe into the mind of St. John: an intricate enigma requiring for its solution the aid of the Spirit of God.

Heathen Rome doing the work of heathenism in persecuting the Church was no Mystery. But a Christian Church, calling herself the Mother of Christendom, and yet drunken with the blood of saints – this is a Mystery. A Christian Church boasting herself to be the Bride, and yet being the Harlot; styling herself Sion, and being Babylon – this is a Mystery. A Mystery indeed it is, that, when she says to all, "Come unto me," the voice from heaven should cry, "Come out of her, My People" (Rev. 18:4). A Mystery indeed it is, that she who boasts herself the city of Saints, should become the habitation of devils; that she who claims to be Infallible should be said to corrupt the earth; that a self-named "Mother of Churches," should be called by the Holy Spirit the "Mother of Abominations"; that she who boasts to be Indefectible, should in one day be destroyed, and that Apostles should rejoice at her fall (Rev. 18:20): that she who holds, as she says, in her hands the Keys of Heaven, should be cast into the lake of fire by Him Who has the Keys of hell (Rev. 1:18). All this, in truth, is a great Mystery.

Eighteen Centuries have passed away, since the Holy Spirit prophesied, by the mouth of St. John, that this Mystery would be revealed in that City which was then the Queen of the Earth, the City on Seven Hills,– the **City of Rome**.

The Mystery was then dark, dark as midnight. Man's eye could not pierce the

gloom. The fulfilment of the prophecy seemed improbable,– almost impossible. Age after age rolled away. By degrees, the mists which hung over it became less thick. The clouds began to break. Some features of the dark Mystery began to appear, dimly at first, then more clearly, like Mountains at daybreak. Then the form of

the Mystery became more and more distinct. The Seven Hills, and the Woman sitting upon them became [more and more] visible. Her voice was heard. Strange sounds of blasphemy were muttered by her. Then they became louder and louder. And the golden chalice in her hand, her scarlet attire, her pearls and jewels glittered [were seen glittering] in the Sun. Kings and Nations were [displayed] prostrate at her feet, and drinking her cup. Saints were slain by her sword, [and she exulted over them]. And now the prophecy became clear, clear as noon-day; and we tremble at the sight, while we read the inscription, emblazoned in large letters, **Mystery, Babylon the Great**, written by the hand of St. John, guided by the Holy Spirit of God, on the forehead of the **Church of Rome**.

In the two preceding Chapters, reasons have now been stated [given] for the conviction [conclusion] stated at the end of the Second Chapter of this Essay, that the prophecies contained in the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, and Nineteenth Chapters of the Revelation of St. John the Divine, and which describe the guilt, and pourtray the punishment, of the mystical ***Babylon***, have been partly accomplished, and are in course of complete accomplishment, in the ***Church of Rome***.

1. Some may allege that such an assertion is uncharitable; that it is inconsistent with the loving Spirit of the Gospel, to arraign a Christian Church, one so distinguished as the Church of Rome for amplitude, dignity, and antiquity; and to brand it with such an ominous name – to characterize it as **Babylon**.

But we may reply to this allegation, by asking, Who wrote the Apocalypse? … The Evangelist St. John. He was a Son of Thunder (Mark 3:17); but he was the beloved Disciple of Christ; he leaned on His bosom at the institution of the Divine Feast of Love. To him the Son of God bequeathed His beloved Mother with almost His last breath, when He was dying on the cross. He was the Apostle of Love. And this divine Boanerges, son of thunder, St. John, fulminded forth God’s judgements in love.

Repent [says Christ, by St. John’s pen in the Apocalypse]; do thy first works; and I will give thee the Morning Star (Rev. 2:28). As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent (Rev. 3:19). Behold, I stand at the door (Rev. 3:20).

Again; let us ask, Who moved St. John to write the Apocalypse? The Holy Spirit of God. If any man hath an ear, let him hear what The Spirit saith unto the Churches (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22).

Assuredly, it is not uncharitable for us to declare, what the Holy Spirit of Peace dictated to the Apostle of Love.

Nay, rather, they, whose office it is to guide and warn others, are guilty of grievous sin; they are chargeable with cruelty to the souls of others, and the blood of those souls is on their heads, and they are doing what in them lies to frustrate St. John's labour of love; they are resisting the Holy Ghost; they are forfeiting the blessings promised in the Apcalypse to all who read and keep the words of this prophecy (Rev. 1:3; 22:7), if they fail to proclaim, what, by the voice of St. John, it has pleased God to reveal.

They are not lovers of peace, or of their own and other men's souls, who build up a wall, and daub it with untempered mortar (Ezek. 13:10); and speak smooth things, and prophesy deceits (Isa. 30:10), and say, Peace, peace, when there is no peace (Jer. 6:14); for it is written, O son of man, if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hand (Ezek. 33:8).

2. We have received the Apocalypse from the hand of St. John, who calls it "the Revelation of "Jesus Christ" (Rev. 1:1), and the voice of "the Spirit to the Churches." Here [in the Apocalypse] we have a positive command from Almighty God not to partake of the sins of Rome, lest we also receive of her plagues (Rev. 18:4). "If any man worship the Beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the Holy Angels, and in the presence of the Lamb (Rev. 14:9,10).

3. Some persons have used this latter text as an argument against the identification of Rome with Babylon. They allege that by such an identification, all, who are or have been in communion with Rome, are consigned to damnation; and that, since for many ages a great part of the Visible Church was in communion with Rome, the Church itself had become reprobate, and Christ's promise of His presence and Spirit to it had failed, if Rome is Babylon. But this is a great mistake. Such persons do not seem to have observed, that many have never had an opportunity of hearing the warnings of the Apocalypse, and that the text (Rev. 14:10), refers to a period after the fall of Babylon, when God's judgement will have been executed on the City and See of Rome, and that it is addressed to those who will not heed the warning given by that awful catastrophe.

We do not hesitate to affirm, that the Church of God has never ceased, and will never cease, to exist. And it has never ceased and will never cease, to be Visible.This is the teaching of Holy Scripture, as expounded by the Primitive Church.

We are not like the Donatists, who imagined that the Catholic Church of Christ might be reduced to a small and obscure Communion.

We also readily acknowledge, that ,for many centuries, a large portion of the Church Catholic was infected by the errors of Rome. But those errors were not the essence of the Church: and it was possible to communicate with the Church of Rome, without communicating in its errors. And we doubt not, that many generations of holy men fell asleep in Christ, who deplored those errors, and did not communicate in them, although they were in communion with the Church

in which those errors arose.

But as years passed by, Rome changed her course. She did not renounce her errors, and she made communion in her errors essential to communion with herself. She enforced her errors as terms of communion; and she excommunicated all, who would not, and could not, receive and profess those errors as articles of Faith.

This she did particularly in the sixteenth century, at the Council of Trent. And thus she became the cause of the worst schism which has ever rent the Church of Christ.

And ever since that time, she has continued to enforce those errors, which she then imposed as truths; and by her recent Act claiming to herself power to make the dogma of the Immaculate Conception to become an article of Faith, she has aggravated her sin in inculcating heresy as if it were Truth, and in tearing the Church by schism, while she charges others with it, and professes to be the centre of Unity.

Thus she has verified the prophecy of the Apocalypse, in which God says, “Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins: (Rev. 18:4). She has still some people of God in her. But she has so identified her sins with herself, that they can hardly remain in her now without being partakers of her sins 1. She has made communion in her sins necessary for communion with herself. They therefore, who hear the voice, must come out of her. And if they come out, she is guilty of the sin of the separation (for there never can be separation without sin), not only by teaching false doctrines, but by enforcing them as terms of communion with herself; and not only by separating herself from the Truth as it is in Christ, but by separating from herself all who desire to cleave stedfastly to Him.

Here, we say, was a new era in the History of the Church. And it is this change in the spiritual polity of the Church of Rome which has placed her in a new attitude with regard to the rest of Christendom; and which calls for more serious attention to the prophecies of the Apocalypse, because it is an evidence of their truth, and because it is also a warning that the time of their full accomplishment is at hand.

Thus, then, we see in the Apocalypse a strong appeal to our Charity. Christian love longs, above all things, for the salvation of souls. It prays and labours that they may escape God’s judgments, and especially that they may be saved from the fearful woes which are denounced by God upon Babylon (Rev. 14:10,11; 19:20). How, therefore, would it rejoice, that these prophecies of the divine Apocalypse were now duly pondered by all members of the Church of Rome! How thankful would it be, that the words of the Apostle [and Evangelist St. John], who was miraculously rescued from the fiery furnace 2 at Rome, to behold and describe these Visions in the Apocalypse, should have power, by God’s grace, to pluck them as brands from the fire! (Zech. 3:2).

Especially too, as years pass on, and as the [God’s] judgements on Rome draw [approach] nearer and nearer, and as, it may be, in the events of our own

day, we [He makes us] feel the tremblings of the earthquake which will engulf her, and behold the flashings forth of the fire which will consume her, true Christian Charity will put on Angels' wings, and will hasten with a Seraph's step; and will be like the heavenly Messengers dispatched by God to Lot in Sodom; and will lay hold on the hands of those who linger, and will urge them forth from the door, and will chide their delay, and will exclaim, –"Arise! What dost thou here? Take all that thou hast, lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of this city" (Gen. 19:12-16).

And what, therefore, shall we say of those, our beloved friends, our brothers and sisters in Christ, who have been nurtured with the same mild of the Gospel at the breast of the same spiritual mother with ourselves; who have breathed the same prayers; knelt before the same altars, and walked with us side by side in the courts of our own Jerusalem; and have been carried away captive – "alas! Willingly captive" – to Babylon?

What shall we say of them? It may be, that we ourselves might have prevented their fall, if we had exhorted them to hear what the Spirit saith by the mouth of St. John. Shall we do nothing for their recovery? Shall we not, even with tears, implore them to listen – not to us, but – to their Everlasting Saviour, their Almighty King and Judge, speaking in the Apocalypse? Shall we not point to the cup of wrath in God's right hand, ready to be poured out upon them? Shall we not say, in the words of the Prophet, – "Arise ye and depart, for this is not your rest; because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction?" (Micah 2:10)

The **Book of Revelation**, thus viewed, as it ought to be, is a divine Warning of the peril and unhappiness of all who are enthralled by Rome. And its prophetic and comminatory uses ought to be pointed out by all Christian Ministers, and to be acknowledged by all Christian congregations. And they, whether Clergy or People [Laity], forfeit a great blessing and incur great danger, who neglect these divinely appointed uses of the Apocalypse, particularly in the present age, when the Church of Rome is employed [busy] with more than her usual activity, in spreading her snares around us, to make us victims of her deceits, prisoners of her power, slaves of her will, and partners of her doom.

But in discharging this duty, the Minister of the Gospel must crave not to be misunderstood.

1) Having a deep sense of the danger of those who dwell in Babylon, he will never venture to affirm that none who have dwelt there can be saved. The Apocalypse itself forbids him. On the very eve of its destruction the voice from heaven says, Come out of her, My People, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plaques (Rev. 18:4). And so, we doubt not, God ever has had, and still has, some people in Babylon.

Many, doubtless, there were in former times in our own land, who had not the blessed privilege which we enjoy of hearing the voice, Come out of her. They had not the warnings of the Gospel: to them it was almost a sealed book. And this, too, is still the case with many in foreign lands. And, since responsibilities vary with privileges, and God judgeth men according to what

they have, and not according to what they have not (Luke 12:48. 2 Cor. 8:12), therefore Christian Love, which hopeth all things (1 Cor. 13:7), will think charitably, and if it speak at all, will not speak harshly of them.

All this we readily allow. But then we must not shrink from asking, What will be the lot of those who hear the voice, Gone out of her (Rev. 18:4), and yet do not obey it? And, still more, what will be the portion of those, — the recent converts, as they are called, and others who follow them, who, — when the voice from heaven says, Come out of her,— go in to Babylon, and dwell there?

2) Again: the Minister of the Gospel, to whose case we have referred, is obliged, for fear of misrepresentation, to say, that he readily acknowledges, and openly professes, that Christianity does not consist in hatred of Rome.

We are not of those, who, in the words of an eminent Writer 2, “consider the Christian Religion not otherwise than as it abhors and reviles Popery, and who value those men most, who do it most furiously.” No; the Gospel is a divine Message of Peace on earth, and good will towards men (Luke 2:14). The banner over us is Love (Cant. 2:4). No one is safe, because his brother is in danger: no man is better, because his neighbour is worse. Our warfare is not with men, but with sins. We love the erring, but not their errors; and we oppose their errors, because we love the erring, and because we desire their salvation, which is perilled by their errors, and because we love the truth, which is able to save their souls.

We know that Error is manifold, but Truth is one: and that, therefore, it is not enough to oppose Error: for one error may be opposed by another error; and the only right opposition to Error is Truth. We know, also, that by God’s mercy there are truths in the Church of Rome as well as errors; and that some, who oppose Rome, may be opposing her truths, and not her errors. But our warfare is against the errors of Rome, and for the maintenance of the truth of Christ. We reject Popery because we profess Christianity. We flee Babylon, because we love Sion. And the aim of our warfare is not to destroy our adversaries, but to save their souls and ours. Therefore in what we have said on this subject, we have endeavoured to follow the precept of the Apostle, Speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15); and if, through human infirmity, any thing has been spoken otherwise, we pray God that it may perish speedily, as though it had never been.

3. It cannot be doubted, that our most eminent Divines have commonly held and taught that the Apocalyptic prophecies concerning Babylon, were designed by the Holy Spirit to describe the Church of Rome. Not only they who flourished at the period of our Reformation, such as Archbishop Cranmer, Bishops Ridley and Jewel, and the Authors of our Homilies, but they also who followed them in the next, the most learned, Age of our Theology, — I mean, the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the seventeenth century,— proclaimed the same doctrine. And it was maintained by those in that learned age, who were most eminent for sober moderation and Christian charity, as well as for profound erudition [learning]. It may suffice to mention the names of Richard Hooker 1 and Bishop Andrewes.

But after them a new generation arose. This was a race of men endued with more zeal than knowledge; devoid, for the most part, of reverence for Authority and antiquity, elated with an overweening [presumptuous] confidence in their own sagacity [confidence in judgment], and idolizing their own imaginations. And having once possessed themselves with a persuasion, that they could not adopt a more effectual mode of assailing what they disliked, than by arraigning it as Popish, they denounced ancient Truths as if they were modern Corruptions, and impugned Apostolic Institutions as if they were Papal Innovations. They involved them all in one sweeping accusation of Antichristian error and Babylonish pollution. Against them they sounded the Trumpets, and on them they would have poured out the Vials, of the Apocalypse.

Such was the use they made of this sacred Book. Now mark the result.

A reaction took place. The indiscriminate violence and wild extravagance of these eager zealots afforded an easy triumph to their Romish antagonists.

Some of their precipitate charges where easily refuted. It was proved, that many things, which they had affirmed to be Antichristian, where really Apostolic, and that many things which they execrated as Popish, and would exterminate as Babylonish, had been authorized by the unanimous consent, and embodied in the universal practice, of the Christian Church.

Let us observe the consequence.

Some of their accusations being thus ignominiously routed, it was inferred by many persons, that the rest of their assertions were no less futile; and because much was shown to be Apostolic, which they had alleged to be Anti-christian, therefore it came to be supposed, that what was Antichristian, might be Apostolic. And so the passionate zeal of the accuser wrought the acquittal of the accused; and some pious and sober-minded men, disgusted by the extravagant folly, and alarmed by the destructive violence, of these furious Religionists, ceased to regard Rome as Babylon; not from any amendment on her part, but only through the presumptuous ignorance and intemperate vehemence of her foes.

What do we thence learn? The necessity of sound reason and of sober caution, as well as of Christian charity, in the investigation of sacred truth. And, in the matter before us, we may rest assured, that however excellent our motives may be, we should in reality be acting as enemies to the cause of Christianity, as piously and wisely vindicated at our own Reformation; and be effective partisans of Romish error and corruption, if we bring a blind accusation of Popery against every thing which displeases ourselves.

This has been signally exemplified in the history of the Interpretation of the Apocalypse.

They who employed it to denounce whatever they disapproved, brought discredit on this Divine Book; and they did much to invalidate its solemn warnings against Roman Superstition, and to deprive the church of its heavenly consolations.

We, therefore, have here a double duty. The Apocalypse is the Voice of God to the Chruch. On the one hand, although it prophecies have been misapplied by some, it is not safe for us to neglect their right application; on the other, we must be on our guard no to strain them beyond their proper limits, lest, by being applied where they are not applicable, they should become inapplicable where they ought to be applied.

4. Another consideration has had much weight even with some members of our own communion, and has rendered them unable to see the Chruch of Rome in the Apocalypse.

It is the following argument, with which we are often encountered, both by Romanists and Protestant Nonconformists. If – they say,– the Church of Rome is the Apocalyptic Babylon, then you yourselves, the Ministers of the Church of England, who derive your Holy Orders from Rome, are infected with the taint of Babylon: your ministerial commission, therefore, is liable to grave suspicions: the validity of your ministrations is questionable; in a word, –by fixing a stigma on Rome, you have branded yourselves.

Such is the objection. But assuredly, the fear of it is as groundless, as the allegation of it is illogical.

We, of the Anglican Priesthood, do not derive our Holy Orders from Rome – but from Christ. He is the only source of all the grace which we dispense in our ministry. And suppose that we admit, that this virtue flows from Him through some who were in communion with the Church of Rome, and that no charitable allowance is to be made for those who held some of her doctrines in a darker age – what then? The channel is not the Source. The human Officer is not the Divine Office. The validity of the commission is not impaired by the unworthiness of those through whom it was conveyed. The Vessels of the Temple of God were holy even at Babylon: and, after they had been on Belshazzar’s table, they were restored to God’s altar (Ezra 1:7). the Scribes and Pharisees, against whom Christ denounced woe, were to be obeyed, because they sat in Moses’ seat (Matt. 23:2), and as far as they taught agreeably to his Law. The Word and ordinances of Christ, preached and administered even by a Judas, were efficacious to salsalvation. The Old Testament is not the less the Word of God because it has come to us by the hands of Jews, who rejected Him of whom Moses and the Prophets did write (John 1:45). And so, the sacred commission, which the ministers of the Church of England have received from Christ, is not in any way impaired by transmission through some who were infected with Romish corruptions; but rather, in this preservation of the sacred deposit even in their hands, and in its conveyance to us, and in its subsequent purification from corrupt admixtures, and in its restoration to its ancient use, we recognize another proof of God’s ever-watchful providence over His Church, and of His mercy to ourselves.

5. We ought, therefore, to be on our guard against two opposite errors. On the one hand, it is alleged by some, that, if Rome be a Church, she cannot be Babylon. On the other hand, it is said by others, that, if Rome be Babylon, she cannot be a Church. Both these conclusions are false. Rome may be a Church, and yet Babylon: and she may be Babylon, and yet a Church. This will appear from considering the case of the Ancient Church of God.

The Israelites in the Wilderness were guilty of abominable idolatry (Acts 7:38,41,43). Yet they are called a Church in Holy Writ (Acts 7:38,41,43). And why? Because they still retained the Law of God and the Priesthood (Cp. Hooker, 3, c. 1&2). So also, Jerusalem – even when it had crucified Christ – is called in Scripture the Holy City (Matt. 27:53). And why? By reason of the truths and graces which she had received from God, and which had not yet been wholly taken away from her.

A distinction, we see, is to be made between what is due to God's goodness on the one side, and to man's depravity on the other.

As far as the divine mercy was concerned, God's Ancient People were a Church; but by reason of their own wickedness, they were even a Synagogue of Satan (Rev. 2:9; 3:9), and, as such, they were finally destroyed.

Hence, their ancient Prophets, looking at God's mercy to Jerusalem, speak of her as Sion, the beloved City (Ps. 87:2): but regarding her iniquities, they call her Sodom, the bloody City (Isa. 1:9,10; 3:9. Ezek. 24:6).

In like manner, by reason of God's goodness to her, Rome received at the beginning His Word and Sacraments, and through His long-suffering they are not yet utterly taken away from her: and by virtue of the remnants of divine truth and grace, which are yet spared to her, she is still a Church. But she has miserably marred and corrupted the gifts of God. She has been favoured by Him like Jerusalem, and like Jerusalem she has rebelled against Him. He would have healed her, but she is not healed (Jer. 2:9). And, therefore, though on the one hand, by His love, she was, and has not yet wholly ceased to be, a Christian Sion – on the other hand, through her own sins she is an Anti-christian Babylon.

6. Having now specified certain causes of a particular kind, which have partially interfered with the right application of these Apocalyptic prophecies, we should not be dealing candidly, if we did not advert to one, of a different nature, which has operated in a manner very unfavourable to the true Exposition of the Apocalypse.

This was the intimate connexion of some of our own Princes, especially three of the Stuart race, with Papal Courts. One of these three Sovereigns was wedded to a Princess of the Romish persuasion; the second was brought up under Romish influence; and the third was himself a Romanist, and endeavoured to establish the Romish Religion in this land. This civil connexion of England with Papal Courts exercised a pernicious influence on our own Theological Literature. Those writers were supposed to be ill-affected to the reigning Powers, and disloyal to the Throne, who identified Rome with Babylon, and pointed to the evils which Scripture reveals as the consequences of communion with her. They were discouraged or silenced: and so the true interpretation of the Apocalypse was for some time in peril of being suppressed.

This may be a warning, that civil connections with Rome are not unattended with religious dangers….Let us pass to another topic.

7. Many admirable works have been composed by our own Divines, in Vindication of the Church of England from the charge of Schism, preferred against her by Romish Controversialists, on the ground of her conduct at the Reformation, when she cleared herself from Romish errors, novelties, and corruption.

It has been shown in those Vindications, that it is the bounden duty of all Churches to avoid strife, and to seek peace, and ensue it (Ps. 34:14; 1 Pet. 3:2). But it was also demonstrated, no less clearly, that Unity in error is not true Unity, but is rather to be called a Conspiracy against the God of Unity and Truth.

Doubtless there is a Unity, when every thing in Nature is wrapped in the gloom of Night, and bound with the chains of Sleep. Doubtless there is a Unity, when the Earth is congealed by frost, and mantled in a robe of snow. Doubtless there is a Unity, when the human voice is still, the hand motionless, the breath suspended, and the human frame is locked in the iron grasp of Death. And doubtless there is a Unity, when men surrender their Reason, and sacrifice their Liberty, and stifle their Conscience, and seal up Scripture, and deliver themselves captives, bound hand and foot, to the dominion of the Church of Rome. But this is not the Unity of vigilance and light; it is the Unity of sleep and gloom. It is not the Unity of warmth and life; it is the Unity of cold and death. It is not true Unity, for it is not Unity in the Truth.

Therefore, since it has been proved by Appeals to Reason, to Scripture, and to Antiquity, that the Church of Rome has built hay and stubble on the one foundation laid by Christ (1 Cor. 3:12); that she has added to the faith many errors and corruptions which mar and vitiate [impair] it; and since, as the Holy Spirit teaches us in the Apocalypse, it is the duty of every Church, which has fallen into error, to repent (Rev. 3:3); and since Jesus Christ Himself, our Great High Priest – Who walketh in the midst of the Golden Candlesticks – declares, that when a Church has left her first love, He will remove her Candlestick out of its place except she repent (Rev. 2:5), and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die (Rev. 3:2); and since the corruptions of one Church afford no palliation or excuse for those of another; for, as the Prophet says, though Israel play the harlot, let not Judah sin (Hos. 4:15); and as Christ Himself teaches, though the church of Sardis be dead (Rev. 3:1), and Laodicea be neither hot or cold (Rev. 3:15), yet their sister Ephesus must remember whence she has fallen, and do her first works (Rev. 2:5), and Pergamos must repent, or He will come quickly, and fight against her with the sword of His mouth (Rev. 2:16) – therefore, we say, it was justly concluded by our Divines, that no desire of Unity on our part, nor reluctance on the part of Rome to cast off her errors, could exempt England from the duty of Reformation; and if Rome, instead of removing her corruptions, refused to communicate with England, unless England consented to communicate with Rome in those corruptions, then no love of Unity could justify England in compliance with this requisition of Rome; for Unity in error is not Christian Unity; but, by imposing the necessity of erring as a term of Union, Rome became guilty of a breach of Unity; and so the sin of Schism lies at her door.

This has been clearly demonstrated by our best English Divines; and a careful

study of this proof is rendered requisite by the circumstances of these times.

But there are many persons who have not the opportunity of perusing their works; and they who have, will not forget that those works are the works of men.

8) Let all therefore remember, that there is another Work on this important subject; a Work not dedicated by man, but by the Holy Spirit; a Work, accessible to all,—the **Apocalypse of St. John**.

The Holy Spirit, foreseeing, no doubt, that the Church of Rome would adulterate the truth by many "gross and grievous abominations — to use the words of the judicious Hooker; and that she would anathematize all who would not communicate with her, and denounce them as cut off from the body of Christ and from 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 practicing on their affections, and by accommodating herself, with dexterous pliancy, to their weaknesses, 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 (Rev. 16:19; 18:5): 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 these dangerous, widespread 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 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 the hand; He has lifted the mast from her face; and with His Divine finger He has written her true character

in large letters, and has planted her title on her forehead, to be seen and read by all, – "**Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of the Abominations of the Earth**" (Rev. 17:5).

Thus the Almighty and All-wise God Himself has vouchsafed to be the Arbiter between Babylon and Sion, between the Harlot and the Bride, between Rome and the Church. And therefore, with the Apocalypse in our hands, we need not fear the anathemas which Rome now hurls against us. The Thunders of the Roman Pontiff are not so powerful and dreadful as the Thunders of St. John, the divine Boanerges ["Son of Thunder"] of Patmos, which are winged by the Spirit of God.

What is it to us, if the Pope of Rome declares Ye cannot be saved, unless ye bow to me, when the Holy Ghost says by St. John, Come out of her, My People, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plaques?

Here then we have a divine Vindication of the Church of England, and of her Reformation; and our appeal is, in this great question between us and Rome, not to Bishop Jewel and Hooker, not to Bishop Andrewes and Archbishop Bramhall, admirable [excellent] as their writings are, but it is to [St. John] the beloved disciple of Christ, and to the Holy Spirit of God.

9) Some persons, impelled by charitable motives, which are entitled to respect, have cherished a hope that a Union might one day be possible between the Churches of England and Rome: and some, it is to be feared, have been betrayed into suppressions and compromises of the truth, with a view to that result.

It is indeed greatly to be wished, that, if it so pleased God, all Churches might be united in the truth. It may, also, be reasonably expected, that, as the time of her doom draws near, many members of the Church of Rome may be awakened from their slumber,– that they may be excited by God's grace to examine their own position, and to contrast the present tenets of Rome with the doctrines of Christ and His Apostles. Thus they may be enabled to purify the truth which they retain from the dross of corruption with which it is adulterated; thus they may be empowered by God's grace to emancipate themselves from her thraldom into the glorious liberty of the children of God (Rom. 8:21).

Our own duty it is, to do all in our power to accelerate this blessed work. But let us be sure that it will be impeded by all who disguise the truth. It will be retarded by all who connive at, flatter, or extenuate guilt. It can only be furthered by uncompromising, though not uncharitable, statements of the sin and danger of communicating in the errors and corruptions of Rome.

And, of all the instruments which it has pleased God to give us for this holy labour of religious Restoration, none assuredly is so effectual as the language of the Holy Spirit in the Apocalypse of St. John.

His divine Voice forbids us to look for Union with the Church of Rome. We cannot unite with her as she is now; and it forbids us to expect that Rome will be other than she is. It reveals the awful fact that Babylon will be

Babylon to the end. It displays her ruin. It says that death, mourning, and famine, are her destiny: and that she will be burnt with fire (Rev. 17:16). It shows us the smoke of her burning (Rev. 18:9); and we look upon that sad spectacle from afar with such feelings of amazement and awe as filled the heart of the Patriarch, when he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain; and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace (Gen. 19:28).

These things were written for our learning.

Let none imagine that Rome is changed: that, although she was once proud and cruel, she is now humble and gentle; and that we have nothing to fear from her. This is not the doctrine of St. John. It is not the language of the Holy Ghost. The Apocalypse teaches us that she is unchanged and unchangeable. It warns us, that if she regains her sway, she will persecute with the same fury as before. She will break forth with all the violence of suppressed rage. She will again be drunken with the blood of the Saints (Rev. 17:6). Let us be sure of this; and let us take heed accordingly. We have need to do so; more need, perhaps, than some of us suppose. The warning is from God: He that hath ears to hear, let him hear (Mt. 11:15., Rev. 2:7; 2;17,29).

10. Again: from the Apocalypse we learn that Rome will be visited with plagues, like Egypt, but that, like the Sovereign of Egypt, she will not repent; her empire will be darkened (Rev. 16:10), and her citizens will gnaw their tongues for pain. But she will not repent of her deeds (Rev. 16:9,11). She will be Babylon to the end. And God forbid that Britain should be joined with Babylon!

Here then is a warning to us as a Nation. Let us pause before, with a view to peace, we sacrifice truth. Let us not incur God’s malediction, by doing evil that good may come (Rom. 3:8). Let us repent of the sins we have already committed, in this respect. Let us not treat the Roman Babylon as if it were Sion, lest God should treat the English Sion as if it were Babylon.

11) Many there are among us, who seem to find pleasure in forgetting the spiritual blessings, which the members of the church of England enjoy, and to take pleasure in exposing and exaggerating personal defects in her Rulers; and some there are who speak of the Church of Rome as the Catholic Church, the Roman See as a Centre of Unity, and would bring all men under the sway of the Roman Pontiff.

Let them look at the Churches of Asia as represented in the earlier chapters of the Apocalypse. They are Seven, and by their Sevenfold unity they represent the Universal Church, made up of particular Churches: and what is said by Christ to them, is not to be understood as said to them exclusively, but as addressed to every Church in Christendom. The language of St. John, to each of them is, “Hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches” (Rev. 2:7,11,17,29; 3:6,13,22).

Were the seven Churches of Asia subject to the Bishop of Rome? No. Was any one of them so subject? Not one. They were all governed by St. John, and one like the Son of man walked in the midst of the Candlesticks, and ordered St.

John to write to the Angel of each Church. That is, every Church in Christendom is governed by Christ: and it is instructed by Him, not through the Bishop of Rome, but through its own Bishops; and all, —Bishops, Clergy, and People, — are responsible to Christ.

The Seven Churches of Asia are now no more. Their candlesticks have been removed. Here is a solemn warning to the church of Rome — — "Remember whence thou art fallen; repent, and do they first works or I will remove thy Candlestick out of its place (Rev. 2:5). [Cease to boast Universal Dominion]: cease to boast that the Roman See is the Rock of the Church. Behold the true Catholic and Apostolic Church displayed by St. John. She does not wear the Papal tiara, but is crowned with twelve stars (Rev. 12:1): she does not sit upon the seven hills, but she has twelve foundations, and in them are the names of the twelve Apostles of the Lamb.

If, therefore, any of the members of the Church of England should feel shaken in their allegiance to her, or be fascinated by the claims of Rome, they will find divine guidance and warning in the Apocalypse.

We may thank God, and we can never thank Him enough, that the church of England does not impose any unscriptural terms of communion; that she holds in her hands the Scriptures pure and entire; that she administers the Sacraments fully and freely by an Apostolic Priesthood; that she keeps the Catholic Faith as embodied in the Tree Creeds, and possesses a Liturgy such as Angels might love to use. But we do not say that the Church of England is perfect. No: there are tares mixed with the wheat here, and in every part of the visible Church. We are on earth, and not in heaven; and we are subject to the infirmities of earth. In this world we dwell in Mesech, and have our habitation in the tents of Kedar (Ps. 120:5). On earth, the true Church of Christ is not, and never will be, in a state of peace and happiness. No: she is the Woman persecuted by the Dragon, and driven by him into the Wilderness, subject to manifold persecutions, offences, distresses, and trials, from within and without. But the church in the wilderness brings forth a man child, who has power to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and is caught up to God, and His throne. Such will be the lot of the remnant of her seed who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ (see Rev. 12:5-17). Such is the character of the true Church; and so now the Church of England, distracted as she is by divisions within, and beleaguered by foes without, and persecuted by the powers of Evil, and, like Eve, bringing forth children in sorrow, and in travail with them till Christ be formed in their hearts (Gen. 3:16), Gal. 4:19), has never failed to bring forth masculine spirits, who have been endued with power by Christ to break the earthen vessels of godless theories with the iron rod of God's Word (Ps. 2:9); and they have been caught up to Christ in a glorious apotheosis. And if we are true to Christ, if we are of the holy see, and keep God's commandments, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ, in this wilderness of doubt and danger, even Persecution itself will give us wings for heaven.

And, that we may not be perplexed by the lukewarmness of many who profess the truth, or exasperated by the tyranny of evil men, and so, in a fit of weak and irritable impatience, fall into schism, — let us observe the Apocalyptic Churches. Though under the government of St. John and of Apostolic Bishops,

not one of them is free from blemish. Christ does not find their works perfect (Rev. 3:2). He notes their errors in doctrine, and reproves their defects in discipline (Rev. 2:5,10,16,20; 3:2). And what follows? Does He advise their members to quit them? Does He exhort them to pass from Ephesus or Sardis to Rome, and to look for peace and perfection there? No: He commands them to repent, to watch, to strengthen the things that remain, to abide in the truth, to be faithful unto death. This is His exhortation to us. Hold fast the truth. In patience possess ye your souls (Luke 21:19). Edify the Church of England by longsuffering, meekness, zeal, faithfulness, holiness, and love. Pray for her, labour for her: be thankful for the privileges, the inestimable privileges, which you enjoy in her communion. Use them aright; and you will save yourself and others (1 Tim. 4:16).

But let us now remark, that the Apostle St. John, as we have seen, having before his eyes many Churches requiring reformation, Churches of his own age and under his own jurisdiction, yet says little to them in comparison with what he says of the future condition of another Church, the Church of the City on the Seven Hills, – the Church of the imperial City, – the Church of Rome.

He contrasts her, in her corrupt state, with the Woman in the wilderness, – who will hereafter be the Bride in heaven; that is, he contrasts her with the Church militant on earth, who will hereafter be the Church triumphant and glorified. And he calls her the harlot. He contrasts her with the new Jerusalem, or spiritual Sion, and he calls her Babylon. He reveals her history, even to her fall.

And wherefore does he speak so largely of her? Because, being inspired by the Holy Ghost, he foreknew what she would become. He foresaw how imposing her claims would be; how extensive her sway; how powerful her influence; how dangerous her corruptions; how deadly her errors; and how awful would be her end.

There fore he uplifts the veil which hung before the future, and he displays her in her true colours. He writes her name on her forehead, – Mystery, Babylon the Great. He does this in love, and in desire for our salvation. He does it, in order that no one may be deceived by her; that no one may regard her as the Bride, since Christ condemns her as the Harlot; and that none should dwell in her as Sion, since God will destroy her as Babylon.

12) The Church of Rome holds in her hand the Apocalypse – “the Revelation of Jesus Christ. She acknowledges it to be divine 1. Wonderful to say, she founds her claims on those very grounds which identify her with the faithless Church, – the Apocalyptic Babylon. As follows:

a) The church of Rome boasts of Universality. And the Harlot is seated on many waters, which are Nations, and Peoples, and Tongues.

b) The Church of Rome arrogates Indefectibility. And the Harlot says that she is a Queen for ever.

c) The Church of Rome vaunts temporal felicity, and claims supremacy over

all. And the harlot has kings at her feet.

d) The church of Rome prides herself on working miracles. And the minister of the Harlot makes fire to descend from heaven (Rev. 13:13).

e) 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; they very claims which she makes to be Sion, confirm the proof that she is Babylon.

Therefore, let us not be weak in the faith; let us not be confounded by the wide extent, the temporal prosperity, the alleged Unity and Universality, and the long impunity, of Rome. It was prophesied by St. John that she would have a wide and enduring sway; that God, in His long-suffering to her, would give her time to repent, if haply she would repent; that He would heal her, if she would be healed; but that, alas! She would not repent, and that her sins would at length ascend to heaven, and that she would come in remembrance before God. And when that awful hour shall arrive, then, woe to the Preachers of the Gospel, if they have not taken up the warning of St. John, and sounded the trumpet of alarm in the ears of their hearers, Come out of her, my people, and be not partakers of her sins, lest ye receive also of her plaques (Rev. 18:4).

13) Lastly, another caution is here given by St. John. Some, at the present critical time, may be in danger of being deluded by the confident language and bearing of Rome. They may imagine, that a cause pursued with such sanguine reliance, and with such outward appearance of success, must be good. But let us remember the parallel — — **Babylon**. Its streets echoed with music; its halls resounded with mirth and revelry; its king's guards were intoxicated at the gates of the city and at the very doors of the palace, and the vessels of God were on the tables at the royal banquet, when the fingers of a man's hand came forth from the wall, — and Babylon fell!

So Rome will be most infatuated, when most in peril. She will exult with joy, and be flushed with hope, and be elated with triumph, when the judgments of God are ready to fall upon her. Her Princes and her Prelates will vaunt [boast of] her power, and will, as at this hour, be making new aggressions, and be putting forth new doctrines, and be entranced in a dream of security, when her doom is nigh. And, as the great River, the river Euphrates, the glory and bulwark of Babylon, became a road for Cyrus and his victorious army, when he besieged and took the city, so the swelling stream of Rome's Supremacy, which has now flowed on so proudly for so many centuries, and has served for her aggrandizement, will be in God's hands the means and occasion of her destruction and final desolation; and so the drying up of that spiritual Euphrates will prepare a Way for the Kings of the East — that is, for **Jesus Christ**, and for the Children of Light, who are His faithful soldiers and servants, and who will be admitted to share in the royal splendour of the Mighty Conqueror, the King of Glory, Who is the Dayspring from on high, — the Light of the World, — the sun of Righteousness, with

healing in his wings (Luke 1:78; John 8:12; Mal. 4:2).

May we be of that blessed company, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

On Sunday, April 28, 1850, the following words were spoken in a Sermon preached in Westminster Abbey. The reason for which attention is now drawn to them may be inferred from the paragraph with which they close.

“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 Seven Stars are the Angels of the Seven Churches, and the Seven Candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven Churches (Rev. 1:20).

“The second Mystery is explained also. I will tell thee the Mystery of the Woman. The Beast that carrieth her, which hath Seven Heads, is described, and The Seven Heads are expounded to be Seven Mountains on which the Woman sitteth (Rev. 17:7,9).

“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 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 second Mystery represents the particular Church of Rome, holding the cup of her false doctrines in her hand, and making all nations to dring thereof. And the voice from heaven cries, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

“The first Mystery is a ‘Mystery of Godliness’.

“The second is a ‘Mystery of Iniquity’.

“Such is the interpretation of the two Mysteries of the Apocalypse.

“If any Minister or Member of the Church of Rome 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; 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.”

This appeal was reiterated, in Westminster Abbey, on Sunday, Feb. 16, 1851. As far as the writer is aware, no reply has as yet been made to it by any member of the Church of Rome. It is therefore repeated here.

THE END

Since the first publication of the foregoing Essay some important events have taken place, which have tended to confirm the conclusion to which the above enquiry has led.

The first of these occurred on Friday, December 8th, 1854. On that day, the Bishop of Rome, in the presence of a vast multitude gathered together in St. Peter's Church in that city from all parts of the world, affirmed it to be an Article of the faith, and necessary to be believed by all, that the Blessed Virgin Mary is exempt from original sin; and he solemnly asserted, that all who contravene this dogma "are guilty of heresy, and have incurred the wrath of Almighty God, and of His blessed Apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul".

By this act the Bishop of Rome assumed to himself a divine attribute. He claimed the power of adding to the "faith once for all delivered to the Saints" (Jude iii.) He arrogated the right of making a new revelation. He also did outrage to the unique sinlessness of Christ. He affirmed that a human creature, the blessed Virgin – and not her Divine Son Who was conceived by the operation of the Holy Ghost – is the source and well-spring of purity and holiness to our fallen Nature. He obscured the doctrine of the Incarnation of the Son of God. He condemned the Apostles and Apostolic Churches, and anathematized eighteen centuries of Christians, who did not acknowledge this doctrine, but either indirectly or explicitly censured and rejected it.

Thus the Church of Rome corroborated the arguments already adduced, that she is the faithless Woman of the Apocalypse, who holds in her hands a golden chalice of false doctrine, and makes all men, as far as she is able, to drink of it.

The second event, which has confirmed the same conclusion, took place in Rome in the same Chruch on Monday, the 18th July, 1870.

On that day, amid a terrible storm of thunder and lightening, the Bishop of Rome in a Council of the Roman Church, the Vatican Council (erroneously called (Ecumenical) proclaimed in a solemn decree that he himself, and every Bishop of Rome in succession, is Infallible, whenever he speaks "ex cathedra" on matters of faith and morals; and that all their decisions in such matters are unerring; and that all persons, who presume to contravene this dogma, are under an anathema or malediction from God.

Here again the Church of Rome fulfilled the prophecies of the Apocalypse. Rome is the city on seven hills which is presented to our view in that book. Rome is the City which is there described as "reigning over the Kings of the Earth" at the time when St. John wrote. The City of Rome is the subject of his prophecies in the Apocalypse. This is confessed by Roman Catholic divines

themselves.

And now in the greatest Church of that City on seven hills, which reigned over the Kings of the Earth when St. John wrote the Apocalypse, and concerning which he delivered a full and a solemn prophecy in that book which all men are exhorted by the Holy Spirit to read and observe (Rev. i. 3; xxii. 7) – two great religious assemblies have been held, in which the Roman Pontiff has assumed to himself prerogatives of God, and has pronounced an imprecation upon all who dispute his claim to them.

By these acts the Church of Rome has added new force to the evidence which has been submitted to the reader's consideration in the foregoing pages, and has riveted the proof, that she is the Babylon of the Apocalypse.

There are two events recorded in the Book of Daniel, of which the Apocalypse is the sequel and completion, concerning the literal, or Assyrian, Babylon, which are like foreshadowing of the two events which have just been noticed in the history of the mystical Babylon, the Church of Rome; and which ,when compared with these two recent events, shed fresh light on the question, why the Church of Rome is called in the Apocalypse by the name of Babylon.

The first of those two events in the history of the literal Babylon, was the setting up of the golden image by Nebuchadnezzar to be worshipped by all on pain of death. This was an act of self-deification on his part; and it may be compared to the recent act of the Roman Pontiff, the sovereign of the mystical Babylon, commanding that he himself should be acknowledged, on pain of eternal damnation, to have the divine attribute of Infallibility.

The other great event in the history of the literal Babylon was the banquet of Belshazzar. That festival was celebrated on a religious Anniversary. Then it was that the King of Babylon and his nobles worshipped the work of their own hands, and profaned the sacred vessels of the Lord; and in the hour of their idolatrous and sacrilegious revelry, God's decree went forth against them in the handwriting on the wall of the palace, and Babylon fell into the hands of the Medes and Persians.

Is there not a parallel to this event also in the recent history of the mystical Babylon, the Church of Rome?

The Festival of the Immaculate Conception was a great religious Anniversary; it was celebrated by the Church of Rome in honour of an object of worship which she had made for herself, and at that festival she outraged the Majesty of the Most High. That festival has now become the signal for the execution of God's judgments upon her, and of the transfer of her Temporal Power into other hands: as the power of the literal Babylon was transferred at the religious festival to the hands of the Medes and Persians.

Observe what was prophesied in the Apocalypse on this subject.

It was there foretold, that the mystical Babylon would be punished for her sins (Rev.xviii. 4,5). It was also prophesied there that (as the literal Babylon was punished by the Medes and Persians, who were formerly subject to

her and who rose up against her, and took the city, according to Daniel's interpretation of the handwriting on the wall) (Dan.v.25-31), so likewise the mystical Babylon would be chastised by God, using the agency of some who had once been her allies and tributaries. It was predicted that some of them would revolt from her, and ""ate her and make her desolate and naked, and tear her flesh" (Rev. xvii. 16); in other words, that they would despoil her of her Temporal Power, and would ravage her dominions, and take from her that carnal Sovereignty in which she trusted.

And what is now the fact? The House of Savoy, which was once the most devoted vassal of the Papacy, and which exercised its power in obedience to the Papacy in the 15th, 16th, and 17th centuries in successive sanguinary persecutions of its own Protestant subjects, the Waldenses, whom it almost exterminated at her bidding, has been raised up by Almighty God against the Papacy in the person of Victor Emmanuel, a Prince of that house, and now King of Italy.

Not by conquests of his own, but by the inscrutable Providence of God, overruling the events of War for his exaltation and aggrandizement, and for the humiliation and overthrow of the Temporal Power of the Papacy, Victor Emmanuel has now become Sovereign of Rome and of all the Papal States.

It is also a remarkable coincidence, that the promulgation of the dogma of the personal Infallibility of the Papacy by the present Pose, in the Council which commenced its sessions on the Festival of the Immaculate Conception, was followed on the next day after that promulgation (July 19, 1870) by the declaration of War on the part of France against Prussia; which has led to the sudden humiliation of France, the protectress of Rome, and to the withdrawal of the French troops from Rome, and to the opening of the gates of Rome to the forces of Victor Emmanuel.

It is also worthy of notice that in the same year, 1870, on the very next day after the Anniversary of the Festival of the Immaculate Conception on which (in 1854) the novel dogma of the Immaculate Conception was promulgated, and on which (in 1869) the Vatican Council met, which has decreed the Pope's Infallibility,—a public document and Manifesto was laid before the Italian Parliament, in which the Government of the King of Italy announced a royal decree, accepting the City and provinces of Rome, transferred to the King by a "plebiscito" of the roman people themselves, and in which it is declared that the Pope's Temporal Power is extinct, and that Rome is no longer to be the Metropolis of the Roman Papacy, but is henceforth to become, in lieu of Florence, the Capital of the Kingdom of Italy.

These coincidences were undesigned; the principal actors in them thought nothing of the Apocalypse.

But they who have that divine book in their hands, and who remember Christ's command to "discern the signs of the times" (Matt.xvi.3. Luke xii. 56), and who consider the blessing which is promised to those who read and meditate upon the Apocalypse (Rev.i.3; xxii.7), will mark these facts, and will observe these coincidences, and will enquire with reverence, whether the prophecies of the Book of Revelation are not now receiving their

accomplishment in Italy and at Rome.

It was foretold, in these prophecies, as has been already noticed, that some who have been tributaries and vassals of the mystical Babylon, will “tear her flesh, and make her desolate and naked, and burn her with fire” (Rev.xvii.16). That prophecy has a spiritual meaning. The mystical Babylon is compared to a faithless woman, and her chastisement is likened to that which was inflicted on Hebrew women for harlotry. They who were once her votaries will tear the flesh of her who once enchanted them with her charms. It is added that they will “burn her with fire” (Lev.xxi. 9); this is also a figurative phrase; and its meaning is that, as, among the Hebrews, unchaste women were burnt, so the mystical Babylon will be punished, and her glory will be consumed for her sins, as with fire.

I do not venture to express a confident opinion, whether the present occupation of Rome by the arms of Victor Emmanuel, and the destruction of the Temporal Power of the Papacy by the People of Italy, including the Romans themselves, and by the Sovereign of Italy at the invitation of the Romans themselves, is a fulfillment of this prophecy; but it seems to be an approach towards it. Time will show. The capture of the literal Babylon by Cyrus was not the total destruction of Babylon, it was the transfer of its sovereignty from the Babylonians to the Medes and Persians.

Many years afterwards, Alexander the Great attempted to make Babylon the Capital of his empire; with what result is well known.

Let us remark another fact in the present condition of the Church of Rome, which appears to be a fulfilment of the prophecies of the Apocalypse.

The Papacy is now using its spiritual weapons against those who are taking possession of its temporalities. It wields against them the thunders of Ex-communication; and it threatens to lay the Kingdom of Italy under an Interdict.

But let the Papacy be reminded, that in former times for six centuries — it used its spiritual weapons in order to deprive others of their temporalities. Pope Gregory VII used them to dethrone the Emperor of Germany, Henry IV; Pope Innocent III used them to dethrone the Emperor Otho and King John of England; Popes Honorius III, Gregory IX, and Innocent IV used them to deprive Frederick II of his dominions. Pope Paul III used them to dethrone our Henry VIII. Pope Pius V (canonized as a Saint) and Gregory XIII used them to depose Queen Elizabeth. Pope Urban VIII used them against our King Charles I. And even at the present day, the Church of Rome eulogizes Pope Gregory VII in her Breviary, whom she has canonized as a Saint, because he “deprived the Emperor Henry IV of his kingdom, and released his subjects from their oaths of allegiance to him.”

We are no advocates of aggression, or apologists of spoliation, but we cannot fail to remark, that is written in the Apocalypse concerning the mystical Babylon, “Her sins have reached unto heaven” (did they not reach to heaven when the Pope proclaimed himself to be Infallible? Did they not then come to a head? And is it surprising that the cup of God’s wrath should now overflow

upon her?), “and God hath remembered her iniquities; reward her, even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double” (Rev.xviii. 5,6). And we cannot but observe the evidence which is now displayed to the world, that God is a righteous Judge, and that He is the moral Governor of the world, and Arbiter of the destinies of nations, and that, after long forbearance, He punishes Churches and Empires in a manner proportioned to their sins; and that the prophecies of the Apocalypse are true.

There are other portions of this prophecy which now claim careful attention.

The Apocalypse predicts that the spiritual dominion of the Papacy will survive the fall of the temporal power of Rome.

In that Book the mystical Babylon falls, but that spiritual Empire, which is personified as the Beast (a term derived from Daniel’s prophecy) (Dan. Vii. 2) on which she sits, is described as remaining after her fall. The fall of the Pope’s temporal power will not be the extinction of the Papacy. On the contrary, it is very probable, that the fall of the temporal power of the Papacy will add fresh strength and confidence to its spiritual domination. The same public document of December 9, 1870 already referred to, in which the Italian Ministry announces the fall of the Pope’s temporal power, and the transfer of the seat of the Government of Italy from Florence to Rome, proposes to give to the Bishop of Rome absolute dominion in all spiritual matters. It revokes what is termed the regale, which was formerly exercised by means of the royal placet and exequatur, without which no Papal Decree could be published. It gives free scope to the exercise of his spiritual despotism, or rather to the despotism of that secret mysterious Power which deifies him, in order to work by him for its own ends. It surrenders to him the nomination to all Italian Bishoprics, which in primitive times were elective by the suffrages of the Clergy of the Dioceses, and have been now for some time in the Patronage of the Crown, by virtue of the Concordat between it and the Papacy.

The Roman Catholic Bishops are vassals of the Pope, being bound to him by a solemn oath “to the Papacy against all men.” Those Bishops have despotic power over the Priesthood; the Priesthood, which is at the mercy of the Episcopate for its daily bread, acts upon the consciences of the Roman Catholic Laity, for the exaltation of the Church of Rome, by means of the Confessional, by refusal of absolution to soldiers if they fight against the Pope, and to civilians if they venture to do what he censures and condemns; and by denial of the Sacraments in sickness and at deathbeds, and by refusal of Christian burial.

Let us also observe that these concessions are made by the Italian Government to the Papacy at a time when by the recent decree of the Vatican Council, which ascribes the divine prerogative of Infallibility to the Bishop of Rome, the spiritual power of the Roman Church has been concentrated in him, and when by virtue of that decree he is regarded by many as “a God upon earth,” whose decrees are to be received and obeyed as divine oracles. Therefore, unless the Priesthood and Laity of Italy arise and recover their rights, especially in the nomination of Bishops, according to ancient practice, the

destruction of the temporal Power of the Papacy will be coincident with its spiritual aggrandizement, and with the subjugation of the Church and Nation of Italy to its despotism. The splendour of the regal diadem will be eclipsed by that of the Papal tiara. In deed, though not in name, the Pope will be King of Italy.

The Apocalypse foretells a remarkable phenomenon, which may soon be manifested, namely that, Powers, which have destroyed the mystical Babylon, will mourn over her (Rev.xviii. 9).

The cause of this seemingly strange anomaly is now beginning to disclose itself. Where Ultramontanism is dominant, there the Papacy will now have acquired new force; but in other places, where Ultramontanism does not prevail, there, as is notorious, the usurpation and corruptions of the Roman Church have given a strong impetus to Infidelity. Infidelity produces Anarchy. Anarchy is impatient of all civil rule, especially of royal power. As long as kings reigned by hereditary right, or where they were allied with the Papacy, and wherever the religion of Rome had some hold over the minds of the people, there the Throne rested (though not very securely) on some religious foundation. But this foundation has almost disappeared. Many European Sovereigns are now nominees of the people. They are made and unmade by popular passion. And the Papacy is no longer confederate with them, but is arrayed against them. Can such Monarchies have any permanence? Is it not probable, that the time will soon come, when some of them may even regret their own act in destroying the temporal power of the Papacy, and, according to the prophecy of the Apocalypse, mourn over the ruins of that mystical Babylon which they themselves have laid low?

Thanks be to God, the Monarchy of England rests as yet on other foundations than these. May it long continue to do so!

There is another prophecy in the Book of Revelation which is a fit subject for solemn mediation at the present time.

It seems to foretell, that after the destruction of its temporal sway, the Papacy will act, if not in alliance with some Infidel powers, yet concurrently with them (Rev.xix. 1-19), and will display a still more direct antagonism to the true Faith, and will thus eventually bring upon itself the wrath and indignation of Christ (Rev. xix. 20), and that when this has been accomplished, then the final struggle of Christianity against open Infidelity will ensue; and then, after that great conflict, the Victory of Christ will be complete, and the General Resurrection and Universal Judgment of quick and dead will take place (Rev. xx. 2-13), and His faithful soldiers and servants will be received into the everlasting glory (Rev. xxi. 1-26; xxii. 1-5) of His heavenly kingdom. Then will be the consummation of all things which is revealed in the last chapters of the Apocalypse….”The Spirit and the Bride say, Come….Amen, so come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. xxii. 17, 20).