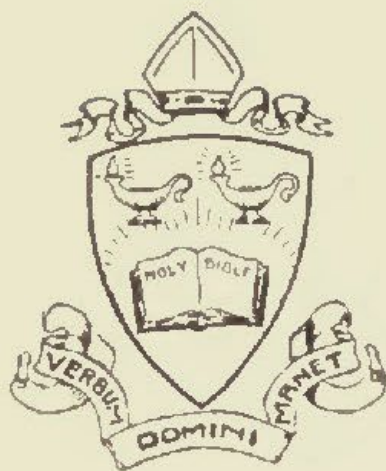


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THE PROPHETIC OUTLOOK TO-DAY

LIGHT FOR THE LAST DAYS

A Study of Chronological Prophecy.

By DR. and MRS. H. GRATTAN
GUINNESS. New Edition. Edited
and Revised by Rev. E. P. CACHE-
MAILLE, M.A. Cloth Boards, 5s. net.

This book indicates many wonderful and suggestive relations between Bible statements and familiar facts.

"It is impossible to read this work without feeling that it propounds a theory which explains a great bulk of prophecy upon a consistent system—upon a system for which a large amount of historical proof can be adduced, and, above all, upon a system which is clear, definite, and precise, without being irreverent."—*Record*.

THE PROPHETIC OUTLOOK TO-DAY

WHERE ARE WE NOW IN PROPHECY?

ESSAYS ON
SECOND ADVENT SUBJECTS

BY THE REV.

E. P. CACHEMAILLE, M.A.

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AUTHOR OF

"PRESENT-DAY PAPERS ON PROPHECY" ETC.

"A light that shineth in a dark place."—II. PET. i. 19

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E-Publisher's Foreword

Dear Reader,

It is with great pleasure that I present this obscure, almost 100 year old title to you. In order to make it easily accessible, fully searchable, and distributable; it is in pdf format. The interactive table of contents works on desktops and laptops, but probably not on phones and kindles. Nonetheless, the page layout/dimensions should provide for easy reading on all your digital devices

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It is my hope that this book will help you the reader, and your friends and family better understand biblical prophecies, and make some sense of this discouragingly hectic day and age in which we find ourselves.

To quote Mr. Cachemaille:

“What is wanted for all is more and more earnest and prayerful study of these prophecies; and more readiness, if need be, to give up our own persuasions, and to lay to heart what God has to teach us; that we may be led by the Holy Spirit into all the truth on this deeply important subject.”

If you, while or after reading this book; are convinced of the identity and your placement in Mystery Babylon, seek the Lord, and He may be found. An excellent resource is the following website: <http://www.bereanbeacon.org/en/>

And if, in short order, we find ourselves witness to the prophesied fall of Babylon the Great, let us not say, wow that author predicted it, but rather let us agree with the same voice that spoke with John: *“And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”* (rev. xix. 10). God Bless.

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FOREWORD

NO serious person, no devout Bible reader, will dispute the importance of the question that forms the title of this volume. At the present time there is, thank God, a wide and deepening impression on Christian people, and indeed not on them alone, that we have entered upon the closing scenes of this dispensation, and that our Lord's return is really drawing near. How long the full development of the terminal events will take is altogether another matter, but that they have actually begun is a widespread and undoubtedly a true belief.

Many therefore are turning to the Word of Prophecy, and are earnestly searching for any indications it may give as to the course of final events. To help such in this praiseworthy effort is the purpose of this volume. It contains four Essays on topics intimately connected with the Second Advent, topics that must be taken into account if a right judgment is to be formed as to what we see happening around us. The four Essays are connected one with another, but each is complete in itself. This has involved some small amount of repetition, which the reader will pardon.

May the apathy and indifference that have in too many instances hitherto prevailed speedily pass away, as God's light shines brighter and brighter on these wonderful prophetic Visions! "It is high time to awake out of sleep; for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Table of Contents

1.

THE SECOND ADVENT: ORDER OF EVENTS.....PG 13

Explain Matthew by Revelation.....	13	Who is Gog?.....	33
Stages in the Settlement of the Lord's Kingdom.....	14	Clues.....	33
"I come as a thief"	14	Gog European.....	34
Final Events.....	15	Gog is the Papacy.....	35
Babylon the Great, the Romish Church.....	16	The Pope's Twofold Character.....	36
The Great Tribulation.....	18	A First Rehearsal.....	36
A Brief Cessation —Why?.....	19	Gog enters the Land.....	37
Babylon Drunken.....	19	Protests.....	37
Distinct from the Jews' Tribulation.....	19	The Invasion.....	38
And from the Work of the Three Unclean Spirits...20		The Decisive Moment.....	38
Not Martyrdom Only.....	20	The Lord Himself Appears.....	39
Rome's Sudden Judgment.....	21	Beast (Gog), Kings, and Armies.....	40
French Law of Separation b/w Church & State.....	22	Birds and Beasts called to the Sacrifice.....	40
Heaven rejoices over her Fall (Rev. xix. 1–4).....	22	Destruction of Beast and False Prophet.....	41
So does the Universal Church.....	23	Surprise at the Result.....	42
Marriage of the Lamb Imminent.....	24	A Great Mourning in the Land.....	42
A Halt on the Journey from Heaven.....	25	Satan Imprisoned.....	43
World-wide Publicity of Second Advent.....	25	The Millennium Opens.....	43
Simultaneous Signs.....	26	The Judgment of the Righteous.....	44
Origin of the "Secret Rapture" Theory.....	26	Martyrs and Confessors.....	45
Ezekiel xxxvi.–xxxix.....	28	The Millennial Reign.....	46
The Land Repeopled.....	28	Physical Changes in the Promised Land.....	47
The People as a Whole to be Gathered Back.....	28	The Watershed and Water Supply.....	47
Revival of their National Life (Ezek. xxxvii. 1–4).....	29	Arabia.....	48
Earthquake and Thundering.....	29	The Land and the Tribe Names.....	49
Baghdad and Jerusalem.....	30	The Holy Oblation.....	50
Reunion of all the Tribes (Ezek. xxxvii. 15–28).....	30	The Mountain of the Lord's House.....	51
The Two Sticks.....	31	The City, Gates, and Suburbs.....	51
The House of David.....	32	The Possession of the Prince.....	51
Gog and the Invasion of Palestine.....	32	Peoples go up to Worship.....	51

Table of Contents

2.

THE ANTICHRIST: WHO? WHEN? WHERE?.....PG 52

A Complex Portrait.....	53	History illuminates these Prophecies.....	63
Meaning of the Name "Antichrist".....	54	War with the Saints.....	64
"Vicar of Christ".....	56	"Denying the Father and the Son".....	65
When was he to appear?.....	56	Object of the Great Apostasy.....	66
After the Break-up of Western Rome.....	57	The Mediatorship of Christ.....	67
The Signs of his Coming.....	58	Antichrist's Character and Teaching.....	68
The Ten Kingdoms.....	59	A Professed Friend, but a Deadly Enemy.....	68
The Great Earthquake and the Tripartition.....	59	The Three Frogs.....	69
The Little Horn.....	60	Why does not everyone see this?.....	70
A Personal Antichrist at the Last.....	60	When the "Let" was removed.....	70
Other Antichrists.....	61	Twofold Character of the Papacy.....	71
The Seventy Weeks.....	61	The Jews and the Messiah.....	73
Antichrist has to do with Christendom.....	62	Tremendous Issues.....	74
A Succession, not only one Individual.....	63	Important for the Clegy.....	75

3.

THE VIAL POURED OUT UPON THE AIR; AND THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS LIKE FROGS.....PG 77

What are these Three Unclean Spirits?.....	79	II. The Spirit of Popery.....	85
All Three from the Same Source.....	80	Allied with Democracy.....	86
Rapid and Widespread Diffusion.....	80	Progress in England.....	86
"Frogs": Agitators.....	81	France the Protectress.....	87
Three Spirits, not one only.....	81	Restores the Pope to Rome.....	87
Historic Sketch.....	82	All the Old Claims repeated.....	88
I. The Spirit of Infidelity.....	82	Antagonistic Missions.....	88
Its Present Workings.....	83	Schemes for Reunion of Christendom.....	89
Our Lord's Testimony ignored.....	84	Romeward Drift.....	89
Effect on Missions.....	84	III. The Spirit of Priestcraft.....	89
The Lord's Day and Marriage.....	84	The Oxford Movement.....	89
Abundant Superstition.....	85	The Tractarian Era.....	90

Tractarian Success.....	91	On the Air.....	104
Tractarian Characteristics.....	91	The Great Earthquake.....	104
The Tractarian Leaders.....	94	The Tripartition.....	105
What are these Spirits working for?.....	95	Babylon Remembered.....	106
Trouble and Distress.....	95	Islands and Mountains Flee.....	107
Physical Force.....	96	Anarchy.....	108
Hatred of England.....	97	The Great Hail.....	108
"I come as a thief".....	97	The Seventh Vial has begun.....	109
Har-Magedon.....	98	Warfare on a Gigantic Scale.....	109
Change of Opinion as to.....	99	Two New Features.....	110
Light has Increased.....	100	The Great Earthquake.....	111
Oxford Tracts and the Antichrist.....	100	A Solemn Warning.....	111
Two Jesuit Expositors.....	101	Conclusion.....	115
The Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 17-21).....	103		

4.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT HARLOT
(REV XVII.).....PG 117

Definitions.....	118	Twofold Character of the Pope.....	132
Purpose of the Vision.....	119	The Popes and their Church.....	133
Secret Spiritual Teaching	119	History of the Beast.....	134
A Wilderness and Waters.....	120	Seven Heads and Mountains.....	135
The Roman Campagna.....	120	Seven Forms of Government.....	136
The Woman and the Beast.....	122	History of the Heads.....	137
An Apostate Church.....	122	The Eighth Head.....	138
A Scarlet coloured Beast.....	123	He is of the Seven.....	139
NoDiadems.....	124	Woman and Beast contemporaneous.....	141
The Woman's Array.....	124	The Ten Horns receive Authority.....	141
The Golden Cup.....	125	The Judgment on the Harlot.....	142
The Woman's Name and Character.....	126	The Process begun.....	143
The Woman Drunken.....	127	Her Sudden Destruction.....	143
St. John wonders.....	130	The Pope remains.....	144
The Mystery of the Woman.....	131		

THE SECOND ADVENT

Order of Events

“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness.” — I Thess. v. 4.

THE SECOND ADVENT

ORDER OF EVENTS

THE nineteenth and twentieth chapters of *Revelation* do not go into much detail as to the great events they foreshow; that is done in many another Scripture, which should be ranged alongside to complete the description. But these chapters settle the order and succession of the events themselves; they arrange in their proper rank the details of the Second Advent of our Lord. We are not told how long these several events will take in their accomplishment, but nothing is cancelled, nothing is altered or displaced, of what has already been revealed; and the order and succession being here definitely laid down, no interpretation may disarrange or omit any of them. These prophetic Visions and their time-measures are indeed being unsealed in this time of the end. We have but to compare with what is now being made so clear the explanations in even comparatively recent Commentaries, to see how vague and indefinite they mostly are, and how much clearer all this has become of late.

But every effort is made by the adversary to divert attention from the plain meaning of these prophecies, or to popularise wrong and mistaken interpretations, or at any rate to keep people indifferent about the whole subject.

Explain Matthew by Revelation

Many persons, reading without careful attention, seem to think that directly our Lord appears everything final happens, and the eternal state forthwith begins. That is very far from being the case, as these Revelation Visions show. Moreover, the earlier and more obscure prophecies in

the New Testament are to be arranged and made plain by these in the latest prophetic book given by the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, to His Church: *“I Jesus have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things for the Churches.”* It is an entire mistake to try to use, *e.g.*, the prophecy of Matt. xxiv. as a key to the *Revelation*. The reverse is the correct process. The *Revelation* itself—the latest, fullest, most systematic and definite of all—is the key to all the rest.

Stages in the Settlement of the Lord’s Kingdom

The full settlement of our Lord’s Kingdom on the earth, even after His glorious appearing, may be—nay, must be—a work of some time. We are not told what interval will elapse between the destruction of His foes by His actual appearing and the firm establishment and organisation of His Kingdom, but for this it is reasonable to allow some space of time. For He comes, not to ascend a vacant throne, nor to reign over a willing and waiting people, but to dispossess a usurper, to overthrow a great rebellion, to right the wrongs of ages, and to introduce order and righteous government in the world. There may then be many stages in the work that follows upon the Advent. Sin still exists. Even at the end of the Millennium enemies arise, and a great conspiracy has to be destroyed.

“I come as a thief”

Under the Sixth Vial (Rev. xvi. 15) the announcement is made, *“Behold, I come as a thief,”* *i.e.* during that war mentioned in the preceding verse. But this seems to refer to the outside world, not to Christ’s true people. They need not be in darkness like the rest. St. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians as to the day of the Lord coming as a thief in the night, goes on to say: *“But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.”* Note that he does not say “that event,” but “that day.” This means a certain period, within which occur the great events of the Sec-

ond Advent. Christ's people will have studied the prophecies, and will have had the promised light on them that will have given the needful warning. They may not know the very day nor the hour, but they will be prepared to recognise the significance of the terminal events, and to expect the Coming of the Lord as being near at hand. In like manner Daniel was prepared by three Visions to expect and to recognise the Second Kingdom when it came, and was therefore able at once to understand and explain the mysterious writing on the wall.

But we must be students of the prophecies. We must learn all we possibly can from the Scriptures about these most wonderful events, so as to know what to look for and to expect; and our expectation of the Coming of the Lord should be based not only on one or two isolated texts, but on an intelligent and comprehensive view of the many predictions, and especially of the orderly Visions. We may not pick out a passage promiscuously, remove it from its context, and explain it as we please. How do we get to it there? Why does it stand just where it does? How does it connect with what precedes and what follows? Only by taking account of such considerations can we hope to get at its right meaning.

Final Events

Laying Vision and History alongside of each other, all the way down the centuries, we have been brought past the Sixth Vial, which foreshows the decay of Turkey, into the era of the Seventh Vial, the last of the series. Here, then, we find ourselves amid final events. What are these? And in what order are they foreshown?

The "*lightnings, voices, and thunders*" of Rev. xvi. 18 represent the terrific warfare now taking place in Europe, and a new and significant feature agreeing with the prophecy is that it has invaded the air, as well as land and sea. Never before has this happened in warfare.

Then follows the Great Revolution, represented in ver. 18 by a mighty earthquake. Is it "great" in the area it affects, or in the hitherto unreached subversiveness of its principles, or in both? See Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24, 25; Luke xxi. 25, 26.

After it has broken out (ver. 19) the Great City is divided into three parts. The “Great City” may be wider than the area of the Ten European Kingdoms, which is what it usually designates in the prophetic Visions, but it does not include Asia, or America, or Africa except the northern parts. The cities of the nations fall; this may mean, fall from their allegiance to Babylon, the Romish Church.

Then Babylon herself is “remembered” for judgment, and is made to feel the fury of the wrath of God for her long-continued misdeeds. This is represented as an episode in the Great Revolution; for the Revolution continues, and develops into a complete levelling of everything in the social fabric. *“Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.”* This looks as though all social bonds were annulled and disappeared, and all existing governing powers were put an end to.

The great French Revolution of 1789 developed into a military dictatorship under Napoleon Bonaparte. Now the Beast (the Papacy) and the False Prophet (the Papal clergy) come to the front. They are in sympathy with the Revolution, and are acknowledged as leaders, for it is they who in the last conflict lead the kings and their armies against Christ and His people (Rev. xix. 19). In each case—that of the French Revolution and that of this great earthquake—the social subversion leads into what is practically a dictatorship.

BABYLON THE GREAT, THE ROMISH CHURCH

Babylon is not the Papacy, but the Romish Church, of which the Pope is ecclesiastical head. The Pope has a twofold personality, represented by the Tiara and the Mitre. He claims to be Vicar of Christ and King of kings, ruler of the world—this is represented by the Tiara. He also claims to be head of the Christian Church, and in that capacity wears the Mitre.

Three marks of identification of Babylon as the Romish Church are given—two of them are world-wide extension, and slaughter of Christ’s saints. The first of these is present and visible throughout the world to-day; the second is past, recorded in history, and it cannot be obliterated.

1. Widespread extension among the people of the world. “*She sitteth upon many waters,*” and “*waters are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.*” She is “*the mother of the harlots...of the earth,*” that is, of the Roman Catholic churches in other lands, which owe their origin to her. Rome’s boasted “Catholicity” is thus one of the marks of her identification (see the *Atlas Hierarchicus*).

With all this extension goes corruption of God’s truth, the propagation of unscriptural teaching. The important matter is to test by God’s Word the doctrines taught and enforced, and it soon appears what kind of “wine” is offered in her cup to the souls of men to drink. Hers is a teaching that leads souls astray.

2. Shedding the blood of Christ’s saints and witnesses on a prodigious scale. This is writ large, in terrible characters of fire and blood, on the pages of History, and it cannot be wiped away.

These are two marks of identification given. It is not either of them alone, but the union of the two in the past history and the present extension of the same Power, that so unmistakably establishes the identification. Travel where you will, you will see her cathedrals and churches in the cities of the world. Read the history of the Christian centuries, and you will see her drenched in the blood of Christ’s witnesses. When at last inquiry is made — and it will be made — “in her was *found* the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that have been slain upon the earth.”

3. There is a third mark of great importance. Babylon in these Visions is connected not only with the Seven Hills, but also with the Ten-Horned diademed condition of the Western Roman Empire; that is, with Mediæval and Modern Europe, which by profession is Christian, not Heathen. Heathen Babylon is on the Seven Hills; Christian Babylon is also on the Ten-Horned Beast.

It is the Ten Horns that get to hate her, and that at last burn her with fire.

These three marks occur *together*, in the same institution, in its history and its present position, and completely establish the identification.

THE GREAT TRIBULATION

In the Sealing Vision of Rev. vii. 2–8, which is part of the Sixth Seal, there had been revealed to St. John the early development of the Antichristian apostasy, that had begun to work even in St. Paul's day. St. John was shown that it is the Lord Himself alone, and not the officiating minister, who marks out and seals and numbers the true members of the Israel of God from among the visible professing body. Then, in the Vision of the Palm-bearers before the Throne, he is made to see by anticipation the ultimate salvation and blessedness of all the aggregated generations of the true Church of Christ.

It is in this connection that the only mention in the New Testament is made of "the Great Tribulation," through which they will have had to pass before reaching everlasting blessedness (Rev. vii. 14–17): *"These are they which come (present tense) out of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb...They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat: ...and God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes."*

What is this Great Tribulation? It refers chiefly to the centuries of Papal domination, during which the blood of Christ's saints has been shed like water, in Europe and in many other parts of the world. The facts are plain in History. The guilt of this terrible slaughter rests upon the Papacy and the Romish Church, and therefore great efforts are made to divert attention from this, which is the real "Great Tribulation," to some other tribulation which is supposed to take effect during a brief period in the last days.

This is to ignore the testimony of History as to the dimensions, duration, and virulence of that great persecution and slaughter of Christ's saints, and of the ferocious warfare of the Papacy against the witnesses of Jesus. This warfare, which had begun years before, was officially declared in the Third Lateran Council, A.D. 1179, and was continued for several centuries down to comparatively recent times, wherever Rome had the power. If she could, she would carry it on now. It betrays a strange lack

of the sense of Historical Proportion and Perspective to divert attention from a tribulation measured by centuries to one that at most is supposed to last forty-two months or three and a half years, at some unknown future date.

A Brief Cessation—Why?

Shortly before the Reformation there was a brief cessation in the slaughter of the witnesses, but only because it was supposed by the Papacy that the “heretics” were at last entirely extirpated. As foretold, the Beast had “*made war with Christ’s witnesses, and had overcome them, and killed them.*” After their vigorous revival at the Reformation, Papal warfare began again, with more ferocity than ever, with sword and flame, Inquisition, Crusades, Jesuits, and massacres. It has been estimated that fifty millions have thus been slain. The result of this Great Tribulation is the Second Company of Martyrs foretold under the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 11). They reappear in Rev. xx. 4, where they are distinguished from the First Company, who were slain, usually by beheading, by Rome Heathen. The Second Company is described not by manner of death, for they suffered in many different ways, but by their protests against the Beast and his teaching.

Babylon Drunken

Babylon, towards the end of her career, is seen by St. John to be “*drunken with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus*” (Rev. xvii. 6). Not “drinking,” for that has been done by her in the past, but “drunken” as its result. Lecky says that the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind.

Distinct from the Jews’ Tribulation

It is scarcely necessary to remark that this Great Tribulation of Rev. vii. 14 is quite distinct from the great tribulation that came upon the Jews at

the time of Jerusalem's destruction and from the Great Tribulation that is to come upon them, in their land, at the time of the end, from the invasion of Gog and his hordes (Dan. xii. 1; Ezek. xxxviii.–xxxix.).

And from the Work of the Three Unclean Spirits

Also the evil influences of the Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs, now at work, may be expected to operate with increased effect as the crisis draws nearer, and to bring about a state of general distress, revolution, and anarchy, which will culminate in the great final war. This also constitutes a tribulation, though it be not the "Great Tribulation" foretold, but only a small portion of it; not so murderous as that one, and lasting but a short time as contrasted with the Papal Tribulation of many centuries. It is the people of God, not the world at large, who come through the Tribulation.

Not Martyrdom Only

But the "Great Tribulation" includes more than this bloodthirsty warfare and persecution. Several suggestive particulars are mentioned, the meaning of which may be understood by noting the allusive contrasts.

Those who come out of the Tribulation have made their robes white by washing them in the blood of the Lamb. It was before their death that these righteous ones had washed their robes, and thus obtained the right to stand before the Throne of God. By contrast, there has been pressed upon the people the constant temptation to place trust in other means than the blood of Christ for washing away sin. False teaching and practice have been forced upon the professing Church during the whole Papal domination of more than twelve centuries.

They have suffered hunger and thirst, sun and heat. That is, no proper spiritual food has been ministered to their hungry souls, and the pow-

ers that be have too often scorched them rather than protected them. All this points also to trial by means of false teaching, of corrupt doctrine, in a position of power, rather than only to persecution or martyrdom, though undoubtedly that is the chief element in the Tribulation.

The whole of these trials together constitute a “Great Tribulation” indeed—great in bloodshedding and every kind of cruel persecution, and great in duration as compared with any other known to history. But great efforts are made to divert attention from this, which is measured by centuries, to some other supposed tribulation occupying a brief space of time.

ROME’S SUDDEN JUDGMENT

A warning voice loud and distinct (Rev. xviii. 4) calls upon God’s people to come out of her before judgment falls, lest they perish with her. The Rapture of the Saints has not yet taken place; some of God’s true saints are still in Babylon, like Lot in Sodom, even to the very eve of her destruction. From this it is plain that Babylon is a professedly Christian Church, for in her some of Christ’s true servants are even then to be found. They would not knowingly have attached themselves to a heathen or an infidel system. They have been deceived by appearances, and have had no opportunity of learning better; but though professedly belonging to Antichristian Rome, they do not partake of her Antichristian spirit. They are, however, in imminent danger of sharing in the coming destruction, if they delay to escape. They are not to wait there for the Rapture, but are to come out forthwith. Nor is their coming out the Rapture, for it is to be their voluntary act, which they would neglect at their peril.

All in a moment God’s judgment is executed on her by revolutionary fire (Rev. xviii. 8, 10): “*Therefore in one day (in one hour) shall her plagues come, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God which judged her.*” A strong angel takes up a stone like a great millstone, and casts it into the sea, saying: “*Thus with a mighty fall shall Babylon, the great city, be cast down, and shall be found no*

more at all.” The doom of Babylon is sudden. The blow itself is instantaneous, overwhelming, and final. While she is saying, “*I sit as a queen, and shall see no sorrow,*” suddenly she is overwhelmed, and destroyed, and disappears for ever.

This is not the Papacy, which still lives on. Nor is it the Roman Catholic religion as a system of beliefs; but it is the Roman Catholic Church as a great public and visible institution. This may be illustrated by the 1905–6 French Law of Separation between Church and State in France, which was itself a heavy blow to the Romish Church in that country.

French Law of Separation between Church and State — 1905–6

This law enacted that the Roman Catholic clergy in France who failed to conform to the requirements of the law should be placed outside the pale of the law. They were to be ejected from their residences and palaces; their churches were to pass to the State, the Departments, or the Communes; their church property would be seized and administered for the poor of the various districts; religious services would be forbidden, and it would be an offence against the law to celebrate Mass, to bury the dead with Roman Catholic rites, to marry, and to baptize. Measures were to be taken against every priest who disobeyed the law, and in the 36,000 parishes of France the Roman Catholic religion would be outwardly suppressed.

This gives an idea of what will happen to Great Babylon, wherever she is established throughout the world. It was a first rehearsal, but only on the scale of one kingdom.

HEAVEN REJOICES OVER HER FALL

(Rev. xix. 1–4)

This is in accordance with Rev. xviii. 20: “*Rejoice over her, thou heaven.*”

There is in heavenly places a mighty outburst of praise and thanksgiving, on the part of the heavenly inhabitants, at the destruction of Babylon the Great which has now taken place, for it is stated in xix. 3 that “*her smoke goeth up...*”

The angelic hosts above, the twenty-four elders round the throne, and the four living creatures, all join in this song of gratitude and joy; for they have known and seen the evil doings of Great Babylon during her long and triumphant career. She had apparently been forgotten, but now at last she is remembered for long-delayed judgment. Heaven has been called upon to rejoice over her destruction, and here is heaven’s response, a double Alleluia. The Harlot is to be exposed and destroyed before the true Bride is taken to her Lord. So heaven rejoices over the destruction of Babylon the Great, the Harlot Church, the parody of the True Church, the Bride of Christ.

It appears, then, that we are to see the destruction of the Romish Church before the Rapture of the Saints (the Marriage of the Lamb) and the Lord’s Return.

Shall we, here upon earth, be aware of this heavenly rejoicing in the realms above? St. John heard it, and in all these Visions he is a representative man. This looks as if those of his faith then alive here below would in some way or other be aware of this outburst of heavenly praise.

SO DOES THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH

(Rev. xix. 5, 6)

Next in order of time the Universal Church also is called upon to raise its *Te Deum* of praise and thanksgiving for the same act of long-delayed judgment (Rev. xviii. 20): “*Rejoice over her...ye saints, and ye apostles, and ye prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her.*” The Universal Church will hear that call to rejoice, and will forthwith obey it. All God’s servants, official and private, great and small, respond with a voice like the rushing of many waters and the roar of mighty thunders.

What an evil must that have been over whose destruction all heaven and the Universal Church are filled with praise! Note the space assigned in these visions to Babylon and the Papacy. How is it that so many Christian people are apathetic about what fills so large a portion of the Prophetic Word? And how is it that some among us are actually wishing and working for reunion with Babylon? What a perilous delusion!

MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB IMMINENT

The Great Harlot having been destroyed, the Marriage of the Lamb is declared to be imminent, and the Lamb's Bride "*hath made herself ready*" for her Bridegroom, who is now known to be near at hand to come to fetch her (Rev. xix. 7, 8). For the Bride was "*not in darkness*"; she had understood from the notable sign that has taken place that her Lord was close at hand.

The Marriage of the Lamb is the gathering of Christ's people to Himself, and the statement that it "*is come*" is to be understood like "*Babylon the Great is fallen*," though the fall had not yet actually taken place. But it was so certain and imminent that it is spoken of in the past tense. So here of the Marriage of the Lamb, before the Bridegroom has yet arrived. Now that the Great Harlot has received her doom, it is known that the Marriage of the Lamb is near at hand.

The Marriage of the Lamb, or Rapture of the Church, or the First Resurrection, is announced as about to take place at this point in the series of Visions (Rev. xix. 11), but it is not symbolised by any special vision. It is an event too brief, too rapid, to be dramatised like the historic episodes; it takes place "in a moment," "in the twinkling of an eye." It could not be represented as taking place in the Roman earth, for the First Resurrection extends all the world over; nor in the symbolic heavens, for it has nothing to do with the governmental sphere; nor in the upper or true heavens above, for "the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven" when He comes to receive His people, and they are caught up to meet Him on His way in the air. In fact, it is not a material event at all, for the bodies

in which we are to rise are spiritual, and the union which is to take place is a spiritual union.

A Halt on the Journey from Heaven

The Rapture takes place before the Lord actually arrives at the earth. The saints meet Him in the air; it is as it were a halt on the journey, a pause in the royal progress of Christ from heaven to earth. The length of the interval between this and His actual arrival at the earth is not mentioned, and speculation is useless.

When a king is coming into a city, the more honourable citizens go forth to meet him, and to accompany him into the city. When our Lord and King draws near to this earth, all His people go forth to meet Him in the air as He approaches with the armies of heaven in His train. These two great companies come from opposite directions — the celestial warriors from heaven downward towards earth; the saints from earth upward towards heaven.

It should be noted that to the Seventh Vial belongs this sublime description of the issuing forth of the Lord from heaven, at His Second Advent.

WORLD-WIDE PUBLICITY OF SECOND ADVENT

The Second Advent, which is described in Rev. xix. 11–16, is consistently referred to in the New Testament as one great event, but having different aspects and consequences for believers and for unbelievers. It has a bright and a dark side, like the Gospel, which is at once a savour of life and a savour of death. Christ comes for blessing and for judgment, but it is one coming, not two.

The signs stated as heralding the Lord's Advent *for His saints* (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17) are: "a shout," "the voice of the archangel," "the trump of God," "a great sound of a trumpet" (Matt. xxiv. 31), "as the lightning is seen from east to west" (*ib.* 27). They are signs for ear and eye all the world over, and

they occur together. Even if one of them could be disposed of by understanding it to be secret, there are the other three making the great event known far and wide.

Simultaneous Signs

Add to this the sudden disappearance of all Christ's true people, called up to Him in the air. There are millions of them, all over the world, of every age and condition of life, in the crowded centers of civilisation and in the distant mission fields of heathendom. All in a moment they every one disappear; perhaps, like Elijah, leaving their earthly garments behind them. What an event to arrest universal attention! How could this possibly be secret?

Matt. xxiv. 30: *"And then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31. And He shall send forth His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."* See also Rev. i. 7. Note that the gathering of the elect is after the statement that all shall see Him coming.

Origin of the "Secret Rapture" Theory

Dr. S. P. Tregelles, who was originally connected with the remarkable religious awakening at Plymouth in 1830-31, says: "I am not aware that there was any definite teaching that there would be a Secret Rapture of the Church at a Secret Coming, until this was given forth as an utterance in Mr. Irving's church from what was there received as being the Voice of the Spirit. But whether anyone ever asserted such a thing or not, it was from that supposed revelation that the modern doctrine and the modern phraseology arose. It came not from Holy Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God."

To the testimony of Dr. Tregelles is added that of Mr. Robert Baxter, the principal actor in the Irving scandals. He was their most notable proph-

et, and for a time one of the most deluded men known in Church History. There is an astounding list of the statements uttered by him, and accepted as truths by the deluded congregations. Prior to the fanatical outbreak in Mr. Irving's church, and before the Plymouth revival, Mr. Irving had publicly taught on the subject what was adopted by Mr. Robert Baxter. In the extravagance of the excitement Mr. Baxter's predictions were greedily accepted by professed believers, and more and more widely afterwards.

Mr. Robert Baxter subsequently repented deeply of his part in the impiety. Humbly confessing his sin, he separated himself wholly from the partisans of the "fables," and published a "Narrative of the Facts." He constantly maintained that the manifestations with which he had been connected were supernatural, but that Satan, not the Holy Spirit, was their author. This explains the features of the movement. It is very notable that the whole movement, including the origin of the "Secret Rapture" idea, belongs to the era when the three unclean and delusive spirits like frogs began to go forth. It would therefore be part of their work.

Such was the birthplace and such the origin of this idea. Set in impiety, the doctrine of the Lord's secret Coming, before the manifestation of the Man of Sin and before the Great Tribulation, was then first openly promulgated in England. It was adopted by the late J. N. Darby, and was caught up far and near, and hailed as enchanted teaching. There has since been much scheming to give the doctrine a reputable origin, scheming by those who did not know the original facts, not being contemporaries of Dr. Tregelles. Also great efforts are made to prove it from Scripture, in the face of the plain statements that have already been referred to. No such direct proof can be found; indirect inferences, but insufficient, are made to do service instead.

It is a disastrous fiction that the Rapture will be before the Tribulation, and that the Lord will take away His people before the Man of Sin is revealed. The saints themselves are those that endure the Tribulation (Rev. vii. 14), so they must be on earth while it is taking place. One obvious effect of the "Secret Rapture" teaching is to divert attention from the

real (Papal) Antichrist of long standing, and from the real Great Tribulation under his reign, to some other personage and to another tribulation supposed to be carried out after the “Secret Rapture.”

EZEKIEL XXXVI.—XXXIX.

When our Lord appears, and His feet stand on the Mount of Olives, He has come to destroy a great expedition under a leader named Gog, who with his hordes has invaded Palestine, for the purpose of exterminating the People of Israel, now settled there as a recognised nation. All this is fully described in Ezek. xxxvi.—xxxix., and at this point it is needful to leave for a time the Visions of *Revelation*, and to study these four chapters of Ezekiel that lead up to the Second Advent.

The Land Repeopled

Ezek. xxxvi. 1–15 is addressed not to the people, but “*to the mountains of Israel*.” All the expressions used are to be understood in their plain, literal meaning. They describe a gradual change of the land from desolation, barrenness, and depopulation, to cultivation, fruitfulness, restoration of the cities, and increase of inhabitants. This is done, not for the worthiness of the people, but to still the reproaches of the enemy.

The immigrants are not any outsiders, but God’s ancient people, “*all the house of Israel*.” There is nothing sudden in this restoration and repopulation. It is gradual, but the settlement is final. However feeble they may seem, and however powerful their foes, the people are never again to be dispossessed.

These changes in the land are now well on their way, though at present interrupted by the warfare now taking place in Palestine.

The People as a Whole to be Gathered Back

From all the countries of their dispersion. Not from one only, as Egypt; nor from two, as Assyria and Babylonia; but from all countries, from all

points of the compass (Ezek. xxxvi. 16–38). They have more than eighteen centuries of banishment and suffering to look back upon and to account for; but they return apparently still under the old covenant. They have not yet nationally recognised Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. This takes place only after His actual appearing. See Zech. xii. 10–13.

Revival of their National Life

(Ezek. xxxvii. 1–14)

This is pictured by the Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones. The revival of their political and national life is quite a different and distinct thing from their repopulation of the land in however great numbers. It is still future. A gathering of people, however many, does not constitute a nation. These dry bones, representing the whole House of Israel, are “*very many*,” but they have no national life and no power of national action. They are politically dead. But they are to stand forth as an organised nation, with representative institutions, an executive, civil administration, and corporate existence, in their own land.

Ezekiel is bid to prophesy over the bones; and during the prophesying, by degrees, not suddenly, they begin to gather together; they recover sinews, flesh, skin, breath, strength, form, beauty and symmetry, life and action; and finally they stand forth an exceeding great army. Here is represented, in successive and distinct stages, the political revival of a nation long ago slain and decayed. Already some steps have been taken, by the formation in 1860 of the Universal Israelite Alliance, and by the meeting of the first Zionist Congress at Basle in 1897. At the Zionist Congress at Vienna in September 1913, it was decided to establish a Jewish University in Jerusalem.

Earthquake and Thundering

While Ezekiel prophesies, there is an earthquake—the familiar Scripture symbol of a revolution—and thundering, and the bones come to-

gether. Is not this the great warfare and earthquake of the Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 18–20)? If so, what more natural and likely than that, as an accompaniment or consequence of that great European convulsion, Israel should regain their independent national existence in their own land? For them the formation into a living nation will be easy; they have all the elements of a national existence ready for immediate use, in far larger proportion than any other people.

Baghdad and Jerusalem

In the year 1917, the British have taken Bagdad, the ancient Turkish capital, and Jerusalem, in both regions wresting large territory from the Turks. The British Government has also promised to favour and to help on the resettlement of the Jews in their own land, a declaration that has aroused extraordinary enthusiasm amongst God's ancient people.

Reunion of all the Tribes

(Ezek. xxxvii. 15–28)

In this revived national life, the people are to be no longer two, but one united nation. All the Twelve Tribes are now in the land, formed into a living nation; but in God's sight they have been two since the schism in the days of Rehoboam, son of Solomon. By the blending of the two sticks in the prophet's hand there is represented a solemn Act of Reunion, by which God makes them once more one united nation. It is the annulling of what took place in the days of Rehoboam, the repeal of what was then decreed by God.

Solomon was the last king who had ruled over the united people. For his sins in forsaking God's law and ways, the division of the people into two was permitted. It was pronounced by God through His prophet Ahijah the Shilonite, and was fulfilled under Rehoboam, Solomon's son (1 Kings xi. 29–39, xii.). This was the solemn act of God, officially announced by Him, and duly carried out by His providence; nor was Judah allowed to

use the sword to undo it. It was a Divine Act of Separation. To all outward appearance the separation was a mere political act, brought about by a blunder of administration on the part of the king; but in reality it was the result of God's decree, as the punishment for Solomon's sin.

The Tribe representatives came to Rehoboam for redress, and not obtaining their request, separated themselves from Rehoboam and Judah, and set up a government of their own. But there was no movement of population, though a great schism had taken place, and a rival government was set up. All Twelve Tribes continued to dwell near each other in the land, for two hundred and fifty years more, till the Captivity of Israel began; but all the time they were, in God's sight and by form of government, two peoples, not one.

That Act has never yet been repealed; it is still in force to-day. Their dispersion has obliterated the division as a matter of fact, and has restored the spiritual unity of the nation; but there has yet been no formal and official annulling of what God pronounced by Ahijah, no reunion as a matter of law, no Act of Union. This must proceed from the same source, and be carried out with the same authority, as the Act of Separation.

The Two Sticks

Ezekiel was to take one stick for Judah and his companion Tribes, and another stick for Joseph and all his companions. All these had been raised from the skeleton state, and were all side by side in the land, a living people. The prophet was to join the sticks together, and they should become one stick in his hand. The division had been represented by the new garment of the prophet Ahijah being rent into twelve pieces, ten of which were given to Jeroboam; the reunion is represented by the blending into one of the two sticks in Ezekiel's hand. Their division was decreed and foretold under Solomon; their reunion takes place under Him of whom Solomon was type.

This reunion may be an Act of their own legislature, which will have been created when they were nationally settled in their land. It will for-

mally abolish the division by which they are still in the sight of God not one nation but two. There need be no more movement of population for the reunion than there was for the separation. Before this Act they might have been practically reunited, and be dwelling together, but now they would be reunited by due legal process; and however it might be brought about, it would be recognised as the good hand of God upon them, just as the separation was declared to be His chastisement.

The countries and peoples of England and Scotland, geographically one, existed before the days of Queen Anne, on opposite sides of the Border; but they were two separate peoples till the Act of Union, 1707. Then they became one. No movement of population was required, only an Act of Parliament. So with the reunion of all Israel.

The House of David

In Zech. xii. repeated mention is made of the House of David. This may mean, literally, that a descendant of that Royal House is again on his father's throne at Jerusalem. God can make his pedigree plain.

Gog and the Invasion of Palestine

Very different scenes are presented in Ezek. xxxviii. What is here foretold takes place after the people have been restored to their land, and are settled therein (8, 11). The land had long lain waste, and the people had been widely scattered; but now they are dwelling there securely, without any fortifications or means of defense. They have begun to enjoy prosperity and to accumulate property (12), but are to all appearance defenceless, yet dwelling in security. It is this that furnishes occasion for what is described.

A great military expedition, under a leader known in this prophecy as Gog, comes from northern regions, with an immense confederation of peoples, against the land of Israel, in which the People of Israel are now settled and prospering. He covets their wealth (11, 12); he notes their de-

fenceless condition; and, disregarding the prophecies that might have warned him of his peril, he marks them out for his certain prey. An evil thought comes into his mind (10) to go up to their land, to turn his hand against the people that dwell there, and to rob them of their property. No doubt also, as Israel are the people of God, and in the vicissitudes of their history are the strongest evidences of the truth of God's Word, this hater of God and of His people and His truth wishes to sweep them away altogether (see Ps. lxxxiii.), and to establish his power in that central and commanding position. Compare Dan. xi. 40–45.

WHO IS GOG?

Who is this great leader, who can influence and control such multitudes, and lead them on to such a daring assault on the land and people of God?

Though not elsewhere so named before these chapters in Ezekiel, several significant clues whereby he may be identified are given here, also in Gen. x., and in other prophecies. In Balaam's prophecy (Num. xxiv. 7) this sentence occurs: "His king shall be higher than Agag," which agrees with the Hebrew. But in the Septuagint Version the name is given as "Gog," not "Agag."

Clues

1. Gog's habitation. Ezek. xxxviii. 2: "*the land of Magog*," who is a son of Japheth (Gen. x. 2).
2. His jurisdiction or control extends beyond his land of Magog, for he is "*Prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal*," or "*chief prince of Meshech and Tubal*," two more of the sons of Japheth (Gen. x. 2).
3. His confederates (ver. 6): "*Gomer and all his hordes*," eldest son of Japheth; "*The house of Togarmah, in the uttermost parts of the north*," a son of Gomer, and grandson of Japheth.

Gog, moreover, is aided against God's people in their own land by some

of Ham's descendants (4, 5), "*Cush and Put*," sons of Ham, brother of Japheth, occupying lands where Mohammedanism has sway.

4. From the north. This is several times repeated as to Gog and his confederates. The north is frequently spoken of in Jeremiah and Ezekiel; it refers to what is in more northern latitude than Palestine, lands from which the entrance into Palestine would be at the north. The whole of Europe and of Mesopotamia is in latitude north of Palestine, and would be spoken of as lands of the north in reference to the Holy Land. It would be perfectly correct to describe France, in relation to Palestine, as "the uttermost part of the north," bordering on the great ocean.

5. Gog, then, is closely connected with Gomer, Magog, Tubal, and Meshech; *i.e.* with the first generation from Japheth, son of Noah, with four of his seven sons, besides his grandson Togarmah. These five names do not occur all together anywhere else but in the genealogy of Gen. x., and in its repetition in 1 Chron. i. These are not Japheth's remote descendants, but his own sons. That must mean the majority of those descended from him, the greater part of the countries originally peopled by him. If some distant descendants were named, that would mean only some small portion of his original regions or descendants. But here are his own sons, four out of the seven, and his grandson. The descendants of Japheth occupied "the isles of the Gentiles" (Gen. x. 5), *i.e.* the coastlands of the Mediterranean Sea in Europe and Asia, whence they spread over the whole continent of Europe and a considerable portion of Asia. From those very regions came the Goths, Vandals, and Huns, who overturned the Western Roman Empire, settled down amongst its ruins, and founded the kingdoms of modern Europe.

Gog European

Gog, then, is a European leader, with a confederacy also European, that must comprise more than half Europe, even assuming that Japheth's seven sons each peopled an equal area. This confederacy would certainly include the Latin nations. Besides these there are descendants

of Ham — Cush and Put. To these Daniel adds Ethiopians and Libyans, who may be dwellers south of Algeria and Tripoli. The members of this great confederacy are first cousins, sons of Japheth and of his brother Ham. It is a European and Pan-Islamic confederacy.

There is but one Power now in existence in Europe — not indeed in its present condition, but in its future Satanic development — that might be expected to do these great things; to have such influence over these kingdoms and peoples as to lead them in the expedition described in the prophecy, and to the fate that is there foretold (Dan. vii. 11).

6. Gog's invasion had been long foretold. Ezek. xxxviii. 17: "*Art thou he of whom I spake in old time by My servants the prophets?*" This identifies Gog with the subject of all those predictions, which long before had foretold a great assault upon the People of Israel in the latter days. There are many in the Psalms, as well as in the Prophets. These former prophecies had not named Gog; his identification as leader of the assault is a matter of inference.

7. At the time of his assault on God's ancient people he is destroyed, not by man, but by the Lord's own personal appearing and intervention. We have therefore to identify Gog with the Power elsewhere described as so destroyed. That is, Dan. vii.: The Little Horn; 2 Thess. ii. 8: That Wicked One; Rev. xix. 19: The Beast, kings, and their armies. These and other prophecies in Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah, the Psalms, and elsewhere, all point to one and the same tremendous event, and to the same great enemy of Christ, to be at last destroyed by the Lord's personal appearing.

Gog is the Papacy

Gathering all these clues together, they meet in one European Power alone — the Papacy. Not as it is at present, but in the formidable character it will assume as its end draws near.

Take as an illustration the Crusades. The sympathies of Europe having been aroused by Peter the Hermit and the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Pope

Urban II., at the Council of Clermont, 1095, authorised and inaugurated the Crusades, by which thousands were sent from Europe to war in Palestine. Gog's expedition would be no new thing.

The Pope's Twofold Character

In the Papacy two distinct functions or characters are united in the same personage, hence they are easily confused; but they are distinct, and have distinct symbols.

1. The immeasurably highest, mightiest, but usurped character of Vicar of Christ, with the claim of headship over all kings and peoples. Symbol — the Three-Crowned Tiara.
2. The Patriarchal Headship of the Roman Church, especially of the clerical body, with the claim of headship over the Universal Church. Symbol — the Mitre.

The Pope is both of these characters at once, but they are distinct. It is quite conceivable that the Roman Church should be destroyed, and the Pope's ecclesiastical functions be brought to nought; while his claims and influence over a large portion of mankind, aided by the army of his priests, should be greatly increased, and he should be recognised and obeyed as a great leader of men.

In *Revelation*, when the Beast and False Prophet make war against the Lord, no Harlot Babylon appears seated upon the Beast. Before that date she has been suddenly destroyed.

A First Rehearsal

During the French Revolution of 1789, a great military leader, from the uttermost parts of the north, with mighty ambitions and far-reaching schemes of eastern conquest, invaded first Egypt and then Palestine. But God's time was not yet come, and disaster overtook him; his fleet was destroyed by an English Admiral, the spell of his invincibility on land

was broken, and he himself with difficulty effected his escape back to his regions in the north.

All this belonged to the “*time of the end*,” but was near the beginning of that period; hence the events, though terminal, were of a preliminary character, indicating what was to happen finally later on. Napoleon’s expedition to Egypt was of the nature of a first rehearsal of what is to be enacted on a much grander scale, as described in these chapters of Ezekiel.

Gog enters the Land

Gog invades the land of Israel “*after many days*” (Ezek. xxxviii. 8); “*at the time of the end*” (Dan. xi. 40). Some of Ham’s descendants aid him. He comes “*upon the mountains of Israel*,” “*my land*” (xxxix. 2, 16, 18); a land long waste, but now repeopled. He has abundance of the sinews and apparatus of war (Dan. xi. 43). The complete armour of the prophet’s day would represent the latest perfections of war material in the days of Gog’s expedition.

Why this immense display of force? Not because of the strength of the people to be invaded, but in order to overawe those who would come to their aid, for they have powerful sympathisers and friends.

Protests

Though multitudes are with Gog in his impious undertaking, there are still some who not only do not join him, but who also protest against his rapacity (13); “Sheba and Dedan,” Arabian names, on the east of the Red Sea, also representing the Indian population derived from them, the grandsons of Cush. The “merchants of Tarshish” possess the trade of India, and Britain’s ships cover the seas. What country can show such a splendid array of “young lions,” or colonies, as she? These self-governing dominions and colonies are now in close league with the mother country. Britain respects the Bible, and favours and protects the Jews.

If the Jews are settled in their land under an International Guarantee, as was Belgium, it would be natural for Gog's invasion to call forth a protest from the Signatory Powers, even though it be ineffectual.

The Invasion

These protests, however, are of no avail to stay the designs of Gog and his hosts. The protests trouble him, yet he goes forth with great fury to destroy (Dan. xi. 44). He comes over the land like a cloud (Ezek. xxxviii. 15, 16); Jerusalem is besieged (Dan. xi. 45) and taken (Zech. xiv. 2). The siege is described in full detail; the city is in the very grasp of the enemy, and a division is actually sent into captivity, after the ransacking. So complete is the subjugation that the enemy, in perfect security, shall portion out the spoil in the very midst of her. This is the Great Tribulation for the Jews.

It would seem that, in addition to the destruction of the Romish Church, we are to see the national resettlement of the Jewish people in their ancient land, and then all this preparation for the invasion of Palestine, and for the destruction of the Jewish people, before our Lord appears.

The Decisive Moment

At this decisive moment of Gog's triumph the Great Deliverer appears, and destroys the invader (Ezek. xxxviii. 18–23; Joel iii. 16; Dan. xii. 1; 2 Thess. ii. 8; Rev. xix. 11–16). The Lord comes down on the same Mount of Olives whence He ascended, and His Coming is instantly known all the world over, as the lightning flash; that is, probably, by some form of electric communication. He comes not alone (Zech. xiv. 5), but “all the holy ones” with Him; an event foretold as far back as the prophecy of Enoch, “with ten thousand of His saints.”

The Mount of Olives cleaves in the midst, and removes north and south, leaving a great valley between. Here is a literal description of a great convulsion of Nature acknowledging the presence of the Deity, when

the Redeemer first manifests Himself at Jerusalem.

[The consecutive narrative in Rev. xix. is now resumed.]

THE LORD HIMSELF APPEARS

After the announcement (Rev. xix. 7) that the Marriage of the Lamb is imminent, the Lord's Second Advent is next described (Rev. xix. 11-16). St. John sees heaven opened, a white horse issues forth, and on it the Lord Himself. This is the beginning of His journey to this earth. Is it not to some extent leisurely? The disciples watched Him as He ascended, till He got out of their sight, and He is to return in like manner; the inhabitants of earth see Him coming. He now comes with a shout, the voice of the archangel, the trump of God, and widely visible as the lightning. He is followed by the "armies" of heaven, the angelic warriors, as He makes His way to the earth, "accompanied with the angels of His power" (2 Thess. i. 7).

As He draws near, and while He is still in the air, the First Resurrection takes place, the Marriage of the Lamb. All His people, living and dead, are suddenly transformed and go up to meet Him and His hosts in the air on His way. They join themselves to the "armies" of heaven, and the whole great twofold multitude accompany their Lord to the earth. Thus He comes to stand on the Mount of Olives with two great companies, His warrior hosts from heaven following Him, and the whole assembly of His true people having met Him.

This First Resurrection at the Lord's Second Coming includes His people alone; the rest of the dead do not rise till after the Millennium. Those still alive on earth at His Coming are suddenly transformed, and are caught up with the risen dead to meet Him in the air. They will be but few compared with the rest, only one generation, a little flock at any time amidst the world's population, whereas the risen ones include all former generations of God's people.

Our Lord's Second Advent itself is instantaneously seen and known wide

as the world. It is one event, not two. There is indeed a tremendous moral distinction between our Lord's Coming for His saints and His Coming as regards the world; but so far as Scripture seems to teach, there is no distinction in time. It is one and the same event, but most differently affecting both. It has two widely different aspects, according to the condition of those whom it affects, but the Advent itself is one (Rev. i. 7).

Who are left behind? Those represented by the Foolish Virgins; all those who have attached themselves to the Beast, and join in or support his expedition; all the other non-Christian inhabitants of the earth. The salt of the earth has been removed at the Rapture, and Satan is still free, to tempt and seduce, but only for a time; presently he is imprisoned for the whole Thousand Years.

Beast (Gog), Kings, and Armies

Rev. xix. 19 shows the Beast, the kings and their armies gathered together, but does not say where. Ezekiel (xxxviii. 8–23, xxxix. 2–4) and Zechariah (xii.) tell us that the gathering is in the land of Israel. Rev. xix. 19 tells that there are more than motives of plunder; it is “*to make war against Him that sat upon the horse*” — that is, against Christ Himself and His army. Ps. ii. 1–3 had its first fulfillment on the very spot (Acts iv. 27), and a Roman governor took part therein. Here is the complete fulfillment of that prophecy.

At the same time, exactly consonant with Isa. xxxiv. 5, 9, 10 and Dan. vii. 11, there is a fire on Magog, the judgment on the country whence come Gog and a part at least of his confederates. To this epoch belongs that magnificent Song of Victory, Isa. lxiii. See also Ps. lxxvi., cxviii., and cxxiv.

Birds and Beasts called to the Sacrifice

An idea of the magnitude of Gog's expedition and of the destruction wrought may be gathered from the fact that birds and beasts are called

to feast upon this great sacrifice. The call of invitation is almost identical in Ezek. xxxix. 17–20 and Rev. xix. 17, 18, the close resemblance arising, no doubt, from both passages referring to one and the same event. But in Ezekiel the place of the sacrifice is definitely stated: “A great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel.” “Beasts of the field” are called, as well as birds of prey. Also it is declared to be the Lord’s own act: “*My sacrifice... which I have sacrificed for you.*”

The manner of the destruction is by a consuming plague, panic and confusion, mutual slaughter, pestilence, hailstones, fire and brimstone (Zech. xiv. 12, 13; Ezek. xxxviii. 21, 22; Luke xix. 27). The burning of Gog’s weapons and the burial of his army are also described, to impress us with a vast idea of the multitudes overthrown by the Divine Vengeance.

This does not mean the destruction of all mankind who were left at the Rapture, but only of those ranged with Gog against the Lord.

Destruction of Beast and False Prophet

As the Harlot must be exposed and destroyed ere the manifestation of the Bride, so also must the Usurper, the self-vaunting king of kings and lord of lords, who claims to be the Vicar of Christ, be destroyed ere the establishment of the kingdom of the rightful Lord.

The Lord comes to destroy His enemies, the Beast and the kings of the earth, who are ranged against Him and are intending to exterminate the Jews now settled in their ancient land. Then it is, at that crisis of great tribulation for the Jews, that the Lord suddenly appears, with all His holy ones; His feet stand on the Mount of Olives, and Gog and his hordes — that is, the Papacy and the peoples it has seduced, with the Papal clergy as officers under the great leader — are utterly destroyed in Palestine (see Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.). That is one great enemy disposed of.

Both the False Prophet and the Beast are cast alive into the lake of fire, and therefore are living up to that date. Doubtless this means alive in

the symbolical sense, in contrast to symbolical death when they can no longer act. Similarly, in Rev. xx. 14, Death and Hades “were cast into the lake of fire.” It is obvious that two actual individuals cannot be meant, but that the description is simply a figurative way of foretelling that the conditions of Death and Hades will then be finally done away with. So here. What St. John saw cannot mean that two personages are to be carried bodily from the battle-field and thrown into a fiery lake. The doom foreshadowed is that the power of the Papacy and that of the Romish priesthood, as evil agencies in the world, are at that crisis to be brought to an end at once and for ever. They are “alive” right up to the Coming of Christ, and then are suddenly overthrown and for ever destroyed.

Surprise at the Result

This wonderful deliverance of Jerusalem and of the Jews is to have an astonishing and confounding effect, not only on the peoples who have taken part with Gog, but on other nations also. To their amazement, Judah and Jerusalem, weak as they were, obtain deliverance, and the mighty hosts of their adversaries are utterly destroyed (Zech. xii. 1–8). Henceforth there is an entire change of opinion on the part of Israel themselves, and also of the nations of the earth. They now understand as they never did before the long course of God’s dealings with His own people, the goodness and severity of God (Ps. cxviii., cxxvi.).

A Great Mourning in the Land

This is strange (Zech. xii. 10–12). A great and wonderful national deliverance has been wrought, yet among the people delivered it is followed by a time of individual and universal mourning. Why is this? “*They shall look unto Me whom they have pierced.*” Then He has appeared. The Lord, whom long ago they rejected and crucified, has come again, and shows Himself to the very people who pierced Him. “*They shall look*”: this plainly marks the first recognition by the rulers and inhabitants of Jerusalem

of that Jesus of Nazareth whom they crucified. The House of David recognise their own royal relative, their bone and their flesh; and the people recognise in Him their true Messiah.

It seems clear that till now the people established in the land have not as a nation recognised their true Messiah. Though restored in a spirit of submission to God's law, as under the Old Covenant, till now they do not know their Deliverer to be the same whom their rulers crucified and slew. They are not, as to the main body of them, converted to the Christian faith, but are still Jews, mistaken followers of Moses, with the veil on their hearts. But now is the time of their obtaining mercy.

Some of the principal stages of their restoration will follow, not precede, the Second Advent; and many prophecies will now be fulfilled which some persons try to crowd into the present dispensation, instead of leaving them for the Millennium and for the Jews. Whatever enemies of the Jews may still exist, such will see that that people are now under God's special protection and favour, and that no one henceforth may harm them.

Satan Imprisoned

Next, after the destruction of the Beast and the False Prophet, Satan is laid hold of, and is chained and imprisoned for the Thousand Years of the Millennium (Rev. xx. 1–3). That is another enemy disposed of; not the last, for the last enemy to be destroyed is Death, and Death is not annulled till the General Resurrection after the Millennium. Man's heart is evil still, but the Tempter is no longer there to practise upon it.

THE MILLENNIUM OPENS

These two chief foes having been disposed of, there follows the organisation and ordering of the Lord's victorious kingdom on earth. At this point begin the actual preparations for the Millennial reign. But its full settlement, even after the Lord's glorious appearing, may be, nay must

be, a work of some time. There cannot be stages in an instantaneous Advent, but there may be many stages in the work that follows, in bringing order into a rebellious world. Even at the end of the Millennium Satan finds materials for a great conspiracy.

In the Vision of the Great Image, the expansion of the stone into a mountain does not take place till after the image has been destroyed by the blow of the Second Advent, and its dust removed by the wind.

The Judgment of the Righteous

Here comes in what is known as the Judgment of the Righteous, for the assignment of rewards and positions in the new kingdom, according to the Parables of the Pounds and of the Talents. This takes place not in the air at the Coming of the Lord, as though there were an interval between that and His appearing for the destruction of His foes, but just where these verses (Rev. xx. 4–6) put it, after the Lord's victory over the Beast and Satan. Having disposed of those two chief foes, He takes in hand the ordering of His kingdom.

What is the Judgment of the Righteous? We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, to receive the things done in the body. But for those who in this life have trusted in Christ and have washed their robes white in His precious blood, there is no condemnation. They are passed from death into life. Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth? The Judge Himself is their Advocate, the propitiation for their sins.

Yet there is for them a judgment, for the assignment of reward. There are degrees of reward, differences of rank, among the redeemed, even in heaven. All this arrangement of detail, if we may call it so, comes naturally after the main event of overthrow of foes and establishment of the King of kings. To Christ's saints, raised and endued with spiritual and sinless bodies, are given positions of authority, responsibility, and honour. Plenteous reward is assigned for plenteous work done for Christ. The Judgment of the Righteous for these purposes takes place now, and

their rewards and positions are assigned, as in the Parables of the Talents and of the Pounds.

There was included in the Seventh Trumpet (Rev. xi. 18) “the time to give their reward to Thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear Thy name, the small and the great” (see also Dan. vii. 18, 27).

“Thrones” of royalty and judgment are assigned to Christ’s risen saints. Not to all alike; one may have authority over ten cities, another over five. But it is a reign, and this implies subjects, people to be reigned over, on this earth, in the midst of “the nations.” In Rev. v. 10 it is said of the redeemed, “They reign *upon the earth*” This implies continuance of political and social existence and organisation.

[How comes the Unprofitable Servant here? He must have risen with the rest, yet he is cast into outer darkness. He is discovered at the Judgment of the Righteous.]

Martyrs and Confessors

Two classes of Christ’s saints are noticed by St. John as especially conspicuous and honourably distinguished amid the royal company whom he saw. They are not the only beings present, but they occupy a high and honourable place among them. They are Christ’s assessors in judging and reigning, and to them are assigned the highest positions, the seats of chief honour in the Lord’s kingdom. These two special companies of the redeemed are the martyrs slain by Rome Heathen, and those slain by Rome Papal.

Under the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 9–11) the souls of the martyrs slain by Rome Heathen were told to wait till another series of martyrs, those to be slain under Rome Papal, should have been added to them; then would their avenging come. The promise, though long delayed, had not been forgotten; the Harlot, the Beast, and the False Prophet had all received their doom.

The two companies are now combined, and these saints, this noble army of martyrs, slain by Rome at different periods of her history, live and reign with Christ the Thousand Years. They are, first—those beheaded by Heathen Rome. Beheading was a usual mode of putting to death in St. John's times, and an axe was the familiar Roman emblem of capital punishment. Secondly—those who had not been seduced by Papal Rome, but had been martyrs and confessors under her power. They are described not by the manner of their death, for they died in many ways, but by the character of their protest, and by their refusing worship, allegiance, or obedience to the Power that claimed such blasphemous authority.

The Millennial Reign

The coming kingdom of our Lord is to be divided chronologically into two parts: a first or opening section, to last for a thousand years, which accordingly is therefore called the Millennium; and a second, or main portion, which is to last for ever, and which is therefore called the Eternal Kingdom. The one is the brief introduction to the other. The Millennium is a transition state from the present dispensation since the creation of man to the everlasting reign after the judgment of the Great White Throne.

The Millennial Reign of Christ is an introductory time of putting down all rule and authority and power; of bringing everything into subjection to Divine authority; of giving men one last supreme season of probation under the righteous governing of Christ Himself. It is the final stage in the work of redemption, prior to the introduction of its eternal results. It closes by the destruction of the last enemy, Death, together with the final expulsion and punishment of its author; and the Eternal Kingdom dates from this close and completion of the redeeming work of Christ.

Even the glorious Millennial Reign is closed by a fresh outbreak of rebellious apostasy, bringing down fresh judgments and destructions; but from the new heavens and new earth such experiences are for ever ex-

cluded. The Millennium is only the first thousand years of Christ's never-ending reign.

PHYSICAL CHANGES IN THE PROMISED LAND

The land promised to Abraham extends west to east some 500 miles across the desert from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. It is the most centrally situated territory in the world, being in contact with the three continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa, and commanding the eastern and the western oceans. There, during the Millennium, the restored people of Israel are to be settled, as the leading nation amongst mankind, and are to expand on the right hand and on the left. Many prophecies will then be fulfilled which some persons try to crowd into the present dispensation, instead of leaving them for the Millennium and for the Jews.

At present the greater part of that territory is sandy desert, but the closing chapters of Ezekiel (xl.–xlviii.), and other prophecies, describe how it is to be prepared and fitted for the great nation by which it is to be occupied. Boundaries are defined for the accommodation of the people at the first, while their numbers are still comparatively small; and arrangements are made by which the occupation of territory may gradually be extended eastward, till it covers the whole of the grant made by God to Abraham.

Ezekiel was bidden to write all this down, for it was all determined, and should surely come to pass; and he was to show it to the House of Israel, that they might be ashamed of their iniquities, and might understand that for no merit of their own were these great blessings to be bestowed.

The Watershed and Water Supply

When the Lord's feet stand on the Mount of Olives, the mount cleaves asunder, half to the north and half to the south, leaving a great valley between. This is part of a mighty convulsion that will upheave the whole land (Zech. xiv. 10) and turn it as the Arabah; that is, the great desert pla-

teau south of the Dead Sea, extending to the Gulf of Akaba on the Red Sea. It was the “plain” along which the Israelites in the last year of their wandering made their toilsome way.

This great upheaval will also raise the lofty mountain of the Lord’s House, on the southern slope of which the sanctuary is to be built. The summit of this very high mountain will be in perpetual snow, which will abundantly supply the great river that issues from the sanctuary and goes east through the desert land.

From the rebuilt Jerusalem, in its new position, living waters shall go out; half toward the western sea or Mediterranean, and half toward the eastern sea (which is this?) through the great valley of the Mount of Olives. The new city stands on the watershed.

The Jordan valley is geologically a “fault” or crack in the strata, the Mediterranean side of which has sunk down much lower than the other, leaving the mountains of Moab standing high above. All the Jordan valley is to be raised to the same general level as the Arabah. The valley all along will be filled up, so as to carry the watershed from the future high ground on the west, and from the lofty mountain of the Lord’s House, across into the Syrian and Arabian desert. The raising of the land will alter the climate, and the new rivers will make the wilderness to blossom as the rose.

ARABIA

The great land of Arabia is almost the centre of the land of the world. Though well situated for a large population, and capable of the choicest products, it is practically unproductive and unknown, all the central parts being usually put down as desert. The obvious reason is that it is almost without water, having neither river nor lake.

Why should a region so well situated, and capable of doing so much, have been left all these ages in such a desert condition? Because God has set His hand upon it for His own purposes. The time has not yet come for His people to hold it, and He has kept all other people from touching

it. When the Palestine watershed is altered, and the new rivers are set running, God will so order their course that they shall do the greatest amount of fertilising by passing through the Syrian and Arabian desert. For all these now desert regions the new Palestine, with its snow mountains and bounteous rivers, will be what Switzerland is to Europe, in supplying the Rhine, the Rhone, the rivers of Lombardy, and many other smaller waters.

The Land and the Tribe Names

The boundaries of the territory to be at first occupied are given thus in Ezek. xlvii.: north, from entrance of Hamath; south, to the Brook of Egypt, a length of 277 miles; east, the Jordan; west, the Mediterranean.

Beginning from the north and going southward, the Tribe Divisions run east and west in parallel lines, thus: the first seven — Dan, Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben, Judah.

Here comes in the great square of the Holy Oblation.

Then follow the remaining five — Benjamin, Simeon, Issachar, Zebulun, Gad.

The width of each is about twenty miles. The names of the children of Leah and Rachel occupy the centre, and those of the sons of the handmaids are placed at the extremities.

It may be understood that these names and divisions are twelve counties or provinces, each called after the old names of the Tribes. In the original division of the land the larger Tribes had the larger areas, the allotment being according to population. But now apparently the same sized area is allotted to each, irrespective of population. This seems to decide that the divisions are county names, not areas covered by members of particular Tribes.

As the boundaries run in parallel lines east and west, expansion is amply provided for over the territory towards the Euphrates, which will have been transformed from wilderness into fruitful land by the new rivers.



The Holy Oblation

By the border of Judah there is to be a holy portion of the land set apart as an oblation to the Lord. It is a square of 25,000 reeds, or 44 miles to the side, taking the reed as 9 feet 4 inches. It is divided into three strips from east to west thus:

One strip of 10,000 reeds broad for the priests; the same for the Levites; and one of 5000 for the city. Those for priests and Levites would be each about 19 miles wide; that for the city about 10 miles. The priests' portion is for the sanctuary and their dwellings; so for the Levites and their dwellings.

The Mountain of the Lord's House

In the middle of the priests' portion is the very high mountain, on the southern slope of which is the sanctuary, the Lord's House, looking like a city in size and appearance, and facing towards the east. It is a Temple and its courts, surrounded by massive walls, forming three terraces: the Outer Court, the Inner Court, and the Temple itself in the midst. The enclosure is about three-quarters of a mile square.

The City, Gates, and Suburbs

The area assigned for the city is 25,000 reeds long by 5000 wide, for common use for the city, for dwellings, and for suburbs. In the midst stands the city, a square of 4500 reeds—about 8 miles—with suburbs on the four sides 250 reeds wide. On each side are three gates, bearing the names of the Twelve Tribes. This leaves a space of 10,000 reeds to the east and the same to the west, to be cultivated as market gardens for food for the citizens.

The city is called "Jehovah Shammah." It is old Jerusalem renewed, and its site changed. Jeremiah and Ezekiel say that Jerusalem is to be rebuilt; but Ezekiel says that "from that day" the name is to be "Jehovah Shammah"; *i.e.* the new city will bear the new name.

The Possession of the Prince

On either side of the Holy Oblation, east and west, between the parallels of Judah and Benjamin, the remainder of land not occupied by the Holy Oblation is to be the possession of the Prince. He is of the seed of David, and is a married man with a family.

Peoples go up to Worship

Year by year the nations of the world will go up, by representatives, to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles (Mic. iv. 2; Zech. xiv. 16; Isa. lxvi. 23, 24).

THE ANTICHRIST

Who? When? Where?

“This is the deceiver.” — 2 John 7.

THE ANTICHRIST

In order to get a true and complete view of this great antagonist of Christ and of His Church, we have to bring together the several prophecies and instructions given by the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of guiding in a sure path those who really desire to learn.

These are the following:—

1. The Little Horn of Daniel's Fourth or Roman Beast (Dan. vii. 8), that grows up amidst the other Ten Horns, and for a long period lords it over them.
2. The self-deifying king of Dan. xi. 36.
3. St. Paul's prophecy in 2 Thess. ii. 3 as to the coming Apostasy, the "*falling away*" from the true faith, with which compare 1 Tim. iv.
4. His prophecy, also in 2 Thess. ii., as to the "Man of Sin," and the restraining Power that for a time was to prevent his open manifestation.
5. St. John's description of the Antichrist, so named only by St. John in five places in his Epistles.
6. The Beast with Seven Heads and Ten Horns of Rev. x., xiii., xvii., and xix.
7. The City of Antichrist, called the Great City and Babylon, which he was depicted in Rev. xvii. as supporting and upbearing, marked out as being Rome by its having a seven-hilled locality in St. John's day, and supremacy in St. John's time over the kings of the earth (Rev. xvii. 18).

A Complex Portrait

All these describe not so many separate powers or personages, appearing at different times or places in the history of Christendom. On the

contrary, they are so many portraits of one and the same great Power, of long duration, taken from different points of view, and not all belonging to the same eras in his history. But they all refer to him. All these prefigurations together cover the whole history and reveal the main features of that evil Power, which lasts from the time of its appearing, all through the dispensation, till the return of our Lord.

To discuss and to explain all these Divine forecasts would take us far beyond our present limits. That is done elsewhere. They are not of necessity all fulfilling together at any one period of Antichrist's history, for he has beginnings, growth, maturity, career of power, and then decay and final destruction. But they are all to be taken into account, all to be combined¹ and fitted together, for the complete historical portrait and entire identification, which also must ultimately satisfy all the requirements of them all.

It may be said at once that all these portraits, all these features, find their exact counterpart, and all meet, in one Power and one Power only, of all that are known to History, a Power that is in existence at the present time, and has been for more than twelve centuries.

Meaning of the Name "Antichrist"

In the name "Antichrist," "Christ" is the subject and "Anti" the predicate; that is to say, he is a "Christ," usurping the name and the place of Christ, making use of Christian phraseology and institutions, and professing the doctrine of Christ; but all the while he is in reality "anti," "instead of," the true Christ, and therefore also opposed to Him. Yet he is a "Christ," one who sets himself up as the counterpart of the true, and therefore one who under the same professed name and character is a disguised enemy to the true Christ.¹

¹ Archbishop Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament*, points out that all expositors of weight, Grotius alone excepted, are agreed that the great Adversary described by St. Paul is identical with the Antichrist described by St. John.

See the author's *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy* (Seeleys).

Archbishop Trench, in his *Synonyms of the New Testament*, explains that the Greek preposition *anti* in composition has both forces, meaning sometimes substitution, sometimes opposition, and occasionally in the same word it will have both meanings. The name itself does not decide the matter, but leaves it to be settled by other considerations.

Bishop Westcott, on *The Epistles of St. John*, affirms that the name means far more than simply “an adversary of Christ.” It means one who takes the place of Christ, or one who under the same character, assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Christ.

A similar usage is seen in the French *contre-maître*, *contre-amiral*, and several like words; that is, a shipmaster or an admiral qualified to take the place of the actual master or admiral.

An excellent illustration of this meaning is the word of the Middle Ages, “Antipope,” meaning not simply an enemy to the Pope, as a hostile Emperor might be, but a self-substituted, usurping, hostile *Pope*, occupying the proper Pope’s place, receiving his honours and exercising his functions.

It is most important to bear in mind that “Antichrist” cannot mean simply and solely an enemy to Christ; it can only mean either a Vice-Christ, or a false opposing Christ, or both; a professed Christian, but in reality an apostate, and therefore an enemy, though in friendly disguise. Outside of the professing Christian Church there originates no Antichrist, in the Biblical sense of the term. Antichrist is not an atheist or an infidel; he might ultimately become such in fact, whatever his professions, but he is not such at first, nor in the greater part of his career: he is a professed Christian.

So his Church, called Babylon, is a professedly Christian Church. Almost to the very last there are in it some of Christ’s true disciples, who are urged to come out of her lest they share her doom (Rev. xviii. 4). Is it credible that such could knowingly have joined themselves to an infidel system, acknowledging an infidel head? They have been deceived by false appearances, and have had no opportunity of learning better; but in God’s mercy they are solemnly warned of their danger, if only they

will give heed to the warning ere it be too late.

“Vicar of Christ”

Antichrist, then, was to appear as a Vice-Christ, as the “Vicar of Christ,” in the mystic Temple or professing Christian Church, and in that character and position was to act out the part of usurper and adversary against Christ Himself and the members of His true Church. Antichrist was to corrupt the doctrines of the Gospel, and was to make war with Christ’s saints and to slay them.

This hostile Power had previously been made known and talked of among Christians (1 John ii. 18) as the one pre-eminently great enemy (not one of two) that was to come. He was not to be a professed atheist, but in mouth would confess Christ, while practically setting Him and His truth aside; calling himself the Vicar of Christ, and professing in His place to be the power, wisdom, and salvation of God, yet in reality denying the Father by denying the Son, for the Son alone can reveal the Father.

It is sometimes confidently affirmed that the majority of Bible students believe there will be a personal infidel Antichrist. This is very far from being the case. For example, Bishop Ellicott, Bishop Westcott, Professor Swete, the *Expositor’s Greek Testament*, Hastings’ *Bible Dictionaries*, the greater and the less, and Murray’s *Bible Dictionary*, do not one of them describe the Antichrist as an infidel, nor does the name itself allow this. To be looking for an infidel is to be looking for what is not foretold. It is one of the devices for diverting attention from the real danger and the real foe, who is far more subtle, far more seducing, and far more dangerous than would be an open infidel. An infidel system is open, is no mystery; not so this.

When was he to appear?

Daniel’s prophecy (Dan. vii.) connected this dread Power with the last of the four great Empires — that is, with the Roman.

St. Paul, living under the Roman Empire, spoke of the principle of the apostasy which was to be headed by the Man of Sin, as already sown and working in his day (2 Thess. ii.); but a certain hindrance or restraint had first to be removed out of the way ere room could be made for the development of the Man of Sin. Observe — that restraint was not to be utterly destroyed, but only moved aside, taken out of the way.

This hindrance was well understood by the Christians of those days to be the Roman Imperial Power ruling at Rome, as the early Fathers testify, and the Apostle himself says to the Thessalonians (2 Thess. ii. 6), “*Now ye know that which restraineth*”; but it was not actually named by St. Paul in his public Epistles, for the obvious reason that to have done so would have brought fierce persecution on the Christians. It was therefore needful for him to practise reserve as to it in writing, although he had described it clearly to them in speaking. He had made it known in conversation, and from so important a seaport as Thessalonica, situated on a great Roman road, the information would soon spread to the other churches, and be with them a matter of common knowledge, as the early Christian writings testify. Nine of the Fathers may be quoted as witnesses to this effect.

It is to be noted also that the “one that restraineth” is spoken of by St. Paul as if a single individual, yet this “*one*” really represents a succession of about sixty-four Roman Emperors, from St. Paul’s day to A.D. 476. In like manner the “Man of Sin” represents the whole succession of Popes, not one individual only. His continuance far exceeds the lifetime of any one individual. He has a corporate existence.

After the Break-up of Western Rome

The Fourth Beast of Daniel’s Vision (Dan. vii.), on whose head, in its last or Ten-Horned state, the Little Horn (that is, the Antichrist) was seen to sprout and grow after the rise of the Ten Horns, could be no other than the Roman Empire, according to the plain facts of History; and so accordingly it was understood by the chief of the early Fathers. The time

of Antichrist's coming forth was to be after the breaking up of the old Roman Empire in the West, from which have come the States of Mediæval and Modern Europe.

The natural inference would be that Antichrist was a Power to rise on the removal from Rome to Constantinople of the Empire and Emperors; it might even be inferred that he would rise in the same place that had been occupied by the hindrance, as well as on its departure.

The Signs of his Coming

The coming of the Man of Sin, the Antichrist, was to be ushered in by two signs of quite different and independent character, but which have actually appeared, and together.

1. *The Religious Sign* of corruption within the Church, working on into apostasy from the true faith; not into desertion of the Visible Church, but—while remaining in it, and indeed claiming to be still the only true representative of Christ's Church on earth—falling away from Christ's true faith and true spiritual disciples.

Ecclesiastical History witnesses to the growth of error, doctrinal and practical, in these ages of the Church, especially in regard to the Sacraments, and to the invocation of other mediators than the only true One.

The baptismal error, exposed in Rev. vii. 1–8, was the foundation stone of the great foretold Apostasy, whose grand object and characteristic, ever followed out with admirable unity of purpose by its originator, the Master Spirit of Evil, was this:—Within the Christian Church itself, while professedly exalting Christ and His institutions, and making free use of Christian phraseology, practically to set Christ aside out of the Christian system from first to last, in respect of one and all of His saving acts and offices.

2. *The Political Sign* of the Roman Imperial Power in the West being moved away from the city of Rome, and the Roman Western Empire breaking up into ten separate kingdoms. This is an unquestioned his-

torical event, the consequences of which are to be seen to-day in the existence of the separate States of Europe.

This crisis of History, the removal of the Caesars from Rome and the breaking up of the old Western Roman Empire into the kingdoms of Europe, cannot possibly be repeated. And since the Papacy, which thus appeared at the crisis predicted for the appearance of the Antichrist, bears all the marks of the Antichrist, it seems impossible to resist the conclusion that the Papacy itself, and not only some future individual, is the Antichrist of prophecy.

The Ten Kingdoms

The seat of Empire and the Emperors were moved away from the city of Rome, and the whole of the Western Roman Empire was broken up into separate States, which, during all these twelve or more succeeding centuries, have averaged ten in number.

Daniel's First Vision, of the Great Image, had foretold attempts at reunion, and again separations, between these divided kingdoms; this would cause temporary variations in their number, there being sometimes more, sometimes less, than the actual ten within the area in question. But the average over the whole period has been ten, and in the year 1918 the number was still actually ten.

The Great Earthquake and the Tripartition

Moreover, after the Great Earthquake of the Seventh Vial (Rev. xvi. 19), — that is, a mighty European Revolution, — the Great City — that is, the area of the ten kingdoms — breaks up and settles down into three parts, no longer into ten. At that epoch, to which we are drawing near, the tenfold division that has lasted some thirteen centuries comes to an end, and gives place to a threefold division.

The Little Horn

But if the Ten Horns be the kingdoms of Mediaeval and Modern Europe, there can be no question as to what the Little Horn among them is. The right historical interpretation of the Ten Horns identifies the Papacy with that Little Horn that rises among them and lords it over them, and whose lordship is recognised and allowed by them, till God's time has come.

Here is the Man of Sin foretold by St. Paul, here is the Antichrist described by St. John. In every particular—time, place, character, doings, all of which have to be taken into account—the identification is complete.

It is plain from Dan. vii. and Rev. xvii. that Antichrist was to be a Power contemporary with the Ten Horns of the symbolic Beast, a common head supporting and forming a centre of union to them. That is, Antichrist is a Power contemporary with the European kingdoms of the Middle and Modern Ages; and this is the position assigned to the Papacy by all the history and by all the standard historians of those times.

[All this is more fully treated in the author's larger work, *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*.]

A Personal Antichrist at the Last

While it is affirmed that the Papal Power, in its rise, career, and doom, is the true fulfilment of the Antichrist of prophecy, and of the other prophetic portraits of the same great enemy, it is freely allowed that there is room for the fullest illustration of the chief features of the Antichrist on an individual scale, in the person of the last Pope or Popes, in the Papacy at the close of its career.

The Antichrist of the last days will then be the Papacy in its last form and fully developed character; not a new and short-lived creation of Satan, but an awful development by Satanic power of the Antichrist that has existed all along during the 1260 years. Because the Papacy is not yet

the full-grown ripened Antichrist of the last days, is it therefore not the present Antichrist?

Other Antichrists

In proving the Papacy to be the Antichrist, it is not intended to deny that there have been other Antichrists, and even that there are others now in the world, as there were many in St. John's time. In fact, all false religions may be regarded in some sense as so many Antichrists.

But the Papacy is that particular form of Antichristianism which above all others has been selected by Divine foreknowledge to be the subject of prophecy, so as to warn the Church of Christ—if she will take the warning—against her most insidious and formidable foe.

The Seventy Weeks

The prophecy of the Seventy Weeks in Dan. ix. has nothing whatever to do with Antichrist; it is occupied exclusively with the First Advent of Christ, His rejection and death, and the Roman destruction of Jerusalem which was the result. It is a fulfilled prophecy. The 70th week, or any part of it, may not be wrenched away from the other 69, and relegated to some distant future; it cleaves to the 69th. The 70 weeks, being a definite measurement of time, run on continuously from 1 to 70, the last week being divided into two halves; otherwise the measurement would have no meaning. As though you promised a measurement of 70 lengths to reach a certain point, and you gave 69 of these, but said that the 70th was you knew not how far away in the distance. Of what use would the measurement of 70 be? To place an indefinite gap between the 69th and the 70th weeks is to destroy the value of the 70 weeks' period as a definite measure of time.

Suppose you have a rod 70 inches long. From any fixed point you can lay the rod in any direction, and the points its end reaches will always be just 70 inches from the starting-point. But suppose you break off from

the end of the rod one inch, or one half-inch, and then tie between the two broken ends a long piece of elastic. You can then stretch the broken piece away to any distance you please, but you have destroyed the measurement of 70 inches. It may now be 100 inches, or 700, or more; but no longer is it 70.

Antichrist has to do with Christendom

Antichrist has to do with Christendom, not with the Jews. In prophecies of events to take place during the “*times of the Gentiles*” — that is, during the present age — the Jews are to a large extent overlooked, till quite the closing period of the dispensation. They are the natural branches of the olive tree, but for the present they are “broken off.” They knew not the day of their visitation, and the Kingdom of God is for the present taken from them and given to others. “*Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and then all Israel shall be saved.*”

Hence the great Antichristian Power symbolised as the “Little Horn” and called the “Man of Sin”; and the eighth head of the Beast, being the last form of Gentile Power, and belonging to these “times of the Gentiles,” has little to do with the literal Israel, or the literal Jerusalem, or a literal Temple, until quite the times of the end. He coexists not with a recognised Jewish nation, but with the rejection and dispersion of the Jews, and with a recognised professing Christian Church.

His sphere is not Palestine, but Christendom; his throne is not at Jerusalem, but at Rome. Though Jews also have suffered grievously from his persecutions, by far the greater number of his victims are Christians, not Jews. His end and doom are brought about by that event which marks the commencement of the restoration of Israel to God’s favour — the Second Advent of Christ; when Israel shall look on Him whom they pierced, and mourn because of Him; and when the “times of the Gentiles” shall be ended.

A Succession, not only one Individual

As has already been mentioned, it is to be noted that the Roman Imperial succession, the “hindrance” or “restraint,” is by St. Paul spoken of as if a single individual — “*one that restraineth now*”; yet it was not one Emperor only, but a succession of about 64 individual Emperors from St. Paul’s day onwards to A.D. 476. In like manner the other phrase in the passage, “*The Man of Sin*,” denotes a succession, and not only one individual.

The Apostle John, in his Second Epistle, writes (ver. 7): “*Many deceivers are gone forth into the world, even they that confess not that Jesus Christ cometh in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the Antichrist.*” This conclusively proves that St. John did not use the term “the Antichrist” to designate a single individual person, but as a collective designation of the false teachers who in the name of Christ taught doctrines contrary to the truths of Christ and His Gospel.

So in the Psalms and other Scriptures, “the wise man,” “the perfect man,” “the man of God,” “the righteous,” “the godly man,” are frequently contrasted with the fool, the wicked man, the ungodly, “the son of wickedness,” and the transgressor. Each of these expressions represents not an individual only, but a class, a body, or a succession of persons answering to that character. Samuel’s prophecy (1 Sam. viii. 10–18) concerning “the king” of Israel is a prophecy not of one individual king, but of the line of Israelite monarchs which began with Saul.

Similarly the “Man of Sin” designates a succession of persons, not one alone.

History illuminates these Prophecies

We have to take account of the facts of History, which powerfully illuminate the forecasts in these Visions. Before the events of the History had begun to happen at all, these solemn and somewhat mysterious warnings were given to the Church, and many were the guesses as to how they were to be fulfilled. That could not be otherwise.

But for us all this has been wonderfully cleared up by the event. Time is a great interpreter of prophecy. We have now centuries of History, of accomplished facts, recorded for our learning. We now know from Roman History precisely when and how and whither “*the one that restraineth*” was moved out of the way. We have also seen, in the History of Europe, how a certain Power, ruling from Rome, has claimed and does claim to be the Vicar of Christ, a Christ instead of the true One; how in every detail the features of the prediction have found and are still finding their accomplishment; how at that precise era the Bishop of Rome began to transform himself into the Roman Pope, who has lasted from then down to the present day. The abandonment of Rome by the Caesars was the liberation of the Pontiffs.

The Pope has claimed to be revered as Christ, and in every way has inculcated Christ’s impersonation in him on the minds and eyes of men. This answers, as a translation in terms, to the word Antichrist in its first sense — a Christ instead of the true One. Inasmuch also as this is an utter falsehood and blasphemous usurpation, it answers also to the second sense — a hostile, counter Christ. But in either case he is professedly a Christ.

War with the Saints

The same character and spirit are displayed from first to last throughout his history. To take one feature only. In the earliest prophecy, that of the Little Horn in Dan. vii., it is said that “*the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.*” And in the latest prophecies, in Revelation, the same feature reappears. The Beast makes war with Christ’s witnesses, and overcomes them and kills them. The Harlot Babylon, riding on the Beast, is seen to be drunk with the blood of Christ’s saints. The identity of character is maintained throughout. It is all along the same Power, with the same evil policy of deadly enmity against Christ’s true saints, who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus.

We turn to the page of History, and read the pitiful records of God's slaughtered saints in the valleys of Piedmont and in Bohemia, of the Vaudois, the Lollards, the massacred Huguenots in France, the victims of the Inquisition, and many, many others.

A traveller, happening to be near Madrid when a new road was being cut through the spot where martyrs and victims of the Inquisition were burned, finds himself standing breast-high among their ashes and calcined bones.

A Motley stirs our enthusiasm as he tells of the successful struggles of that brave little Dutch Republic against the then mighty power of Spain, but also of the awful massacres of those multitudes who would cleave to the teaching of the pure Word of God.

These are only some instances of many. Whoslew all these? The numbers thus slain in the countries named, and elsewhere, including our own land, have been computed at over fifty millions, besides the unknown sufferers who cannot be numbered. As a question of History—who is responsible for all this most dreadful slaughter? When History is seriously inquired of, it will return no uncertain answer.

“Denying the Father and the Son”

It is objected that the Papacy has never denied, and does not now deny, the Father and the Son. It receives and acknowledges the Christian Creeds, which express the beliefs of the whole Christian Church.

But look beneath the surface. St. John, after defining the Antichrist as *“he that denieth the Father and the Son,”* goes on to say, *“Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father.”* To be false to the one is to be false to the other. With this agree the words of our Lord (John v. 23): *“He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which sent Him.”* It all turns, therefore, not on the words of the lips, but on the real attitude towards the Son and His work; for the Son may be verbally confessed in the Creeds, while He and His work are denied—that is, put aside and

superseded in practice; and the Father also is denied by denying the Son. The term “deny” in this connection is not used in the infidel sense of denying the existence or the Godhead of God and Christ, but it is applied to those who, while professing to be Christians, practically dishonour the Lord by corrupting His doctrine, and so proving false to Christ.

The “Apostasy,” the “falling away,” is a declension from the primitive standard of faith. There has been a previous profession of the truth, but apostasy — departure therefrom — has supervened. Wrong teaching about the Person and Work of Christ has ever been Satan’s great weapon against Him. The Antichristian spirit, which in St. John’s day animated the false but professedly Christian teachers, took the form of corrupting the truth of the Gospel, with regard to the Person and Office of Christ. This, St. John says, is really a denial “*that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.*” It cuts at the root of the Incarnation, and ruins the Gospel

Object of the Great Apostasy

The one grand object and characteristic of the great predicted Apostasy (as stated above), ever followed out with admirable unity of purpose by its originator, the Master Spirit of Evil, is this:

Within the Christian Church itself, and while professedly holding the Christian faith, honouring Christ and His institutions, and making free use of Christian phraseology, practically to set Christ aside out of the Christian system from first to last, in respect of one and all of His saving acts and offices.

The Apostasy openly declared itself towards the end of the fourth century, with the baptismal error exposed in Rev. vii. 2–8 (see *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*).

The general principle of this Apostasy, of which the Papacy is the head, is to deny openly nothing Christian, but to profess the whole of it; to acknowledge the Christian Creeds and the chief Christian doctrines, and to use the Christian phraseology. But in practice — besides making

unauthorised additions — to divert adoration and trust away from the Lord Jesus Christ to other objects, as to His Mother, to saints, to sundry practices of religion — all, it may be, having the outward appearance of true Christian devotion. A great deal that is professedly Christian is allowed to be retained, provided that the heart's real trust is diverted ever so little away from Christ to someone or something else. Thus it is most truly Antichristian (“anti,” instead of).

Naturally, many other evils follow, as is invariably the case when the Divine Lord and His truth are forsaken. But the main principle is, practically forsaking the Lord Himself, in His various offices, while still professing His Name and retaining Christian phraseology. No wonder that multitudes are deceived and led astray, and are made to believe that they are holding the true Christian faith of the New Testament and of the Primitive centuries. Even to the last, some of Christ's true saints are to be found in the Pope's Church, Babylon (Rev. xviii. 4).

The Mediatorship of Christ

The real question then is, How does the Papacy regard the Mediatorship of Christ? To whom does it send the penitent seeking for pardon and peace? Does it forthwith direct him to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to Him first and alone who has said, “*Come unto Me*”?

No. It is rather to His Mother that the sinner is first directed, or to other so-called intercessors, that these may incline the Lord Himself to be merciful; thus disbelieving, denying the willingness and the abundant promises of the Saviour to receive any that come to God through Him, and the plain statement that there is but one Mediator between God and man. It is a notorious fact that, at the present time especially, our Lord, in the matter of mediation, is by the Papal teaching placed in a secondary position, if not lower.

In the year 1916 Cardinal Bourne urged on Roman Catholics constant prayer in connection with the War. In his Pastoral he exhorted his people to turn to God “through the intercession and under the guidance

of her who by her lifelong anxieties and unsurpassed compassion was privileged to share, as no other creature can ever do, in the all-atoning sacrifice of her Divine Son.”

Thus in actual practice, whatever may be the profession of the lips, the Son in His mediatorial character is denied, and in consequence the Father also.

AntiChrist's Character and Teaching

Here is a portrait sketched long ago by some who had good reason to know what they were writing about:

Antichrist is falsehood most skilfully disguised with the appearance of the truth. He bears that name because, though clothed and adorned with the semblance of Christ and of His Church and faithful members, he in reality opposes the salvation wrought by Christ. He robs Christ of the merits of Christ, with the whole sufficiency of grace, righteousness, regeneration, remission of sins, sanctification, and spiritual nourishment; and imputes and attributes them to his own authority, to his own doings, or to the Virgin and saints and their intercession, or to the fire of purgatory.

His main object is to withdraw the members of the Christian Church from allegiance to the Church's only true Head, Jesus Christ, and to attach them instead to himself. In reality he separates the people from Christ, and leads them away to those substitutes already mentioned, that so they may not seek the things of Christ, nor through Christ, but only through the works of their own hands; not through a living faith in God and Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, but through the will and works of Antichrist, agreeably to his preaching that man's whole salvation depends upon his works. He hates, persecutes, and when he can he puts to death, the true spiritual members of Christ.

A Professed Friend, but a Deadly Enemy

Here is another instructive sketch:

Which would be viewed with the deeper abhorrence?

An avowed, open, desperate enemy, sworn against your life, family, friends, and property:

Or one that, while professing the utmost friendship, should by some strange impersonation of yourself in your absence insinuate himself into your place in the family, seize your estate, seduce your wife to be as his wife, your children to look to him as their father, and, if yours be a king's dignity, seize upon your kingdom for himself; that he should then make use of his opportunities to train your wife, children, and subjects into unfaithfulness and rebellion to all your most solemn and cherished wishes and commands, falsifying your letters, and forging your handwriting, in order the more effectually to carry out his plan.

Such is somewhat the view of Antichrist presented in Scripture prophecy, and such is what has been actually realised in the Popes and the Popedom. These prophecies, rightly applied, give the Divine estimate of the greatest system of corrupted religion the world ever saw, and stamp as Satanic the Power which claims to be Divine and infallible, and which still lords it over hundreds of millions of mankind.

The Three Frogs

We are seeing around us to-day the operations of the Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs (Rev. xvi. 13, 14), who come forth under the Sixth Vial—the Vial of the drying up of Turkey—and whose range is over the whole inhabited earth. These three are materialistic Infidelity, Popery, and Priestcraft, from the mouths of the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet respectively. We have now been since A.D. 1820 under the Sixth Vial, and along with the drying up of Turkey which is going on before our eyes, we see these Three Evil Spirits hard at work all over the world. It is the preparation for the great war of Har-Magedon; it is the last supreme effort of the powers of evil against Christ and His cause. They are nearing their doom, and perhaps they know it.

There is nothing in the prophetic Visions to authorise the expectation that in the last days infidelity will be universally substituted for superstition and other corruptions of the truth. The fact that shortly before the final consummation these Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs—not one only—go forth, shows that up to the very end Antichristian error will be various in form. There are two other spirits besides the spirit of Infidelity from the mouth of the Dragon.

The great conflict takes place under the Seventh Vial, which has now begun. The tremendous warfare, following on the strange spirit of unrest and revolution that has broken out in all parts of the world, in resistance to social order and constituted authority, looks singularly like what is foretold as characterising that Seventh Vial. We must be prepared and guided by a true and intelligent knowledge of these prophecies, if we would be ready in time to take our place on the right side. It is for the express purpose of so guiding His people that the Lord has caused these wonderful predictions to be written for our learning.

Why does not everyone see this?

Someone will ask, “If all is so plain, why does not everyone see and admit it?”

Must it always be so, in spite of the darkness and enmity of the human heart, and the snares and deceptions of the great enemy? Alas !

When the “Let” was removed

When the restraining Power that prevented the open manifestation of the Man of Sin had been moved away in A.D. 476, why did not the Christians of those days recognise the crisis and what it portended? St. Paul had quite plainly told the Thessalonians what that restraining Power was, and his warning was clearly understood by the early Christians to refer to the Roman Imperial Power ruling at Rome, as their writings testify. Why then did the warning fail of its effect when the time actually came?

The following reasons have been assigned:—

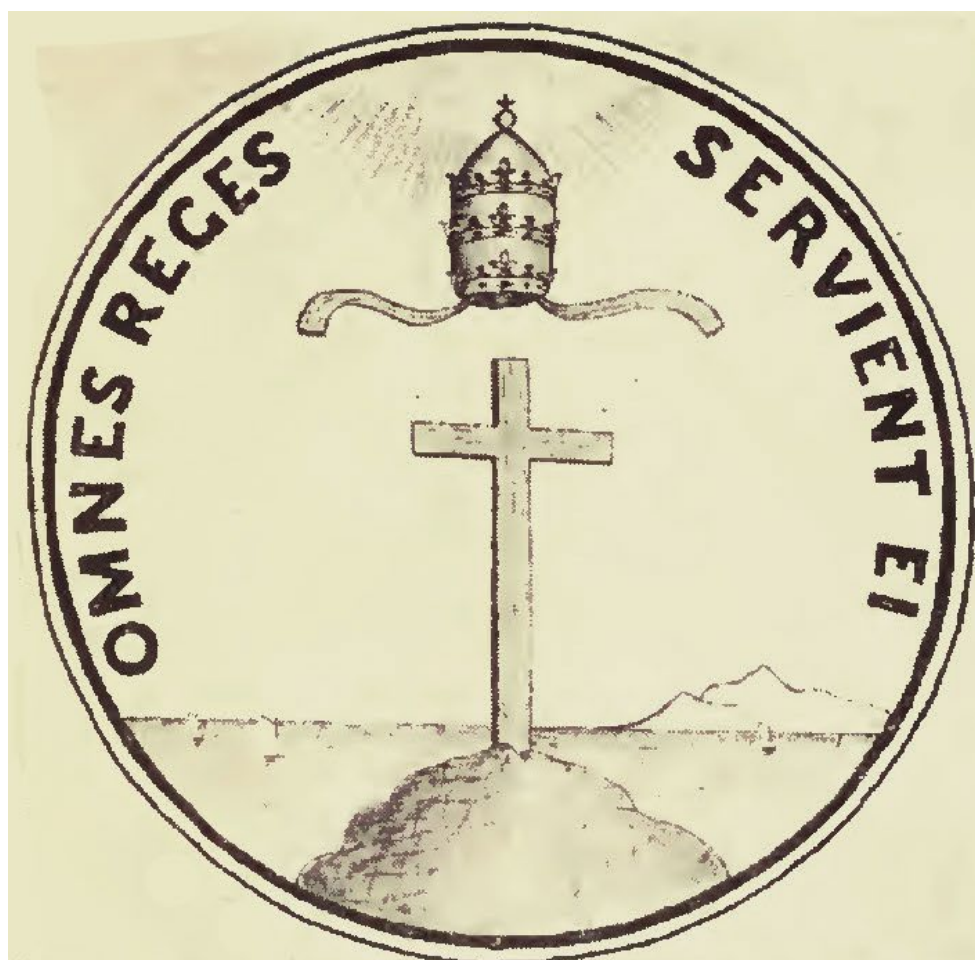
1. The universal prevalence in the West of the mystical principle of interpretation, throughout almost the whole period from A.D. 500 to 1100, and considerably in the East also. By this principle, all in the prophetic symbols, as to geography and chronology, that was most definitely applicable to Papal Rome, was spiritualised away.]

2. The Greek Ruler at Constantinople was still called and thought of as Roman Emperor, after the Gothic catastrophe, though not having Rome itself as the seat and centre of his power. Some three centuries later arose what was called the “Holy Roman Empire”; first under Charlemagne, who was crowned by the Pope at Rome, A.D. 800; and next under Otto I., crowned at Rome, A.D. 962. Hence expositors reasoned as if the “Let” still remained. The “Holy Roman Empire” was put an end to by Napoleon in 1806.
3. The generally received idea that the times people were then living in were a part of the Millennium, previous to Satan’s being loosed for a little season of three and a half literal years, and previous to the manifestation of Antichrist.
4. The political fact, that in these early centuries the Bishops of Rome rose gradually and almost furtively to political power; and with such a combination of lamb-like pretensions to sanctity, and of lion-like pretensions as Christ’s Vicegerents on earth, as served in that dark and un-intellectual era to blind the minds even of expositors to the real correspondence between the Papacy and the foretold Antichrist.
5. The moral fact, that the corruptions of Christian doctrine and worship enforced by Papal Rome were participated in, more or less, by the expositors themselves, in West and East. Hence their blindness to these grand marks of the Antichristian Apostasy already developed.

Twofold Character of the Papacy

The Pope unites in himself two distinct personalities, and in consequence makes two vast but separate claims.

1. There is the immeasurably higher, mightier, but usurped character of Christ’s Vicegerent upon earth, as “Vicar of Christ,” with consequent supreme headship over kings and peoples. This is royal, or rather super-royal, and is signified by the three-crowned tiara. When the Pope is crowned in St. Peter’s at Rome these words are used (in Latin): “Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the father



The Tiara.

Symbol of
TEMPORAL SOVEREIGNTY
AND OF CLAIM OF
HEADSHIP OVER ALL
Kings & Peoples

MEDAL OF
Pope CALIXTUS III
A.D. 1456

The Mitre, Symbol of ECCLESIASTICAL authority AND OF CLAIM OF HEADSHIP OVER The Church



of princes and kings, the ruler of the terrestrial orb, the Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to Whom is honour and glory for ever and ever.”

This claim is made by a dynasty of temporal sovereigns of longest continuance in Europe, who assert themselves to be the supreme rulers of the kings and temporalities of the Roman world; and notwithstanding all that has taken place in History, this claim is put forth in all its fullness at the coronation of a Pope at the present day, in the light of the twentieth century.

2. There is also the patriarchal headship of the Church of Rome, and the claim of supreme headship over the general Christian Church. This is sacerdotal or ecclesiastical, and is signified by the mitre.

What creates complexity is the strange fact that these two distinct characters and functions are united in the same personage — a political power and an ecclesiastical system. But they can be regarded apart from one another, and one might perish while the other remained. The members of the Papal dynasty have been not only heads of a Church, but also European monarchs and temporal sovereigns, until in 1870 the last of their territorial possessions was taken from them. Enthroned at Rome, they succeeded to the Western Empire of the Caesars, and for more than twelve centuries united in a bond of common obedience to themselves all the nations of the Western Empire of Rome.

None of these claims have been renounced. It is a grave mistake to regard the Papacy simply as an ecclesiastical system, with the Pope as its head. It is also a most formidable political organisation, ever busily at work, but mostly under the surface.

Englishmen are almost hopelessly dull and incapable of perception as to the true character of the Papal Government. They persist in seeing in it nothing but a Church and a religion, and in regarding all questions about Romanism as theological rather than political. They do not seem to be aware that it is, and for a thousand years has been, a vast political organisation, with a mere disguise of religion thrown over it. In the Middle Ages Rome was the capital of a kind of Clerical Empire dominating all Western Europe. — *Rev. D. M. Berry.*

The Jews and the Messiah

Remember how the Jews, with all the prophecies in their hands, with Moses constantly read in their synagogues, and the voices of the Prophets sounding in their ears, nevertheless failed to recognise Jesus Christ as their true Messiah, and as a nation fail to recognise Him still. To us, prophecies and fulfilment alike seem wonderfully plain; not so to them. The veil is on their hearts.

So likewise, while to not a few — and one would fain hope to an increasing number — these prophecies of AntiChrist seem wonderfully plain, and their accomplishment unquestionable, there are still many who

have these prophecies and hear their explanations, yet cannot recognise him to whom they all point. So, with all the help and the warnings that the Holy Spirit has given, it is still possible to fail to see aright.

When the “Let” spoken of by St. Paul had been removed, and the era for the manifestation of the “Man of Sin” had arrived, the signs of the times, and the furtive rise of the foretold Antichrist, were not rightly read by the Christians of those days. Wherefore? Here is a significant extract from Mede’s works:

“The Jews expected Christ to come when He did come, and yet knew Him not when He was come, because they fancied the manner and quality of His coming [to be] like some temporal monarch with armed power to subdue the earth before Him. So the Christians, God’s second Israel, expected that the coming of Antichrist should be at the time when he came indeed, and yet they knew him not when he was come; because they had fancied his coming [to be] as of some barbarous tyrant who should with armed power persecute and destroy not only the Church of Christ, but almost the world; that is, they looked for such an Antichrist as the Jews looked for a Christ.”

And while they were thus looking for an Antichrist of their own imagining, the real Antichrist stole unperceived into their midst, and is here amongst us now. He is far more deeply concerned in the present European troubles than most people suspect. One of the Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs issues from his mouth, and is in league and co-operation with the other two.

Of course those who are on the side of Antichrist cannot be expected, at least at first, to admit any of this. But those may be left out of account at present; we are speaking only of those who are not of necessity prejudiced in that direction.

What is wanted for all is more and more earnest and prayerful study of these prophecies; and more readiness, if need be, to give up our own persuasions, and to lay to heart what God has to teach us; that we may be led by the Holy Spirit into all the truth on this deeply important subject.

Tremendous Issues

Tremendous issues depend on the identification and recognition of this great foe, the most insidious and most formidable enemy of our Lord, of His truth, and of His Church.

God, in His Prophetic Word, has given us most elaborate and abundant description, warning, and guidance as to this foe, his aims and methods, and his final doom. There it all is, in Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John, if we will attend to it, and put aside our own prepossessions, and what may even be the most popular notions of the day.

Why all this wealth of description, these elaborate picturings of the foe and his doings? Because he has very special powers of deception; because it will be very difficult to recognise him as the foe that he is. Many will be deceived into regarding him as a friend, or at least a neutral. The object of all this descriptive detail is to enable us to unmask the professed friend and to discover the real foe; and the abundance of the help provided means that the matter is difficult, demanding careful examination and honest attention to one and all of the details given.

For it is possible to see, and yet not to perceive. But it will be disastrous indeed if we get on the wrong track; if, instead of becoming aware of and being on our guard against the real foe that God has pointed out to us, and who is actually in our midst, we are gazing into a far future to discover some imaginary personage, who is expected to do things not assigned in the prophecies to the real enemy. We shall then be presently taken by surprise by the crafty and powerful adversary, and because ignorant and unprepared, we shall be taken at a disadvantage, to our confusion and perhaps defeat. Which God forbid!

Important for the Clergy

Especially is all this important for us clergy, who are responsible for giving official teaching from the Word of God on this as on other Scripture topics. We ought indeed to be clear in our own minds.

The real Antichrist has been in our midst for many centuries, close to us,

doing exactly what is assigned to him; and many of us have not known it, or else refuse to admit it. How grievous the apathy, the ignorance of so many, who neglect to study for themselves the forecasts God has given, comparing them with the solid facts of History (*e.g.* Dan. vii.), and are content to pick up current notions, or to follow some professed leader in exposition, or, sadder still, to put this great subject aside altogether.

But there is much worse. What an awful delusion, not only to ignore all this Scripture teaching, but even to be yearning and working, as some amongst us are, — not curates only, — for reunion with this chief enemy of Christ and of His truth and Church! Will not these be led to reconsider their position in the light of God's Prophetic Word, and come over to the ranks of those who know the real enemy, and are doing what they can to unmask and resist him? "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!"

Remember that at the present time every effort is being made to keep these topics out of sight, to minimise their importance, to put them aside as belonging to a bygone age. The purpose is to distract attention from the true Antichrist, and to pervert or to turn aside what Scripture so plainly declares, applying it to some other Power or Personage, who is not the real foe against whom the Holy Spirit so elaborately warns us. Many minds that do not look deeply into things are easily captured by these crafty devices.

We must be on our guard against this danger. For if we let these Divine admonitions pass unheeded by, they will nevertheless all be fulfilled, but our blood shall be upon our own head.

**THE VIAL POURED OUT
UPON THE AIR;
AND THE
THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS
LIKE FROGS**

“Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” — Jas. iv. 7.

THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS LIKE FROGS

(Rev. xvi. 13–16)

The drying up of Turkey, as foretold under the Sixth Vial (Rev. xvi. 12), began in 1820, and is in rapid progress before our eyes. The Vial is strikingly marked, politically, by this drying up of the symbolic Euphrates — that is, by the decay of the once mighty Turkish Power. But it is no less strikingly marked, religiously, by the outgoing, over England and the world, of Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs out of the mouth of the Dragon, the Beast, and the False Prophet, all united and co-operating in the one object of seducing and gathering men to war against God Almighty. This follows next after the drying up of the symbolic Euphrates has begun, and the action of these spirits progresses at the same time as does the decay of Turkey. They originate under the Sixth Vial, but their influence and work extend and develop under the Seventh Vial, the Vial of the present day.

In Rev. xiii. is described the rise of the Beast from the Sea, the Dragon's creature, and the delegation to him of the Dragon's former throne and power. There is also described the rise and close connection with that Beast of the Two-Horned, Lamb-like Beast, the False Prophet. From that point the Beast from the Sea or Abyss may be traced (Rev. xi. 7), without any change of form, down to this Sixth Vial. The account of the final war and the treading of the winepress is given in Rev. xix.; it is the same Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet all through. As the three are referred to in this Sixth Vial as being now on the scene, the descriptions of the three in Rev. xii., xiii. must be anterior in point of time to this Rev. xvi. Probably the Dragon, on transferring to the Beast his throne and power, has transferred also the covering skin with seven heads and ten horns, so that he now appears on the scene simply as the Dragon.

What are these Three Unclean Spirits?

1. *The Dragon* is that old serpent the Devil, who in earlier days animated and acted in the Heathenism of Ancient Rome. He has been depicted in the Vision of the final war of Heathenism against Christianity (Rev. xii. 7–11), at the opening of the fourth century, in a covering skin of a Seven-Headed Dragon, and he has remained on the scene. The spirit from the Dragon's mouth is heathen-like Infidelity, with its proper accompaniment of blasphemy, and of rebellion against God and His truth, and against rightful authority, Divine and human, when such is opposed to the spirit's action.

2. *The Beast*, or rather the Beast's Eighth Ruling Head, is the succession of the Popes of Rome, from and after the time when the Papacy began to occupy the Dragon's throne and empire in Western Christendom. The spirit from the Beast is the pure, direct principle of Popery, based on the fundamental Antichristian dogma that the Pope is Christ's divinely appointed Vicegerent on earth, the Vicar of Christ here below. It comes from the *mouth* of the Beast; not from his body, the peoples; nor from the Woman, the Papal Church; but from the Beast's ruling head — that is, from the Papacy itself.

3. *The False Prophet* is identified in Rev. xix. 20 with the Two-Horned Lambskin-covered Beast of Rev. xiii. 11–17, which represents the Priesthood of the Patriarchate of Western Europe, from and after the time of its subjection and official attachment to the Roman Popedom; this Two-Horned Beast being the chief agent, mouthpiece, and supporter of the Papal Beast its principal. Here the False Prophet is named without any expression of subjection to the Beast; he bears simply the generic name of an apostate priesthood in the professing Church.¹

¹ See this fully explained in the author's *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*.

The most characteristic spirit of such a priesthood is the spirit of Priestcraft, and this is the spirit from the mouth of the False Prophet. Its essence is to arrogate to its own peculiar order the distinction of being the appointed and necessary mediator between man and God, the one ef-

fective deprecator of His wrath and channel of His grace and salvation; and the spirit shows itself not in the Roman Catholic priesthood only, but in all sacerdotal priesthoods in any Church. It is distinct from and independent of the spirit of direct Popery, though it is its natural and almost necessary ally. It so acted independently in the fourth and fifth centuries, before it was organised to prepare the way for the Antichrist that was to head the Apostasy; and afterwards it was his most effective instrument and supporter, still fully retaining its own peculiar spirit of Priestcraft.

All Three from the Same Source

The Three Spirits, then, are those of *Infidelity*, *Popery*, and *Priestcraft*; and all three are ultimately from the same source. The Dragon has called forth the Beast, and given him his throne and power; and the Beast has been provided with the False Prophet as his chief attendant and helper. As is the source, so will be the stream; as is the enemy who originates, so will be the influence transmitted. These Three are under one and the same evil direction, and act with unity of effect, though to unreflecting persons they may seem to be in opposition to each other. Strategically, they are a most clever combination; for a person who may seem proof against the machinations of the one may yet fall all the more easily under the seductions of the other; or a person may be loudly condemning the doings of the spirit of Infidelity who all the while is working strenuously in the service of the spirit of Priestcraft or Popery, and so is aiding the general effect.

The purpose of the Three Unclean Spirits is to seduce and to gather together the Powers of the world—as Ahab was seduced by a lying spirit to go to Ramoth-Gilead to fall there—in antagonism against Christ’s truth and people, for the great and final conflict.

Rapid and Widespread Diffusion

Here is foretold, after a certain progress has been made in the drying up of the Turkish flood, and ere the expiration of the era of the Sixth Vial, a great revival of energy in these three Powers — Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet; a fresh but final issuing forth in strength over the prophetic scene of those three spirits of evil that had already been the chief enemies to pure Christianity during the eighteen previous centuries.

The symbols signify some extraordinarily rapid, widespread, and influential diffusion throughout the whole Roman world, if not indeed throughout the whole habitable earth, of the three unclean or unholy principles that characterise the Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet; that is, the principles of Infidelity, Popery, and Priestcraft, all alike directed and speeded by spirits of hell. It is their last great effort.

“Frogs”: Agitators

The earthly agencies employed to propagate these evil principles resemble frogs — that is, vain, loquacious talkers and boastful agitators, lofty in pretensions, deluding and seducing the minds of men. The comparison is to the noisy frogs of Southern Europe, and the symbol seems to indicate opposition by speaking and agitation rather than by active violence and persecution; where and when possible, however, these will certainly follow. But though earthly teachers and agitators may be the visible means, the real propagators are evil spirits.

Three Spirits, not one only

There is nothing whatever in Scripture to authorise the expectation that in the last days infidelity will be universally substituted for superstition and corruption of the truth. On the contrary, it is here foreshown that at the close of the dispensation three unclean spirits like frogs go forth together to the kings of the whole world. It is not one only, as from the Dragon alone; but three, from three distinct and contrasted sources, that are to gather the hosts for the last great conflict against Christ and His truth. This plainly shows that, up to the very end, error will be various in form.

HISTORIC SKETCH

The historic sketch of the doings of these three evil spirits must begin from about 1830, when the mystic Euphrates had been dried up in Greece, across the Danube, and in Algiers. Some few years before, the spirits of Infidelity and Popery had made themselves very noticeable; but at this time momentous political changes occurred in France and England, the two most influential Powers in Western Christendom. In France there was the second democratic Revolution, in 1830; in England the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act, in 1829, and the Reform Bill of 1832.

By these, though little intended by the chief authors of those changes in England, the issuing forth of the three spirits in virtual alliance with each other, at least as to common enmity to evangelical religion, was greatly helped and hastened forward. It is especially in England that their actings must be marked, for during the revolutionary era England was the chief asylum of true religion, the centre of evangelisation for the world. And as England still, thank God, occupies that position, though not without some serious falling-off, it is hither that the enemy directs his fiercest assaults. Here the working of his evil spirits would be most injurious to the cause and progress of the truth, and here, and against our land, of all Christendom, the author of evil urges their going forth in power with his deepest subtlety and mightiest energies.

I. The Spirit of Infidelity

The spirit from the Dragon, the early antagonist of Christianity in the days of Roman Heathenism, is the unholy spirit of heathen-like materialistic infidelity, with its proud rebelliousness against opposing truth, whether in religion, morals, government, or even in science itself.

It is notorious that there was a sudden furious outbreak of this spirit in England after the overthrow of the Bourbon dynasty in France, and about the time of the progress of the Reform Bill at home. An extraordinary anti-religious and revolutionary agitation took possession of the

public mind. Rank and property, Church and State, were alike endangered. Frequently was seen the conjunction of the avowed infidel as to religion and the revolutionary democrat as to politics incessantly croaking to the masses, "Agitate, agitate." The Established Church was marked out as the special object of enmity and attack; its prelates were insulted, and even in the House of Lords were admonished to set their house in order. The other religious bodies seemed especially infected with that spirit.

Whoever those may have been who at the time fell under the influence of a mighty spirit of delusion, there could be no two opinions as to the real origin of the godless, irreligious spirit which at this political crisis burst forth with such singular vehemence. Nor was the unclean infidel spirit from the Dragon's mouth silenced even after that fearful crisis. It continued still alive and active, and socialism, chartism, and infidelity still kept up in England their machinery of agitation—inflammatory harangues, mob orators, newspaper articles, and halls in which infidelity and sedition were sedulously inculcated. Human reason was appealed to against the truths of Christianity. The infidel spirit invaded and sought to establish itself even in the sanctuary of the English Church.

The same, with even yet more effect, was the case in the Continental countries, whence the draconic spirit came to England; more especially in France and Germany, but also in Spain, Portugal, Italy, Russia, and Denmark. Nor in Europe alone; its range is wider than the old Roman earth, even to the whole world. Thus in regard to India, advantage was taken of the renewal of the East India Company's charter in 1833 to send out bales of Tom Paine's Works and other like literature.

Its Present Workings

The spirit has not ceased to work from that time to this, in a variety of ways, but all leading to the same end. To its activity are due attacks of all kinds on the Old and New Testaments, not necessarily coarse and vulgar as in the eighteenth century, but refined and subtle, and with a

great show of scholarship, generally reducing or discrediting the supernatural, especially in prophecy. Intelligent and reverent investigation of all that concerns God's revelation to man is not only not to be dreaded, but may with all confidence be welcomed and encouraged. Yet not a little of what shelters itself under the name of "Higher Criticism" is of this Dragon spirit and has its aims. One means of propagating these views is by encyclopaedias and dictionaries, as was done before the great French Revolution.

Our Lord's Testimony ignored

A notable feature of this kind of criticism, betraying its source, is that the testimony of our Blessed Lord Himself, both before and after His Resurrection, to the Old Testament, which prophesies of Him and of His work of Redemption, goes for nothing, and is not taken into account at all. Such teaching, whatever may be its source, and whatever use it may make of the best scholarship, does not come from the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, for it is His special function to glorify the Lord Jesus Christ (see 1 Cor. xii. 3). Attacks both open and concealed are repeatedly made on the Deity of our Lord, and all that it involves.

Effect on Missions

In the Foreign Mission Fields the effect of these teachings and pronouncements of leading men at home, in the British Universities and elsewhere, is disastrous in the extreme. Mission work is disturbed and rendered much more difficult by the diffusion of a theology that depreciates or altogether denies the foundation facts of salvation, and that questions the unique character of the revelation of God in Christ, and, as a consequence, the absolute claims of the Christian religion.

The Lord's Day and Marriage

From the influence of the same spirit come the constant efforts to secularise and degrade the Lord's Day, the bulwark of religion; and to lessen the sanctity of Marriage, the bulwark of Society, giving greater and greater facilities for dissolving the union, with little regard to the Divine arrangements for training up a new generation. So also to lower the estimation of parental authority, and indeed of any authority whatever. The all-round weakening of authority in every form is a distressing feature of the present day. The strike mania prevails everywhere, in England no less than in other countries. Much is done to loosen morals, not least in regard to marriage, and to discredit the Divine Revelation, by the current literature and especially by the fiction of the day. Strange beliefs are put forth, and sects formed, as though at last some great truths had been discovered. The books and pamphlets that set forth these beliefs have wide circulation.

Abundant Superstition

Hence also the encouragement and practice, even among the educated and cultured classes, of various forms of superstition. In this twentieth century, astrology, crystal-gazing, clairvoyance, palmistry, medium-consulting, and other occult practices, are ominously flourishing, and bring crowds of dupes and their money to those who profess them. No thoughtful person can view without alarm the growing passion for superstition combined with decay of religious faith, reckless luxury, and irresponsible frivolity. But God is sobering us by this great war and all that it entails.

II. The Spirit of Popery

The spirit of Popery has been not less active and stirring. What the Popes did after the fall of Napoleon Bonaparte, on their restoration to the Romish See and their resettlement at Rome, before the outpouring of the Sixth Vial (A.D. 1820), must be viewed as but preparatory to what

is here prefigured. They issued Bulls, Allocutions, Indulgences, which asserted or implied all the Pope's old pretensions as Christ's Vicar; and they re-instituted the Inquisition and the Jesuits, those crafty and invaluable helpers of the Beast. The authority they then sought to exercise was very much after the old model, in France, Spain, Portugal, Bavaria, Austria, Sardinia, Naples. In each of these there was a marked revival of Popery, and in some cases even the Inquisition was again set in motion. But this being against the spirit of the age, a popular reaction ensued in the first three of those countries.

Allied with Democracy

Then appeared the power and aptness of Popery to ally itself with whatever new forms of government might arise. For years Ireland had been in agitation; in 1829 the Roman Catholic Emancipation Act was passed, as a preferable alternative to civil war; in 1830 the Protestant King was expelled from Belgium. Whereupon, after some hesitation, the Papal Court, being convinced that democracy was in the ascendant in Western Europe, and finding that the French people, all democratic as they were, professed Roman Catholicism as the religion of the great majority,—for religion in some form or other the human soul craves after,—resolved to ally itself with democracy. A masked alliance was entered into between the spirit of the Dragon and that of the Beast; there being thus presented a double seduction from the truth, according as either infidelity or corrupt Christianity might best suit the character of the country, times, or persons. Such was the state of things for sixteen or eighteen years after the second French Revolution in 1830.

Progress in England

In England, the Reform Bill of 1832 having been passed by the conjunction of Romanists (now in Parliament) and Liberals, results succeeded to strengthen the cause of Popery at home and abroad. The turning of

the scale was found to be in the hands of the Irish Papal party; hence in the House of Commons the deference paid to Romish principles, discouragement of distinctive Evangelical Protestantism, assertion of the obscurity of the Bible, and equal probability of opposite views of its essential dogmas. Romish chapels, convents, and colleges sprang up with increased rapidity throughout the land. The press lent its powerful aid; fiction, music, architecture, all were pressed into service. At length, in 1850, the whole Island was astounded by the Bull of Pope Pius IX., ignoring our Protestant Church, and parcelling out England, as if prepared for it, into Romish Episcopates.

France the Protectress

France helped the Papal cause yet more than did England, for England only put the Romish Church on the same footing as Protestant sects, whereas France adopted it distinctively and alone, especially in the countries bordering on the Mediterranean. Even during the revolutionary era from 1830, democratic France still boasted of being the protectress of Roman Catholicism. Nor did she change after 1848, that third extraordinary Revolution which involved the overthrow of royalty in France, the expulsion of the House of Orleans, and the establishment of the French democratic Republic, as a transition to Louis Napoleon's revived Empire.

Restores the Pope to Rome

The world saw with amazement that when, under fear of the democratic faction at Rome, the Pope had fled from Rome, it was an army of democratic France, under direction of its then President, that fought against their brother democrats at Rome, and restored the Pope to his capital and to his kingdom. During the earlier years of Louis Napoleon's reign, even more than during the reign of Louis Philippe, France carried out the Papacy-favouring policy, as a nation priding itself upon being "the

eldest son” of the Romish Church. During the same period the other European Roman Catholic States concurred in giving their support and aid to the Papacy.

All the Old Claims repeated

Recent Papal efforts show plainly that all the old claims are put forth to-day, as they have been all along, as to the Papal authority, the need for all to recognise and to submit to it, and to be in union with him who usurps the position of Vicar of Christ on earth. All the old and new doctrines and superstitions are vamped up afresh. Thus in Pope Leo XIII's Letter to the English People in April 1895 this prayer occurs : “O sorrowful Mother! intercede for our separated brethren, that with us in the one true fold they may be united to the supreme shepherd, the Vicar of the Son.” In the same letter the Pope brings forward prayers to the Virgin Mary, described as the “Mother of God and our most gentle Queen and Mother”; a “300 days' indulgence,” and “the pious practice of the Holy Rosary.” When Pius X. was crowned in St. Peter's at Rome, on August 9, 1903, these words (in Latin) were used: “Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the father of princes and kings, the ruler of the terrestrial orb, the Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to Whom is honour and glory for ever and ever.” All these claims are being urged at the present time as unscrupulously as ever, but they meet with a very different reception from that they had in the Dark Ages.

Antagonistic Missions

To mar the work of Evangelic Protestant Missions has been in every case one primary object of this spirit. Not only have its Propaganda Missions been vigorously supported, but in very many instances Roman Catholic Missions have been planted where the obvious purpose was to hinder the progress or to pervert the converts of other missions.

Schemes for Reunion of Christendom

We have need to be on our guard as to specious schemes for the reunion of Christendom. By all means let Christian love and unity be cultivated and reunion between Christian bodies be aimed at, on the basis of the Word of God and truly primitive Christianity; but not a little of this effort is the work of this spirit from the mouth of the Beast, and is really intended to bring Christendom, or most of it, if possible, and especially England, the head-quarters of Protestant “heresy,” back under the headship of the Papacy. The invasion of England by Romish monks and nuns and convent schools is reaching alarming dimensions. This is what the Germans call “peaceful penetration.”

Romeward Drift

To assimilate services and doctrine to the Roman type is another of the aims of this spirit, only too successfully accomplished in many parts of our land. Earnest Christians deplore and detest this “Romeward drift,” but it is not checked, nay it is even encouraged, by not a few in authority who should be its strenuous opponents.

III. The Spirit of Priestcraft

The spirit from the mouth of the False Prophet is Priestcraft pure and simple. Its essential character has ever been to arrogate to its own order the exclusive dignity of being the earthly mediator between God and man, necessary for effectively averting God’s wrath and communicating His favour and salvation.

The Oxford Movement

Who can hesitate to recognise this spirit in Oxford Tractarianism, which in 1833 so suddenly and influentially sent forth its voice from the

banks of the Isis? At first the Oxford Movement was avowedly against the two others—the infidel revolutionary and the Popish spirits, and hence much of its early strength. It was looked upon therefore at first by the friends of order, religion, and the Church, in times of fearful peril and agitation, as an ally of conservatism. Not a few of its early authors and abettors so intended it, and foresaw not whither it would lead them. For when a spirit of delusion goes abroad, its plans are not at once fully disclosed, and thus its agents and instruments are often at first led blindfold. Satan may come in as an angel of light. But the development soon became clear and unequivocal.

The Tractarian Era

The time of the issuing forth of this spirit was after some progress had been made in the drying up of the mystic Euphrates. In 1833, after the Turkoman Power had dried up in Greece, Moldavia, Wallachia, Algiers, and other countries for years overflowed by it, the first of the Oxford Tracts issued from the press. It synchronised with the going forth of the spirits from the Dragon and the Beast. Oxford Tractarianism has been accompanied with a most remarkable and almost simultaneous outbreak from the spirit of godless infidelity and the revived spirit of direct avowed Popery.

Its mode of speech and action has well answered to the symbol of a frog. There has been unceasing emission of voice in conversational or more formal discussions, by pulpit, press, essays, novels, poetry, devotional manuals of all kinds and for all ages, children's books, newspapers, music, painting, church decoration and architecture. What is unsound in doctrine is skilfully mystified, the false mixed up with the true, false picturings of evangelical religion intermingled with as false but fair-drawn picturings of the religion of Rome, incessant but delusive appeals made to the better and worse feelings of our nature, high swelling words and claims put forth as to a supposed sacerdotal office and apostolic descent and powers. To all this must be added the formation of secret societies for the promotion of the evil spirit's objects.

Tractarian Success

The speed and far range of the spirit's outgoing, not only at the first, but on each fresh emission of its voice, forces on us the idea of some supernatural influence at work—among laity and clergy, in country and town, in England and the Colonies, in all grades of Society. Nor only there has this spirit made its voice heard, but also in the United States and Canada, and in the Reformed Churches on the Continent. Its human instruments wondered at the fact, and were convinced that some higher power was helping them, not reflecting, however, that it might be an evil spirit rather than a good one.

However willingly one would admit the zeal, moral worth, and high attainments of many advocates of the movement, who knew not what spirit they were of, yet that the helping spirit was one of error, not of truth, will seem little doubtful to whoever takes God's Written Word as the one supreme standard of truth and right, or to him whose heart and reason are fully in accord with the doctrines of the Reformed Church of England in her Articles and Liturgy; still less to him who has entered discerningly into all that these Visions tell us as to the character of the Great Apostasy and of the Man of Sin.

Tractarian Characteristics

The following are some of the chief characteristics of this spirit:

1. It refuses to receive as the one rule of faith and practice the Written Word and commandments of God, a firm adherence to which is the one constant mark of the true prophets and witnesses for Christ. It makes that rule void, as did the Pharisees of old and the apostatising teachers of the fourth and fifth centuries, by addition of another rule of faith and conduct—the traditions and commandments of men.

Tradition, however, has been supplemented, or rather superseded, by the theory of development. This teaches that our Lord had committed to His Church certain seeds and germs of truth destined afterwards to ex-

pand into definite forms; consequently that He did not intend the teaching of His Church to be always the same, but ordained that it should go on continually improving under the guidance of His Holy Spirit. This theory practically abandons the claims of Christianity to be regarded in things essential to salvation as a supernatural revelation, likely to be preserved in its purest form by those who lived nearest to the times when it was given. The way of salvation does not change from age to age; those truths which were effectual for the salvation of souls in the second or third century are sufficient for salvation still. More over, the so-called developments are not seldom found to be in direct opposition to the primitive revelation.

2. It notoriously takes for its model not the really primitive age, though perpetually appealing to “primitive” practice and teaching, but the fourth and fifth centuries, or later ones, when the Church was being greatly corrupted, and the first marked development of the predicted Apostasy had appeared.

3. It has chosen for the primary and fundamental doctrine of its system the very dogma that the Church Sacraments, duly administered, are the unconditional means for communicating Divine life to man; thus superseding the Spirit of Christ, who is Himself directly and alone the Enlightener and Quickener of each dead soul. With this is connected the doctrine of a fancied apostolical succession for the sacerdotal priesthood, as the actual and only conveyancers of that Divine life.

4. It holds doctrines of reserve on the Atonement, and doctrines concerning Justification which virtually supersede Christ as our propitiatory atonement. Also it favours the mediation of living priests and departed saints, superseding Him as the One Mediator.

5. It teaches a mysterious change in the Sacramental bread and wine upon the priest’s consecration; if not transubstantiation, yet most nearly resembling it. It speaks of offering the changed elements as an offering for the living and the dead, holding a doctrine of Purgatory, and encouraging prayers for the dead.

6. It insists upon the duty of auricular confession to the priest, and the necessity of his priestly absolution, with his penances, for God's forgiveness.
7. It praises, if not inculcates, as marking a high attainment of grace, self-imposed celibacy, especially for the clergy; and monastic institutions for either sex, as in the fourth and fifth centuries.
8. It supports in no equivocal manner the Papal pretensions and authority; teaches reverence due to the Pope; recognises his universal primacy; deplores the "schism" at the Reformation; longs for reconciliation and reunion; regards his See as the Saviour's holy home; praises and imitates Rome's ritual in contrast with that of the English Church; and wards off all applications of the titles "Antichrist," "Harlot Church," etc.
9. It avows allegiance to General Councils — not only that of Trent — as speaking the voice of God's Spirit and possessing the Spirit's infallibility, wresting Art. xxi. It excuses and desires re-enactment of the penalties of excommunication for enforcement of the Church's decrees.
10. It displays bitter enmity against the Anti-Papal witnessing of Protestantism and the Reformation; avows as its object the unprotestantising of the National Church; unchurches the foreign Protestant Churches and the Dissenters at home; shows that it does not only not understand the "New Song," the holy and glorious doctrine of Justification by Faith, but also that above all things it abhors and rejects it. Hatred to this great doctrine of the Reformation, to the Protestant Reformation itself, and to the great earthly instrument raised up by God to effect it, has always been characteristic of the Tractarian spirit.

Our differences with Rome are far more and deeper than any questions of aestheticism and ceremonial. They touch the very springs of the spiritual life, and it is for this reason that the Reformation of the sixteenth century stands as a permanent factor, since it meant the emancipation of human consciences from a system which ruled men through the priesthood. It is this that gives point to the present crisis in the Church of England. Sacerdotalism means a system which puts the priest in command of the spiritual life of mankind.

In all these points the character, teaching, and aims of the Tractari-

an School agree very completely with those of the False Prophet. Dean Goode gives this summary :

“It is their avowed desire and object to re-appropriate from Popery the doctrines which our Reformers rejected; to set up a Popish rule of faith, a Popish view of the Church and Sacraments, a Popish doctrine of sacrifice in the Eucharist, available for quick and dead for remission of sins; and in regard of transubstantiation, purgatory, invocation of saints, and even on the Papal Supremacy, a doctrine which, if not Popish, is at least so near it, that it is like splitting hairs to draw a distinction between them; nay, which is admitted to be in most of these instances consistent with the Tridentine statements; and only not Popish because it does not reach all the extravagances practised in the Popish communion.

“The Tractarians must pardon me for saying that their statements, when taken as a whole, incontestably prove that they have taken up their views not from a careful and impartial perusal of the Fathers themselves, but from the works of Romish and semi-Romish writers; for they are involved in almost all their misrepresentations and mistakes.” — Goode, *Divine Rule of Faith*, vol. iii. p. 96.

The Tractarian Leaders

With regard to the movement toward Rome, there was this difference between the early apostatising Church and the present Oxford School —that the latter, as professed members of the Anglican Church, had to deal with the notorious hostility of their Church to Rome and the Papacy, which the former had not. So for some time this hostility was expressed by the Tractarian writers; and it did the movement service, as open evidence against the charge that they had Popish predilections.

Very strange it seemed to reflecting men, considering the affinity of the spirit with that of Romanism, that its ardent advocates should not join the Church of Rome. The Romanists on their side looked with more and more hope continually for their secession, and even hailed the movement as the probable precursor of the re-conversion of England. Soon the anticipated event took place, and most of the Tractarian chiefs seceded to the Romish Church. Others of the leaders remained, with whatever inconsistency, in the Reformed Church of England.

The Report (1906) of the Royal Commission on Ecclesiastical Discipline bears ample testimony to the activity of this spirit at the present time in the Church of England. So do the constant complaints in the newspapers of the advance of Romanising practices and teachings.

What are these Spirits working for?

“To gather them together...” Here is a statement of the object for which these three unclean spirits are working—to gather together the kings of the earth, including, of course, the people of their kingdoms or the majority of them, towards the scene and the purpose of the last great conflict. Their parentage is evil, so is their object, and they act with unity of purpose and effect, be outward appearances what they may. There has generally been an effective playing into each other’s hands, even in the natural and necessary antagonism at times of the infidel spirit of the one with the superstitious spirit of the other two, especially in relentless opposition to evangelical religion.

“Unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.” The idea of a certain duration and continuance attaches to the word “war” (R.V.) such as does not attach to the word “battle.” It is not only some single battle in Judaea or elsewhere; there is indeed a great final conflict on a great battle-field there (Rev. xix. 19; Ezek. xxxviii., xxxix.), but this is as the climax to a much wider warfare that has long been carried on.

Trouble and Distress

The era of the Sixth Vial (which began in 1820) thus includes not only the judgment upon the Turkish Power, a lengthy preliminary now fast progressing before our eyes, but also the active agency of the three unclean spirits whose purpose is to seduce mankind against the Lord of all. Though these agencies have been for several centuries at work, the latter portion of the era of the Sixth Vial is characterised by a fresh and considerable outbreak of their activity, which is to bring about the pe-

riod of disorder, revolution, and warfare, leading up to the great final gathering of the nations to war, in which this dispensation is to close. That final great storm forms the main subject of the Seventh Vial. These evil influences, even now hard at work, may be expected to operate with increased effect under the Seventh Vial as the crisis draws nearer, and to bring about a state of general distress, revolution, and anarchy which will culminate in the great final war.

Physical Force

In his early warfare against Christianity, the Dragon of Heathen Rome carried it on first for two centuries by appeal through the heathen priests to the superstition of the populace, and by the infidel arguments and sneers of heathen philosophers. But then came decisive wars by physical force on the battle-fields of nations.

So here under the last two Vials. First have gone forth vauntingly the spirits of Infidelity and Superstition, then has come the appeal to physical force, in the war, now begun, of the great day of God Almighty. This terrible agency of war, under leaders consciously or unconsciously animated by each and every one of the unclean spirits here described, is waged against Evangelic Protestant Christianity, and against that country most especially which for over three hundred years has been its favoured home — England.

Does our country, and especially do our leaders in Church and State, understand all this, and recognise which are the truest and most formidable foes, how ever disguised? England and England's Church are marked out for the chief assaults of these three evil spirits, and it is useless to give in to them in the hope of obtaining peace. We have to beware of all three, not of one only, and to expect to meet their work anywhere. We must be wise to recognise them even under the guise of what may be popular movements; and to resist them to the utmost, no matter by whom their designs are being fathered or promoted.

Hatred of England

The bitter hatred of England now being shown by Germany, whatever its pretexts, springs from a most formidable source. It is wrought by these evil spirits, and really is because as a nation England loves and honours the Bible and is the home of Evangelical Protestant religion. If she could be swept out of the way or thoroughly crushed, the three evil spirits and the master spirit behind them—who are now making their great final effort before the Lord's return—would have a free course; but in God's mercy they are checked by England's presence and influence and power. Hence their rage against us.

Whoever be our immediate antagonists, and whatever their professed motives and methods, it is essential to penetrate behind all these out-works and to understand whence and wherefore comes the remote impulse. Let England beware, and look upwards for true help and strength. She has no ordinary foes. But if God be for us, who can be against us?

German spies in our midst are a sore danger, of which our authorities should be well aware; but we are honeycombed with spies and enemies of a far more dangerous because less suspected type, as coming events will prove. These are in league with, and consciously or unconsciously are working on behalf of, the Power and the spirits whose chief aim is to crush England as the home of Evangelical religion. Do our ecclesiastical rulers realise all this? What are they doing to resist these formidable foes? Do they study these wonderful Visions, to gather from them the instruction and the warnings God in His mercy has provided?

The identifying feature as to the present time is that all these marks are found *together* to-day—Turkey's decay, *Jewish Renaissance*, and the three spirits' work.

“I come as a thief”

“I come as a thief”—that is, during that war to which reference has just been made. But this seems to refer especially to the outside world, who

have made no use of the Divine warnings and instructions, for Christ's true people are affirmed to be "*not in darkness, that that day should overtake them as a thief*" (1 Thess. v. 4). They will have studied the prophecies, and will have had light on them that will have given them the needful warning. They may not know the very day or the hour, but they will have been prepared, as Daniel was prepared by more than one Vision to expect and to recognise the Second Kingdom when it came (Dan. v. 25–28). It is a striking feature of the religious thought of the present day that a steadily increasing wave of interest on the subject of the Lord's approaching return seems to be spreading among Christians. This is good, but the expectation, to be really useful and reliable, must be based not on one or two isolated texts, but upon an intelligent and comprehensive view of the many predictions that refer to that event, and especially upon the long, orderly, connected prophetic Visions.

"Blessed is he that watcheth..." A warning suited to every age of the Church, but doubly so when the spirits of delusion are abroad, the night far spent, and the cry already raised, as it would seem, of the day of Christ's coming being near at hand. Then, if ever, should His servants, and especially the ministers and watchmen of His Temple, be watchful against putting off, like indecorous slumberers, or men drugged to sleep by the poison draught of some spirit of delusion, those garments of righteousness and salvation of which He Himself was the Giver; lest, seeing them naked, He should shut them out of His heavenly temple and kingdom, and their spiritual nakedness and shame be exposed before the world. Personal living union with and personal trust in the Divine Saviour Himself is the true safeguard, the most effectual antidote against the poison of these evil spirits, and this is brought about by the Holy Ghost.

Many think that there is in this passage an allusion to the Jewish custom of the Prefect of the Temple going his rounds at night to see that the watchmen were at their posts (see Ps. cxxx. 6, cxxxiv.).

Har-Magedon

“And they gathered them together.” “They,” that is the three evil spirits, “gathered them,” that is the kings of the earth. The three spirits extend their voice and influence into the Seventh Vial (see below). It is agreed on all hands that the War of Har-Magedon takes place under the Seventh Vial, and is the conflict immediately before the consummation. All the great hostile *dramatis personæ* of the history of Christendom come on the stage as the end approaches. “Har-Magedon” is “The Mountain of Gathering” or “Destruction.” The name has a meaning ominous of the great overthrow that is to take place there. No doubt it corresponds with the winepress of Rev. xiv. 19, 20.

Change of Opinion as to Apocalyptic Interpretation

To the era of the Sixth Vial and to the agency of the three spirits belongs a remarkable effort to change the views long held by Protestant interpreters in regard to the interpretation of the Prophecies of Daniel and St. John, and so to break down some of the strongest barriers in the Word of God against Romanism.

In 1826 appeared the first prophetic pamphlet of Dr. Maitland, followed by others, energetically assailing the whole Protestant application of the symbols of the Little Horn in Dan. vii. and of the Apocalyptic Beast and Babylon to the Roman Papacy and Church. The scheme he advocated was even more Futurist than the Jesuit Ribera’s (see below), for he supposed St. John even in the very first chapter of Revelation to plunge in spirit into (but see the Greek) “the day of the Lord,” as though “the Lord’s day,” spoken of in Rev. i. 10, could be the great epoch of the Lord’s second coming and of the consummation of all things, passing over the whole of the Christian dispensation without any guidance for God’s Church and people, and ignoring the statements as to “things which must shortly come to pass” in Rev. i. 1, xxii. 6. Nearly contemporarily Mr. Burgh in Ireland put forth his treatise on Antichrist and the Seals, much to the same effect.

Light has Increased

It is enough to point out that light on all the topics in the Visions has greatly increased in these latter times, especially since the date of those publications, and that we have now a much longer series of historic facts than had earlier expositors to aid us in recognising the true explanations. The Year-Day system, applied according to the lengths of the different kinds of year, is now yielding the most striking and instructive results (see Paper vii. in the Author's *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*, on "The Measurement of the Prophetic Periods"; also the new edition of Dr. H. Grattan Guinness's *Light for the Last Days*). There were many points in regard to which it was impossible that the early Fathers and expositors should do more than offer their guesses, for the events were not to happen till centuries after their day. No long series of historic events and of political and religious changes could yet be referred to, by which to test or to illustrate their explanations. Hence to go back to the writings of those early ages in search of the true interpretations is to go back to the knowledge and ideas of childhood for the explanation of what cannot possibly be understood but by mature age.

However, these assaults on the Protestant explanations were not without effect, and many persons adopted these new views as to Antichrist and the Year-Day system. The strange thing is that not a few good Protestants have been drawn into following these Anti-Protestant expositions, and so into casting aside one of the mightiest weapons against Rome's errors and Rome's assaults and the deplorable "Rome-ward drift" of the present day.

Oxford Tracts and the Antichrist

Soon after, another cause appeared, which wrought with very great power to spread and to give weight to these Anti-Protestant opinions.

In 1833 began the publication of the Oxford Tracts, one main object of the writers — soon developed — being to unprotestantise the Church of

England. How then could they overlook or avoid availing themselves of the help of these labourers in the Futurist School whose views set aside all application to the Roman Papacy of the fearful prophecies respecting the Antichrist, and left Protestantism open to the charge of unjustifiable schism, and the Papacy open to the Catholic desires and aspirations of the Tractarians for reunion? Accordingly, as the Tractarian views spread and found favour, so likewise did the Futurist Anti-Protestant views more and more widely prevail.

Hence the change of opinion on Apocalyptic Interpretation, and the gradual but rapid advance of the new English Futurist School, during this period. The influx of German literature into England during the same period began to familiarise the English mind more and more with the most popular German views on Scripture Prophecy, generally Praeterist, and helped on the abandonment of the Continuous-Historic, or, as it may rightly be called, the Protestant system of Prophetic Interpretation.

At the present day, however, a reaction has plainly set in, and several excellent works have appeared on Continuous-Historic lines; some of them from writers who had at first held Futurist views, but found themselves compelled to abandon them on closer examination.

Two Jesuit Expositors

Commentaries on the Book of Revelation generally state that there are three main systems of interpretation of the Visions of that Book—Praeterist, Historicist, and Futurist; and the impression is given that those three are equally the result of sincere Christian study endeavouring to discover the true meaning of the Visions, and that all three may be alike good and true, it being left to readers to choose in safety the one they prefer.

This view of the three systems is not borne out by the history of Prophetic Interpretation. That shows plainly that the Continuous-Historic *system* is the one that has been followed in its main principles by true-

hearted servants of Christ, by martyrs, confessors, reformers, besides a whole galaxy of learned students and expositors down to the present times, but with varying degrees of light. All these have believed that these Visions referred in some way or other to the present dispensation, and foretold and described the course of history of the Church of Christ through the centuries; but in the providence of God the full understanding and application of the Visions, especially of those nearer to our own day, has been for a time withheld, and it is only of recent years that the meaning of many details of these Visions has been made clear. There has been some slow and laborious progress all along, but much brighter light now shines for those who will turn their gaze towards it.

At the era of the Reformation the Reformers dealt from these Prophetic Visions such heavy blows to Rome and her system that it became indispensable to discover some means of blunting these formidable weapons, and of diverting their effect away from the Papacy and the Romish Church.

This was accomplished towards the close of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth by two Jesuits. One of them, the Jesuit Ribera (A.D. 1580), developed as to its main features what is now known as the Futurist system, referring most of the Visions to some era in the remote future; while the other, the Jesuit Alcasar (A.D. 1614), found their accomplishment in the past fall of Jerusalem and of Heathen Rome, thus developing the Praeterist or past system of Interpretation. Either served the desired purpose of diverting their application from Papal Rome, and, notwithstanding the serious difficulties they both raise, both have had many followers, learned and unlearned. The success of Ribera's system may be seen in that most Futurists regard as the Antichrist not the Papacy, but some personage who is supposed to appear in the future.

It is therefore not correct to represent all three systems alike as the result of sincere Christian study, searching for the right meaning. That is the case indeed with the Continuous-Historic, many of its disciples having given their lives for the truths they held; but not so with the other two. Their origin was from two Jesuits, and their object from the first was

if possible to upset what is really the Protestant Interpretation. Their original aim was not to discover the true meaning of these prophecies as intended by the Holy Spirit who inspired them, but to invent plausible explanations which should seem to solve the problem, and yet should divert its application from the system which it assails with such tremendous effect.

Naturally, all who have a leaning towards the Romish system would be disposed to favour the interpretations that protect it, but sincere seekers after truth will surely pause before they commit themselves to schemes that originated with enemies of the truth, and the avowed purpose of which was to blunt the weapons of the fighters for truth.

THE SEVENTH VIAL (Rev. xvi. 17–21)

This, the last Vial of Judgment, is poured out “*upon the air*” or atmosphere of the Apocalyptic world. As the natural atmosphere is the region of storms, the medium through which the heavenly luminaries shine on us, and the element we breathe, a great physical disturbance in the air must affect it in each of these functions; and if it be thus in the symbol, so must it be likewise in what is symbolised.

The symbol has been used before, under the Fifth Trumpet (Rev. ix. 1, 2), of the smoke from the pit darkening the air, this smoke being the false Mohammedan religion, out of which came the Saracen locusts. When the political atmosphere was darkened by the smoke of Mohammedanism, there resulted agitation and moral taint in Greek Christendom, as well as a darkening of the ruling authorities in the political heaven. The symbolic sun, moon, and stars communicate to us their influences, their light and heat, through the medium of the political constitutions of the states to which they belong. This, then, would be the air or atmosphere upon which the Vial is poured. The action of the Vial signifies the vitiation of the very elements of thought and principle, religious, moral, and political, within the affected area.

We are now dealing with much that is still future, though perhaps nearer at hand than we think, for the Seventh Vial has begun to be poured out (see below). We cannot tread as firmly as if we had the guidance of accomplished facts, as we have had hitherto, to aid us in the explanation of the symbols. But these Visions, no less than the others, are intended to be understood, and we may not ignore or neglect their teaching, even though some of it may still be obscure.

On the Air

The Vision of the Seventh Vial teaches that after a certain progress of the three unclean spirits now abroad, so as to marshal their strength in Western Christendom and its colonial dependencies against Christ's cause and Church, and after a cry of Christ's coming as near at hand, such as seems now surely begun, there is to arise all suddenly some extraordinarily fearful vitiation and darkening of the political atmosphere, the permitted effect perhaps in God's righteous judgment of the working to a crisis of those evil principles.

Doubtless the vitiation of the political atmosphere in Western Europe, especially among what are known as the Latin nations, will be unprecedentedly awful. The very elements of thought and feeling, of social affection and moral principle, by which society is in God's wonderful wisdom constituted and preserved, may be so affected as very much to intercept all genial influences of the ruling authorities; to minister disease instead of health to the body politic; and perhaps, with terrible convulsions, to resolve society for a while into its primary elements.

The Great Earthquake

See now how the sequel is described. Politically a revolution (symbolised by an earthquake) follows, more mighty, more subversive and awful, than any previously described, and ending in the Tripartition of the constituency of the Ten Kingdoms of Western Europe.

The “*lightnings, voices, and thunders*” are the well-known symbols of wars and tumults. Then follows the mighty earthquake, greater than any before; that is, greater than that on the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity (Rev. vi. 12), at the Gothic Invasions (Rev. viii. 5), at the Reformation (Rev. xi. 13), and at the French Revolution (Rev. xi. 19). This tremendous upheaval of the fabric of human society, this greatest of all revolutions, affects especially “*the great city*,” that is, the area of the Ten Kingdoms (compare Rev. xi. 8).

The chief nations of the old Roman earth — that is, of Western professing Christendom — are now in marked political ascendancy before the whole world, Heathen, Mohammedan, and Jewish. The eyes of all nations are forced on this same Roman earth, as being the very focus of commerce, science, and political power. A great moral and political disturbance here, therefore, must mightily affect the whole world.

The Tripartition

“*The great city was divided into three parts.*” As the result of this earthquake, a most remarkable change is foreshown as destined to befall the European Commonwealth; nothing less than the final breaking up of that decem-regal form of the Papal Empire which has characterised it for now nearly thirteen centuries, and its change into a new and Tripartite form. This Tripartition may probably be, like the earlier separation of the Tenth Part of the great city, both religious and political. Territorial Tripartition certainly seems included, and it may be supposed that the predicted threefold division will have a threefold purpose.

It is plain that the expected tenfold division of the old Roman Empire which some are looking for is not to be. A tenfold division of Western Rome has existed for many centuries, but it is to pass into a threefold division at the end.

[Many points in these Visions are more fully explained in the author’s larger work, *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*.]

“The cities of the nations fell.” In Rev. vii. 9, x. 11, xiv. 6, etc., the term “*nations*” may have a meaning extending beyond the Roman world, but in Rev. xi. 2, 9 it seems restricted to the Latinised Christians of the Papedom. The cities “fell.” In Rev. xi. 13 it is said that “the tenth part of the city fell,” referring to England breaking away from under the Papacy. But here, having regard to the connection and to what is revealed in Rev. xvii. (which see), the expression may mean that they fell away from their allegiance to Babylon or the Romish Church; for it does not appear that they fell away from allegiance to the Papal Power, the Beast and the kings being together to the end (Rev. xix. 19).



Babylon Remembered

The Tripartition of the European Commonwealth is to be the very alarm bell for the long-delayed judgment on Babylon the Great. Now at

length she comes up in remembrance before God, and receives her own final and appalling doom.

Babylon is not the Popedom, but the Romish Church and city, and what is here briefly summarised is presently expanded in full detail. It is here implied that she has already had a long and triumphant career, and that that career has been so evil as to call for a specially awful judgment from God. Her character, career, and doom are forthwith described (Rev. xvii., xviii.). She has been engaged in a savage warfare against Christ's saints, so much so that she is now seen drunken with their blood. During all that long time she has been apparently forgotten by God, but now at last she is "remembered" for judgment (see Rev. xviii. 5).

Islands and Mountains Flee

After the judgment on Babylon, the great earthquake still further extends its effects, and develops into a complete levelling of everything in the social fabric. All social bonds are annulled and disappear; all governing powers are put an end to. *"Every island fled away, and the mountains were not found."* The earthquake affects the sea, or maritime parts, as well as the mainland. In the earthquake of the Sixth Seal (Rev. vi. 14), the mountains and islands were only *"moved out of their places,"* in the change from Heathen supremacy to Christian. But here they no longer appear when looked for; all the prospect has been reduced to one dead level, mountains and islands having been levelled down to earth and sea.

Former revolutions have implied only a change from one form of government to another; but this one seems to involve the disorganisation of government itself, and of the social fabric altogether—in fact, anarchy absolute and complete. If the waters and the plains or valleys lying level or low represent the people at large, then hills and mountains that rise above them represent those who are above the rest in authority or social position (see Ps. lxxii. 3); and the islands represent institutions or organisations in some social way marked off from the rest and rising above them, though standing in their midst. All these have now disappeared.

Anarchy

The purpose of the Anarchists has been declared plainly enough: they aim at the subversion of the present state of society

“Obviously, if the Divine Government of the world is wholly denied, there is nothing illogical in the ultimate refusal of the individual to render obedience to any authority whatever. The Anarchist says, in effect: ‘There is no God, and therefore there is no source of authority, and no justification for the claim of any one man to control the conduct of any other man.’ On this view each man is a law to himself and a bitter opponent to any system of government, human or Divine. The whole theory was effectively summed up long ago in the words, *‘Ni Dieu, ni maître’* (Neither God, nor master).”

Here are two pronouncements made during 1901:

“No more laws. No more judges. Burn the guillotines; demolish the prisons; drive away the judges, policemen, and informers, the impurest race upon the earth; treat as a brother the man who has been led by passion to do ill to his brother.”

“Free work. Free use of things. Communal possession of all the means of social wealth, and the machinery of production, of ways and communication, of land, of mines, of water, etc. The abolition of all private property. The doing away with government, with class, with militarism, with judges, with the nobility and bureaucracy. Social emancipation. Anarchy.”

In short, ignore the terrible facts that man is a fallen and sinful being, and that he has an evil heart within and a powerful tempter without; and abolish all the safeguards and restraints that God has provided and that social order has devised. What an awful prospect!

The Great Hail

This mention of the hail comes after, not before, the Tripartition. If the analogy of the First Trumpet be followed, the hail would seem to indicate a judgment from the North. There may be that also which shall literally answer to the prediction, but the Apocalyptic figures generally require first a symbolic explanation.

To resist the spread of the great French Revolution of 1789, there was

ultimately founded a coalition of the European Powers against France, and fearful warfare and carnage ensued, and a plague of leaden hail. The “great hail” may be of the same kind, but on a much larger scale, and with the latest developments of modern lethal weapons (see below).

The Seventh Vial has begun

The importance of England in the Prophetic programme, and the significance of what happens there, have already been pointed out. Now, shortly after the passing of the Parliament Act in August 1911, by which a heavy blow was struck at the British Constitution in the overthrow of the Lords’ Veto, disabling the House of Lords, there followed an extraordinary and inexplicable outburst of unrest, in Britain and her colonies as well as in other countries. The newspapers were full of it, and tried to account for it in a variety of ways.

Unreasoning strikes on a vast scale, with revolutionary spirit and violence, and not seldom against the will of the leaders of the working classes, broke out in many parts of the world, and had to be put down with a firm hand, if society was to be preserved. All these upheaval movements showed a spirit ominously like what is foretold under the Seventh Vial; and even if these doings were only preliminaries, they were most significant, and conveyed a grave warning. No wonder that that date, followed as it was by what has just been described, as well as by most terrific warfare, should have arrested the attention of prophetic students at home and abroad, and should have suggested itself as the commencement of the Seventh Vial, the last of the series, the closing section of the Seventh Trumpet.

Warfare on a Gigantic Scale

During the subsequent years, in accordance with what is foretold, there has followed warfare on a gigantic scale, “*lightnings, voices and thunders*,” as never before in the history of mankind. First, in the regions of the

Balkans against Turkey, and then between the Powers that had been righting Turkey. The result was the thrusting away of Turkey from her European territories towards Asia Minor, leaving her only Constantinople and a narrow strip along the Sea of Marmora. Next, there broke out the most terrible warfare, begun by Germany and Austria against Belgium and France, but presently spreading over the whole of Europe, including our own country, and drawing in our Colonies, India, and the United States of America. Turkey joined with Germany against us and our Allies, and in consequence lost Egypt, Cyprus, and parts of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia, and of Palestine.

Two New Features

In the tremendous warfare of the present time two new and notable features have appeared that fit in as auxiliary illustrations of what is foreshown under this Vial—the Vial that is poured out “*upon the air*,” and one of the judgments of which is “*a great hail*.” The emblems used in these Visions are generally to be understood as symbols, but in some instances there is literal fulfilment as well, by which attention is the more forcibly drawn to the deeper meaning intended.

We are now seeing an immense development of warfare in the air by aircraft of various kinds, these being used not for scouting only but also as fighting units, as well as for dropping bombs like hail out of the sky. Never before in history has there been any thing like this. Add thereto the use of poisonous gases poured out into the air to asphyxiate the opposing fighters, and of liquid fire.

There is also a tremendous increase in the power and use of artillery, with high-explosive shells and rapid and far-ranging fire. Guns are now made that throw shells of a ton weight to a distance of twenty miles. The middle of their trajectory being several miles high, these huge missiles may well seem to come straight down out of the sky like “*hail about the weight of a talent*.” This also was unknown till the present war broke out. It may foretell also a great development in bomb-dropping by large aeroplanes.

It is surely significant that these two new features should be appearing together, at the present time. Still, too much importance should not be attached to the merely literal, as though it fulfilled all that was signified.

The Great Earthquake

The next great event to look for in sequence to the thunderstorm of warfare is the mighty European Revolution foretold as the “*great earthquake*,” greater than any before, resulting in the Tripartition of the Great City, and followed by the destruction of the Roman Catholic Church. Already revolution has begun in Russia; the ancient dynasty of the Tsars has been dethroned, and an entirely new constitution is in course of formation. Is this the first premonitory shock?

This great earthquake is no doubt the mighty disturbance and darkening of the symbolic luminaries referred to by our Lord in His prophetic discourse on the Mount of Olives (Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 24, 25; Luke xxi. 25, 26). The firmamental heaven, with its luminaries, is the well-known symbol of the governing department and of its authorities; and what is here foretold is in much plainer language than that in the Gospels. For it is a mistake to try to explain the Revelation Visions by means of the Gospel prophecy. The reverse is the correct process; the earlier and more obscure statements are illuminated by this latest and fullest of the prophecies given by our Lord.

A SOLEMN WARNING

THE THREE UNCLEAN SPIRITS CONTINUE UNDER THE SEVENTH VIAL

We have seen that the time when the Three Unclean Spirits like Frogs first issued forth was after the Euphratean flood had begun to dry up—that is, after 1820. We have looked into History subsequent to that date, and have discerned the fulfilment of this part of the Vision in the operations of the three Satanic principles here described. But we must remem-

ber that their influence and operations continue and increase under the Seventh Vial, and lead up to the final conflict of Armageddon; indeed, wider and more strenuous effort may be expected under the Seventh than under the Sixth Vial.

St. John had beheld all three personages,—Dragon, Beast, and False Prophet,—for they had long been on the scene, and he could be in no uncertainty as to the character and aims of the three spirits that issued from three such mouths. He “saw” them, as a representative man; that is, those (represented by him) who in these present times hold the Apostolical doctrine and are fellow-disciples of the Apostle will be able to recognise these three evil influences and their outgoing and progress. While others are endeavouring, on principles of mere human wisdom, to explain and account for what is now taking place, the wiser ones, Spirit-taught from these Visions, will perceive and understand the source, character, influence, aims, and success of these three spirits, and likewise their coming doom and that of their dupes.

These three are spirits, not flesh and blood, though acting through human instrumentality and making use of flesh and blood and brain for their purpose. Unclean spirits, for they are the spirits of demons, all three from an impure source, and themselves impure; possessing to a certain extent supernatural powers, working signs, and impressing the minds of the ignorant and unwary; themselves invisible to the human eye, but revealing their presence and influence by the results of their operations. He must be blind indeed who fails to discern their doings in the world around. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light, and these evil spirits likewise may fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; wherefore it needs Spirit-enlightened sight to penetrate the disguise.

The spirit from the mouth of the Dragon shows the characteristics of the Old Serpent, the Devil, Satan. He was a liar, a murderer, a tempter, a deceiver, from the beginning, and a proud rebel against all authority. Murder and every kind of horrible brutality in warfare are his work, as also private and public lying, and every form of ignorant and of learned superstition. Germany of to-day supplies many an illustration of the pernicious results of his influence there.

Attached to the Sixth Vial, and forming a part of it, are four verses of immense significance, predicting the war of Armageddon. The fearful outbreak which began in 1914 has directed the attention of all who believe in the Bible to those verses. Three evil spirits are seen to go out into the world to do Satan's work. Their particular purpose is to involve the world in war...To-day the prophecy stands revealed, though the completion of its fulfilment may for a time be delayed. The causes which led to the present war are exactly those indicated. They account for all that the Germans have done — their long hostile preparations in time of peace; their false pretext for war; their murderous onslaught on peaceful neighbours; their breach of solemn compacts; and their methods of savagery.

The Germans have abandoned Christianity. It stood in the way of their ambitions. It reproved their covetousness. It taught a "slave morality" of kindness, contentment, and unselfishness. For more than a generation the spirit of Infidelity has been at work in Germany, and it has demoralised the people. Higher Criticism is German in name and in origin. It begins by rejecting on *a priori* grounds all definite inspiration, miracle, and prediction. It has applied to the Bible critical methods which would produce absurd results if applied to any of the classical authors. It has treated Scripture as if it were a dead body handed over for dissection. As a consequence, the German people have gradually lost their faith in a Divine and living Christ, and have taken instead a god peculiar to Germany, who is almost a revival of the Pagan god of War...Nothing can be wrong which helps on Germany's desire to rule the world. Everything is justified by "military necessity." It is the worship of expediency in its most hateful form; a compromise with any crime so long as it promotes success... It is being adopted on a national scale in the present war, in the attempt to gain for the nations over whom Rome still rules a world dominion.—Rev. E. H. Home.

Of the Beast, *i.e.* the Papacy, it is said in Rev. xiii. 5,6: "*There was given to him (by the Devil) a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies...And he opened his mouth for blasphemies against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, even them that dwell in the heaven.*"

The Pope puts forth the claim to be the Vicar of Christ on earth, and therefore above all kings and peoples, also head of the Christian Church. He insists on all these claims being universally acknowledged, on his Church being the only true Church, and on union with him being essential to salvation.

The spirit of Priestcraft, from the mouth of the False Prophet, speaks like the Dragon. It claims to be the intermediary between the soul and

the Saviour, and to be the dispenser of God's favour through the Sacraments. It teaches Romish and semi-Romish doctrines, and encourages Romish forms of worship, practices, and superstitions. It aims at restoring the Mass in place of the Holy Communion. The False Prophet being subordinate to the Beast, his function is to aid the Beast and to promote his interests; that is, to play into the hands of the Papacy.

So these three unclean spirits are no new creation, but a fresh and formidable outburst of activity and effort, under the Sixth and Seventh Vials, with a view to the great final conflict that is drawing near. Their assault is threefold. It is not enough to discern and to fight with one; there are other two leagued with that one, and we must be on threefold guard. The final efforts of evil are not of one type only — as of atheism or infidelity — but of three types, Popery and Priestcraft as well.

These unclean spirits “*go forth unto the kings of the whole world.*” Their chief aim, of course, is to seduce especially “kings,” *i.e.* those in positions of authority, poisoning and corrupting their minds by instilling as much as they can of their accursed principles. Some minds, thank God, will not admit them at all; they have been better taught. But alas, many others do; and if they are in positions of influence and authority, they are able to taint and to seduce multitudes of unwary souls.

The energies of these spirits are world-wide. One may expect to find traces of their operations anywhere on the whole earth, following up and thwarting the efforts of the messengers of truth, often with only too much success, as well as spreading their own pestilential teachings.

Their object is to gather together these kings “*unto the war of the great day of God, the Almighty.*” And they meet with considerable success, for it is said that “*they (the evil spirits) gathered them (the kings) together into the place which is called in the Hebrew Har-Magedon.*” There the final battle takes place, the climax of the “war.” So these kings yield to the temptation to rise up against the Almighty. They are under a strong delusion, a seductive mirage floats before their eyes to lure them on, and it leads them to certain destruction. They are so infatuated as to expect victory, whereas they are hurrying on to utter defeat.

“Now therefore be wise, O ye kings:
Be instructed, ye judges of the earth.
Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling.
Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish in the way,
For His wrath will soon be kindled.
Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him.”
(Ps. ii. 10–12.)

Conclusion

Now here is something greater and far more momentous than any sagacious forecasts of statesmen and politicians, or the newspaper explanations of present troubles. We are nearing the end of this dispensation, and are seeing the spiritual preparations for the last great conflict. We have to war not against flesh and blood or human brain alone, but against wicked spirits, against the prince of the power of the air and his evil demons and subordinates. They have gone forth, and are now hard at work; and it is imperative that we recognise this, and put on the whole armour of God in which to encounter them.

Let us be warned. Let us be quick to recognise these foes. Let those in any position of authority be specially on their guard, for they are the chief mark for the most subtle assaults and the most poisonous influences of these evil spirits. This is the last portentous effort of these demoniac powers to gain the mastery over the world, and their great aim at present is the ruin of England. They are steadily working to carry out their unholy purposes, in the light and in the dark, in the palace and in the cottage. When manifestations of their activities are seen, let them not be minimised or underrated, or treated as unimportant and negligible. However common like evils may have been in other days, they are especially prominent now, and are being urged on by evil spirits with untiring energy and relentless malice.

Above all, let their action be firmly resisted, even in its beginnings. These are not matters of indifference, nor are they to be disposed of by ridicule; it is all most tremendously real and grave. Every effort is made to keep people in ignorance of this mighty campaign, to delude them into believing that nothing abnormal is taking place. Attention is diverted into other channels, perhaps against fictitious foes; whereas all the while most strenuous exertions and preparations are being made for attaining their own ends. *“Whom resist, steadfast in the faith.”*

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT HARLOT (Rev. xvii.)

“Come hither, I will show thee.” — Rev. xvii. 1.

THE JUDGMENT OF THE GREAT HARLOT

(Rev. xvii.)

This Vision (Rev. xvii.) is introductory to the judgment on Babylon, and explanatory to St. John, as the symbolic man, of its causes and reasonableness. This is God's usual method when about to execute any very notable act of vengeance. He shows His Church its justice beforehand, thus vindicating His honour, and warning such of His people as may have been deceived to separate themselves in order to escape imminent doom. So with Lot and Sodom, Babylon (Jer. li. 6), our Lord and Jerusalem.

Definitions

The Beast is the Papacy, the whole succession of the Popes of Rome, with their subjects, and the Harlot is the Romish Church. So important is the description of the Beast that it is twice given — here in this chapter, which relates to the end of his history, and in Rev. xiii., which relates to its beginning. Here is given us a bird's-eye view of more than twelve centuries of history, a chapter the right understanding of which is of the last importance.

The judgment of the Great Harlot was revealed to St. John by one of the Seven Angels that had the Seven Vials, this signifying that the complete historical revelation here given belongs to the era of the Vials. That particular Vial Angel may be supposed the revealer in the time of whose Vial-outpouring a full understanding would prove to be given of the Woman and the Beast, doubtless the Seventh and last. If so, this exposure belongs chronologically to the time of the outpouring of the Seventh Vial, just as it stands in the sacred text. Much would have been

made clear before that date, but not till then would the Woman fully appear in the depicted relationship to the Beast and to his Horns. The picture would be premature at any earlier period, though it embodies a long previous history.

Purpose of the Vision

1. “*Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot.*” Who that earnestly desires to know the truth would not eagerly respond to this gracious offer of instruction?

Not, “I will show thee the great harlot,” but “the *judgment* of the great harlot,” with whom the kings and the inhabitants of the earth—that is, all classes of persons in many parts of the world—have committed fornication. She sits upon many waters—that is, peoples (ver. 15)—so wide is the extent of her influence and of her teaching. This is in fact the “catholicity” of which she boasts (see the medal representing Rome Papal: “*sedet super universum*”). The judgment is described in verses 16, 17; but St. John is so overcome with astonishment at what he sees, that the Angel gives him fuller and further explanations before describing the judgment itself. The Angel (ver. 7) promises the explanation of (1) the Woman, (2) the Beast, but begins with (2). This is in strict accordance with the chronology, for it is not till near the end of the Beast’s history that the Woman fully appears in this condition and this relation to him.

The same Power—the Beast of Rev. xiii.—as seen and described here is in a later stage of development, and is now represented by a double symbol, a Beast and a Woman. The secular power is thus shown to be wielded by Church authority. The Woman has become responsible for the crimes committed by the Beast, and so occupies the chief place in the Vision.

Secret Spiritual Teaching

3. “*He carried me away in the spirit.*” The Vision was out of the usual routine and order, as displaying a phenomenon of no less than 1260 years’

duration, and consequently that which Christ's people living at the era of the Vials could see only mentally and not by the bodily eye.

The result of this secret spiritual teaching is seen in the next chapter (Rev. xviii. 1, 2). That exposure is public and notorious. It seems to represent the several sections of the Christian Church uniting in opinion as to Rome being indeed Babylon the Great, after the secret teaching that has been preparing the minds of some.

A Wilderness and Waters

3. *"Into a wilderness."* Not the wilderness into which the Woman, the true Church, fled and was hidden (Rev. xii. 6); nor the desolation total and final destined to befall the Harlot at last through the judgment by fire (Rev. xvii. 16); for she is here depicted not as suffering under judgments of either human or Divine origin, but as in all the wantonness, pride, and gaudiness of a prospering harlotry. The desert appeared to a considerable extent flooded with water round where the Harlot was seated. Moreover, she was said to be seated on Seven Hills, symbolised by the Seven Heads of the Beast that bore her.

The waters are emblematic as well as literal. As the Seven Heads or mountains were not only a natural feature of the scene, but also symbolised the seven forms of government Rome would previously have experienced, so the waters that inundated the base of those hills where the Harlot had her seat were not only literally true, but also were an apt symbol (ver. 15) of the barbarian floods which, after pouring into and desolating the Empire, would at length constitute nations, tribes, and languages, subject to Papal Rome's dominion.

The Roman Campagna

By almost necessary inference this desert scene was the Campagna around Rome. St. John might ask, How could this be the Roman Campagna, which in his time and for centuries had been most cultivated?

The present desolate state of the Campagna, began at the time when first, after the Ten- Horned Beast of Western Christendom had emerged into existence (Rev. xiii. 1), the Harlot Church of Rome rose on its back to supremacy; and it has continued ever since, till the Italians, after the fall of the Pope's Temporal Power in 1870, recovered Rome as their capital city, and were able to begin to do something towards recovering also that desolate area.

The Ten Gothic Powers spoiled and burned Imperial Rome in the fifth and sixth centuries, and so desolated her Campagna as in fact to originate that desert region out of which she rose up again as Papal Rome, and which attached to her ever after. This desert state of the Roman Campagna continued most remarkably the constant characteristic of the scene all through the 1260 years of Papal supremacy, a notable contrast between Rome Imperial and Rome Papal. (The Gothic Invasions are more fully described in the Author's larger work, *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*.)

Gibbon, when about to describe Rome's revival and restoration to dominion in the new character of Rome Papal, under Gregory I., about the close of the sixth century, gives a descriptive sketch of the Campagna which one might suppose to have been drawn for the express purpose of illustrating this passage (*Decline and Fall*, viii. chap, xlv.) : Chiefly from the long continued harass of barbarian invasions, "the Campagna was reduced to the state of a dreary wilderness; the land barren, the waters impure, the air infectious." Further desolation was caused by the inundations of the Tiber.

Though the city rose again in its new and ecclesiastical character, the Campagna remained a scene of desolation. In consequence of depopulation after the barbarian invasions, districts once highly cultivated, above all in Italy, were changed into forests or marshes. In every other country, as civilisation and population advanced, the recovery of these lands was successfully accomplished, but not so in the vast plain round Rome. From the days of the Goths and Gregory down to the present, the traveller has been struck by the waste and dreary Campagna that sur-

rounds the city. The Tiber still from time to time overflows his banks as of old, and then from the distant hills Rome is often to be seen actually sitting upon many waters.

Thus the desert scene associated with the Harlot in the Vision was a landscape admirably perfect, drawn from nature; a true and faithful picture of the Campagna of Rome as from that date it appeared and has continued ever since.

The Woman and the Beast

The Woman and the Beast are here shown distinct, though in close connection; the Beast's body — that is, his popular constituency — both upholding and being subject to the Harlot that sat on it. By the Woman sitting on the Beast's body is signified that superintending and guiding power which the rider possesses over his beast; than which nothing could be chosen more apt to represent the superiority claimed and exercised by the See of Rome over the secular kingdoms of Western Christendom. Under the figure of the Woman and the Beast are represented a professing Church, and a great Empire of which the ruling head is the Papacy.

As the true Church is doubly prefigured as a Woman and a City — the Bride and the Heavenly Jerusalem — so the false apostate Church is doubly symbolised as a Woman and a City.

An Apostate Church

In the light of the accompanying and contrasted symbol of “the Bride, the Lamb's wife” (Rev. xix. 19), this Harlot Woman is interpreted to represent an Apostate Church, the Church of Rome. The Woman is a visible Church, an earthly corporation, with a local connection. The contrast with the Bride settles the general meaning of the symbol. It is not the Papacy as a temporal power, with a ruling dynasty of Popes at Rome, but the Church of Rome as an ecclesiastical system, long submitted to

by the Roman world, but in the latter days, according to the prophecy, hated, despised, and despoiled by the Ten Kingdoms.

As the Beast's body both upheld and was subject to the Harlot that sat on it, so the Papal Empire of the West, with the power of its Ten Kingdoms and many peoples, upheld and was at the same time ruled by Papal Rome, as the recognised Mother and Mistress Church of Christendom. The Beast's ruling Head—the Pope for the time being—in his twofold character as Christ's Vicegerent on earth and as Patriarchal Head of his Church, took part in the same act, sustaining his Church upon the Seven Hills as one married to her, according to the phraseology of the Roman Law.

The acquiescence of the Western Kingdoms in the Hildebrandine theory of the Roman Supremacy is typified by the Beast taking the Woman Babylon, who represents the Seven-Hilled City and the Roman Church, on its back (not on its heads) as its guide and director.

Down to near the time of the Harlot's final destruction, the Ten Kings, during the chief period of their connection with the Beast as his constituency, support her; but towards the end they tear and desolate her. At last she is suddenly and utterly destroyed; and when the Beast himself comes to his end (Rev. xix. 19), though the False Prophet (Rev. xiii. 11–17) is still with him, the Woman is no longer there; before this she has entirely disappeared.

A Scarlet coloured Beast

A deeper red than before struck the Apostle's eye and is specially noted here. No doubt the colour was deeper now because of the blood of saints shed during the Beast's career. The colour is the same as that of the royal robe put in mockery on the Lord Jesus, as described by St. Matthew; in St. Mark and St. John it is called purple. In the description of the Woman's dress (ver. 4) the two are combined, "purple and scarlet." In like manner the names of blasphemy—in the sense of claiming Divine titles and powers have accumulated during the 1260 years. In Rev.

xiii. 1, “names of blasphemy” are said to be on the Beast’s heads. Here it is simply said that he is “full of names of blasphemy,” or “names full of blasphemy.” They may still have appeared on the heads; nothing is said about their being on his body.

No Diadems

3. *“Having seven heads and ten horns.”* The Seventh Head has grown out of the wound of the previous Seventh Head wounded to death (Rev. xiii. 3), but it is really in order of time the Eighth. Since the Great Earthquake and the Tripartition (Rev. xvi. 19), the Ten Horns are no longer dominant as they have been for twelve centuries, hence they are now mentioned last (see Rev. xii. 3, xiii. 1). The Beast still has the Ten Horns, but there is now no mention as before of Diadems on the Horns. All has been reduced to a dead level; dominion has now passed entirely to the democracy. Does not this feature connect this Vision with the Seventh Vial and the Great Earthquake? However, the Horns have been “kings” during a long period of their history, and they are so called by the Angel. They have been associated with and subordinate to the Beast “until the words of God should be accomplished” (ver. 17). The symbol here seems meant to represent the normal kindly relationship between the Beast and them during the 1260 years.

The Woman’s Array

4. Purple, scarlet, gold, and gems. As said of the Romish Church, this is a truly characteristic picture, drawn from the life. The dress-colour specified is distinctively that of the Romish ecclesiastical dignitaries, the scarlet being reserved by her to her Pontiffs and Cardinals. The ornaments are those with which she has been bedecked beyond any Church called Christian.

The Crown.



NERVA

A.D. 96-98

Rome Imperial.



VESPASIAN

A.D. 69-79

The Diadem.



VALENS

A.D.
364-378

Rome Papal.



Pope LEO XII

A.D. 1823-29

The Golden Cup

4. *"In her hand a golden cup"* This cannot be Imperial Rome, which is far otherwise represented on medals, coins, and monuments; it is Rome in the cupbearing form — that is, Rome Papal — holding forth the drugged cup of her superstitions. The Woman is represented under a double character: as a Harlot to the Ten Kings, and as a vintner or tavern-hostess, vending wines to the common people — two characters often united of old.

So the Church of Rome interchanged mutual favours with the kings of Western Christendom, such as might suit their respective circum-

stances and characters; while to the common people she dealt out for sale the wine of the poison of her fornication, — that is, her indulgences, relics, masses, and the rest of her superstitions, — therewith in the spiritual sense drugging them and making them besotted and drunk. All the features of the description are symbolical. Rome's sin has been that of leading men aside and astray from the right worship of God, and of substituting for the purity and unworldliness of Christian living the irreligious and worldly spirit of the earth. God commands men to use the endowments of reason and conscience, 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 unscriptural doctrines, with which she makes the head dizzy, the eyes to swim, the feet to stagger, and this intoxication she calls faith.

The Woman's Name and Character

5. "*Upon her forehead a name.*" In allusion to the custom of certain notorious prostitutes of having their name written on a label on their foreheads. Fornication and adultery throughout the Old Testament are the emblems of religious degeneracy, of departure from the true God and from His right worship and service. In numerous passages both terms are used to describe Israel's departure from the worship of Jehovah, and the degrading sensuality by which such idolatry was everywhere accompanied.

The name is upon her forehead, so that everyone can see and read it. It is visible to all others, though not to the Harlot herself. The name is in contrast to the words "Holiness to the Lord" on the forefront of the mitre of the High Priest, also in contrast to what is described in Rev. xiv. 1. Who has written that name there? Not she herself. Is it History that has now written it? If so, this means that at the epoch to which this Vision belongs her true character and doings will have become known without mistake to all who are willing to be taught.

"*Mystery*," as part of the name, or "*a mystery*," as describing the name. This indicates a spiritual meaning. Something lies behind which will

be made manifest in due time; the meaning is not simply literal. Hea-then Rome was no “mystery” in Christian eyes, but how many professing Christians have been deceived by Rome Papal! There is evidently an allusion to St. Paul’s predicted “mystery of iniquity” (2 Thess. ii. 7, 8), and it is in contrast to the “mystery of godliness” (1 Tim. iii. 16).

“Babylon the Great.” The very parody of the title Rome arrogates, “Rome, Mother and Mistress.”

“The mother of the harlots”—that is, of the Roman Catholic Churches in other lands, she herself being the mother and progenitress of the rest. All this spiritual fornication and corruption are owing to her and to her example and teaching. *“And of the abominations.”* The word especially designates an object of idolatrous worship. Not only is she first and greatest of these, but she is herself the origin of the rest.

So far from the interpretation which identifies the Church of Rome with the Apocalyptic Babylon dating only from the Reformation, the truth rather is that it did very much to bring about the Reformation. Even if it were a late interpretation, this Vision, at the era of the Seventh Vial, leads us to expect fresh and convincing light on that very subject in this later time.

The Woman Drunken

6. She makes the peoples drunk with the wine of her teaching, but she herself has been made drunk with the blood of Christ’s saints—that is, of those who ruled their lives by God’s laws; and of the martyrs or witnesses of Jesus—that is, of those who testified for Christ against her teaching. That implies a long career of cruel persecution and slaughter.

St. John does not see her drinking the blood of the saints; she had done this abundantly in her past career, and under the influence of those draughts in times gone by she was now drunk, implying that there has been much drinking. This drunkenness of course has a symbolical meaning, and this Vision is intended to represent her towards the end and not at the beginning of her evil career. The great Antichristian persecution has

taken place during the reign of Babylon, not after her destruction; and her destruction is followed not by that great Antichristian persecution, but by the Marriage of the Lamb (Rev. xix.).

6. *“Drunken with the blood.”* The applicability of this to the Romish Church, throughout the latter half of the 1260 years, is written in deep-dyed characters on the page of History. What other professedly Christian Church has slain millions of Christians for no crime but that of being true Christians, as she has done? The persecuting Church, by a wretched quibble, always handed her victims over to the secular power to be dealt with by it, and with a mockery of mercy always enjoined the secular power to deal leniently with her children. Even the Inquisition did not burn its own victims, but called upon kings and princes to kindle the flame of the *auto-da-fé*.

Almost all Europe, for many centuries, was inundated with blood, which was shed at the direct instigation or with the full approval of the ecclesiastical authorities, and under the pressure of a public opinion that was directed by the Catholic clergy, and was the exact measure of their influence.

That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant that has a competent knowledge of history...These atrocities were not perpetrated in the brief paroxysms of a reign of terror, or by the hands of obscure sectaries, but were inflicted by a triumphant Church, with every circumstance of solemnity and deliberation.—Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, chap. iv.

The Beast called forth by the Dragon had power given him (by the Dragon) *“to make war with the saints, and to overcome them”* (Rev. xiii. 7). The Attendant Beast causes *“that as many as should not worship the image of the beast should be killed”* (Rev. xiii. 15). The Harlot that rode on the Beast is seen, not “drinking,” but *“drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus”* (Rev. xvii. 6; see also Rev. xi. 7). Therefore the Beast, the Attendant, and the Harlot are contemporaneous in their warfare against the witnesses of Jesus, and the result of their warfare

is the second series of martyrs foretold under the Fifth Seal (Rev. vi. 11). The first series was slain by Rome Heathen; the second is slain by Rome Papal.

It was only by means of the Ten Horns and the mouth of the Eighth Head that the Woman was thus enabled to persecute and slay the saints, and to become drunk with their blood. The Beast under its revived wicked and persecuting Eighth Head is contemporary with Babylon prospering, and is not subsequent to Babylon destroyed by the Ten Horns. The persecutions were Babylon's, yet effected by the Beast on which she sat. It was she that instituted crusades of slaughter against heretics, and that compelled the Ten Horns to rend and destroy. The Beast's body was under her control, so that though the actual bloody deeds might be his, the responsibility was hers. It is the Beast that wars against the witnesses of Jesus.

When at last serious inquiry is made of History,—and it will be made,—“in her was *found* the blood of prophets and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth” (Rev. xviii. 24).

Two marks of identification are given. One is present and visible throughout the earth to-day—namely, widespread extension among the peoples of the world, “*upon many waters*” (Rev. xvii. 2, 15, xviii. 3). Rome's boasted “catholicity” is thus one of the marks of identification. With all this extension goes propagation of unscriptural doctrines and corruption of God's truth. The important matter is to test by God's Word the doctrines taught and enforced, and it soon appears what kind of “wine” is offered in her cup to the souls of men. The other mark is past and historical—namely, shedding the blood of Christ's saints and witnesses on a prodigious scale (Rev. xvii. 6, xviii. 24). This is writ large, in terrible characters of fire and blood, on the pages of History, and cannot be wiped away. It is not either of these marks alone, but the union of the two in the past history and present extension of the same Power, that so unmistakably establishes the identification.

Add to this, that in these Visions she is connected not only with the Seven Hills but also with the Ten-Horned condition of the Western Roman

Empire; that is, with Mediaeval and Modern Europe, which by profession is Christian, not Heathen. Heathen Babylon is on the Seven Hills; Christian Babylon is also on the Ten-Horned Beast.

St. John wonders

6. This is a proof that St. John did not conceive the symbol to represent Heathen Rome. He was told indeed by the Angel (ver. 18), “the Woman whom thou sawest is the great city, which *reigneth* over the kings of the earth.” That was Imperial Rome, the great city existing in his time, and *at that time* actually reigning over the kings of the earth. In the Vision she is Rome still, but in much later phases of her history. In the Vision she is contemporary with the Ten Horns or Kingdoms of Western Europe, whereas that break-up of the Western Roman Empire did not happen till centuries after St. John’s day. Those Ten Horns hate and hurt her, therefore she exists in their times. She is riding on a Beast who is the eighth in a series (vers. 10, 11), and it was the sixth in that series that existed when St. John wrote.

The Harlot Woman Babylon is the Church of Papal Rome. From this picture it would seem that whatever injury the Beast or the Woman might have sustained under the Vials—as from the outpouring of the Fifth upon the throne of the Beast, fulfilled in the anti-Papal acts and fury of the French Revolutionists, or from the progress of the Angel with the everlasting Gospel—all would have been in appearance repaired by the time of the Vision, which seems to be not long before the Harlot’s final destruction. So that up to the very last Rome’s Harlot Church will appear putting on all her former bravery and boastings and charms; still, as of old, holding out to the world her cup of abominations; still, as of old, breathing out her spirit of persecution against the true saints of Christ.

It could have caused St. John no astonishment that the Heathen City should persecute Christianity. But that Rome should not only become a Christian Church, but being such should also be a more bitter persecutor of Christians than ever Heathen Rome had been—this was aston-

ishing indeed. Heathen Rome doing the work of heathenism in persecuting Christ's Church was no mystery; but a Christian Church calling herself the Mother of Christendom, and yet drunken with the blood of the saints, this was indeed a mystery; a Christian Church boasting herself the Bride, and yet being the Harlot.

The Angel had promised St. John to show him the judgment of the Great Harlot, which he does in verses 16, 17. But St. John is so overcome with astonishment at what he sees that the Angel gives him fuller and further explanations before describing the judgment itself. The Angel (ver. 7) promises the explanation of (1) the Woman, (2) the Beast, but begins with (2). This, as has already been stated, is in strict accordance with the chronology, for it is not till near the end of the Beast's history that the Woman appears in this condition and this relation to him.

This wondering comes at the end of the Harlot's career, as here shown. St. John as a symbolic man has the whole of this career before him when he wonders. The prophets had spoken of Israel and Judah as harlots, when they had allied themselves with the world and its dark idolatries. Did St. John see in this Vision a hint that after the lapse of years the Church of Christ, like Israel of old, might fall from her high calling, and become the ally of the worldly power? The hint certainly was there. His wondering, he being a symbolic man, may mean that even to the end Babylon will seem powerful, having recovered from former judgments, and being in no apprehension of her approaching destruction. But God will teach His servants, from these very Visions, that the Romish Harlot is about to be suddenly destroyed. This is signified by the action of the Angel towards St. John, in removing his astonishment.

The Mystery of the Woman

The Harlot must be exposed, branded, and destroyed ere the manifestation of the Bride. The rise, pretensions, persecutions, and decay of the Papal Church have been beyond all controversy the greatest and most important facts in the history of the Christian centuries. The early

Christians were not in danger of relapsing into heathen idolatry, but a Christian idolatry was to arise; Antichrist was to sit on the throne of Christ, in God's Temple—that is, in the professing Church; a fearful apostasy was to take place in the Church itself. It was an object well worthy of Divine inspiration to expose this new and specious form of evil, which, rising slowly and imperceptibly, was destined to attain such gigantic proportions, and to endure more than a thousand years.

For a true understanding of the prophecies of Babylon and the Beast, a clear idea of the relations of Church and State during the Dark Ages is needful—the relations between the Church of the Seven Hills and the Kingdoms of Western Europe. Had there been prefigured only a persecuting Church or only a persecuting State, half the truth would have been omitted. What actually existed for ages, and consequently had to be depicted in prophetic Vision, was Church and State distinct in themselves as secular and spiritual, yet united in the persecution of the saints, the one acting through the other, and the head of both co-operating and sharing the blood-guiltiness.

Twofold Character of the Pope

What creates apparent complexity is the strange fact that the head of the one was head also of the other; that a succession of priests claiming descent and authority from St. Peter became also a dynasty of sovereigns of longest continuance in Europe; assuming, moreover, to be the supreme rulers of the kings and temporalities of the Roman world, and actually recognised and accepted as such for centuries by the Powers of Europe.

The twofold character of the Pope must be kept distinct:

1. There is first the immeasurably higher, mightier, but usurped character of Christ's Vicegerent upon earth, with consequent headship over kings and people. This is royal, or rather super-royal. It is signified by the triple-crowned Tiara.

2. There is also his patriarchal headship of the clerical body belonging to the Church of Rome, and of course of the Church herself, as well as the claim to headship of the whole Christian Church. This is sacerdotal or ecclesiastical, and is signified by the Mitre.

These two distinct characters and functions are nevertheless united in one and the same personage, but the Vision shows that the distinction will be made much clearer towards the end.

The Popes and their Church

The Beast is a political power, the Woman an ecclesiastical system; and these two are not one, whatever the relation between them. The Roman Empire under its last ruling head—that is, the Papal dynasty—is very closely connected with the Romish Church. But the members of that dynasty have been also European monarchs, temporal sovereigns, who, enthroned at Rome, succeeded to the Western Empire of the Caesars, governed, and for more than twelve centuries united in the bond of a common obedience to themselves, all the nations of the Western Empire of Rome. The Church of Rome, as such, never did this.

St. John saw a Woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured Beast; not a Beast apart from a Woman, nor a Woman apart from a Beast. A close and important connection exists between the Roman Empire under its last governing head and the Roman Catholic Church; the symbols employed distinctly show that connection to be both close and of long continuance. The Woman, or Church, is carried or supported by the Beast, or Papal Empire. The Church and the Empire in this their last stage are represented not by two distinct and separate symbols, but by one double one.

St. John is told in explanation that the peoples, nations, and tongues forming the Latin Empire under its last head would first uphold and obey the Woman or Church, and then in the end turn against and rend her. The Beast would first bear her up and accept her guidance, and then at last hate, insult, and destroy her. There is close relation, but not iden-

tity, between Beast and Woman. They are never confounded, yet never are they disjoined.

History of the Beast

The Beast that St. John sees bearing up the Harlot has a long history, which the Angel proceeds to describe. The Seven Heads are to be viewed not as contemporaneous but as successive; and at the time when the Angel was revealing this Vision to St. John, some of the heads were past, one was present, and two still future.

“The beast that was” is the same as the Roman Heathen Dragon; it was cast down and politically slain under its Seventh Head (Rev. xii. 9).

“And is not” in respect of its old heathen form of existence. This does not mean that it was absolutely non-existent, but that the Seventh Head had received its deadly wound.

“And is about to come up.” The “let” or “hindrance” having been removed (2 Thess. ii. 6, 7), the Beast was about to come up as the Beast from the Sea or Abyss, in the new form, by the Dragon’s creation, and under the new head, under which it revives. This is the era of the Eighth Head, or revived Seventh, and it is to this era that the Woman belongs in her character as here displayed. The Beast had not yet so come up when the Angel was speaking, hence it cannot be the Roman Heathen Empire then in existence. It is this Beast that makes war on the witnesses (Rev. xi, 7), hence it must have appeared and have grown to maturity and power before the time of that war. St. John had seen this Beast rising up out of the sea (Rev. xiii. 1), but the Angel, who sees and knows more than does St. John, here describes it as the Beast from the Abyss, deeper than the sea, this being its true origin. So a marine volcanic island rises both out of the sea and out of a deeper depth beneath.

So important is the description of this Beast that it is twice given in—Rev. xiii. at the beginning, and in Rev. xvii. at the end of its history. In Rev. xiii. 1, the Beast, though rising from the sea, is represented as of

devilish origin; in the later Vision (Rev. xvii.) the origin is more plainly declared — it is from hell itself. That may be explained as implying that later on in the course of time, through better understanding of these Visions, the true origin of the Beast will be recognised as being from hell. Compare Rev. ix. 1, 2.

“And to go into perdition.” Therefore under this Eighth Head the Beast is in its final form, that in which it receives final judgment. It now represents the last form of Roman Power. It does not fall like the others, but goes on and meets its own destruction at the hand of the Lord (2 Thess. ii. 3, 8).

Those four statements, from “was” to “go,” cover or correspond with the whole of the supplementary Visions, from Rev. xii. 1 to xiv. 20, the “writing outside.”

How marvellously concise yet comprehensive are these inspired symbolisations! In that one symbol of the Beast as now seen by St. John is represented the whole course of Roman History, from the time of Romulus (753 B.C.) to an end still future.

Seven Heads and Mountains

9. “Seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.” The Woman being the city which then, in St. John’s time, ruled over the kings of the earth (ver. 18), these mountains could only mean the far-famed Seven Hills of Rome. Constantinople, the only other city besides Rome famed as built on Seven Hills, had not then been built, much less had it acquired rule. The unanimous voice of Roman poetry during more than five hundred years, including the age of St. John, proclaimed Rome as the Seven-Hilled City. On the Imperial medals of that age, still preserved (see illustration, p. 137), we see Rome represented as a Woman sitting on Seven Hills, precisely as is here described.

“Sitteth on them.” This necessarily associates the Beast, bearing these Seven Heads, so interpreted, with the Seven-Hilled Rome for capital. It

binds the Power symbolised, through all its various mutations, to that same locality. The Seven Hills of Rome were to be the Beast's seat or throne of empire, as they had been of the Dragon before him.

Seven Forms of Government

"And they are seven kings." A second mystery is symbolised by the Beast's Seven Heads. Had they meant hills or mountains only, how could we explain the wounding to death and the revival of one of them? They are "kings," the word being used in the dynastic sense as meaning not mere individuals, but a succession of them (see Dan. ii. 37, 38, vii. 17, 23, 24, viii. 22, 23).

They are the number of Forms of Government, of successive Governing Heads, of bestial character,—that is, lines of heathen-like ruling governors,—which the same Seven-Hilled Roman Empire would be under from its early origin to its final destruction. They are all of them heads of the same Beast; the body is the same, though at different epochs under a different head. A Beast carries its own heads only. The first seven are the same as the Seven Heads of the Dragon, *"who gave the beast his power, and his throne, and great authority"* (Rev. xiii. 2), and they belong to that Beast or Empire in its Draconic or Heathen form. Satan gave to the Beast the power and influence which he (Satan) had so long possessed and exercised in Heathen Rome. Probably the Dragon, on transferring to the Beast his throne and power, transferred also the covering skin with seven heads and ten horns, so that he now appeared on the scene simply as the Dragon. The Beast, then, is the Dragon's creature and substitute; and the real source of its power and success is expressly declared to have been the Dragon or the Devil, who, after long animating and reigning in the old Roman Empire, now gave to the Beast his seat and throne. The Dragon does not himself directly act, though remaining on the scene (Rev. xvi. 13); he has his representative, or Vicar, or substitute, in the Beast. The Eighth or revived Seventh Head—the Popes of Rome—belongs to the Beast in its bestial form, which is the last phase of Roman power.

These heads could not be Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, or any such separate Powers. Those are whole Beasts, not heads only, and so some of them are represented in Daniel. A head is a form of government, ruling the body to which it belongs. If that Beast represent the Roman constituency, then the heads of that Beast—which are declared to be successive, not contemporaneous—must represent forms of government that have prevailed over that Roman constituency.

History of the Heads

The very symbol of a Dragon or Wild Beast necessarily excludes the supposition that it could represent a truly Christian Power; besides, it is said of the Dragon's heads and of the Beast generally, that they had on them names of blasphemy (Rev. xiii. 1, xvii. 3). When the Vision was revealed, the heads were past, present, and future; and it must be remembered that the Seventh Head visible on the Beast was really in order of existence the Eighth, taking the place of the original Seventh that had been wounded to death.

The historian Tacitus names the first six ruling heads that had had the supreme executive authority legally attached to them at Rome. Five had passed away, and the sixth bore rule when Tacitus wrote. He belongs to the same era as St. John, to whom the Angel said:

10. *"The five are fallen."* These are: Kings, from 753 B.C.; Consuls, from 509 B.C.; Dictators, from 498 B.C.; Decemvirs, from 451 B.C.; Military Tribunes, from 443 B.C. These five had "fallen," or ceased to rule, before the time at which St. John saw the Vision.

"The one is." This is Emperors, the Imperial Head, beginning with Augustus, 31 B.C. This head was in power in St. John's day. The "crown," or wreath of bay leaves, was the Imperial emblem then worn. "

"The other is not yet come." This is Absolute Monarchs, beginning with Diocletian, A.D. 292. He "divided" (Dan. ii. 41) the Roman Empire into four parts, and introduced a fundamentally new constitution, with it adopting, instead of the "crown," the "Diadem," the fillet of pearls worn

round the head, an Oriental badge of empire. This head or form of government was wounded even to death at the final downfall of Heathenism, A.D. 395.

It was to continue only “*a little while*”—little, as compared with those before and after it. It lasted only about 100 years, from its establishment by Diocletian, A.D. 292, to its final downfall, A.D. 395. Whereas Augustus’ Imperial Head, the one next before this, had lasted some 300 years; and the Beast’s Eighth Head, next following, was to last 1260 years.

The Eighth Head

II. “*The beast...is himself also an eighth.*” One of the heads was “wounded to death,” but healed, a fresh head having sprouted up in place of the old Seventh cut down. The Seventh Head visible would thus be really the Eighth. So did the Beast become under his new and last head what the Angel called him (8): “*The beast that was, and is not, and shall come.*”

But was not the next governing head of the Roman Empire Christian Emperors, such as Constantine and Theodosius? True; but the Beast’s heads meant Rome’s Seven Hills as the seat of government, as well as the successive governing heads themselves; thus excluding any but those that had their seat of empire at Rome.

Most remarkably, Constantine, when he adopted the Christian Faith, removed the seat of his Empire to Constantinople. Even after the division of the Empire into Eastern and Western, never did the Western Emperors again enthrone themselves at Rome, but at Milan or Ravenna. It was not till the Gothic flood had swept once again over Italy, and had utterly desolated old Rome itself, that Rome became again a seat of empire, and even then not the seat of any new secular Emperors or Kings, but of its Bishops or Popes, who in their usurped character of successors of St. Peter, and so Vicegerents of Christ upon earth, claimed universal empire.

Thus does History mark out the Roman Popes to be the Eighth or last ruling head of the Roman Beast, subsequently to the Gothic desolations

of Rome, and to their own usurpation of the prerogatives and title of Christ's Vicar, itself a "name of blasphemy," as is said of the titles written on the Beast's heads. This Eighth Head, the Vision shows, is a revival of a professedly Heathen headship, that of Diocletian and successors, that had been wounded to death.

The veritable inheritors of Pagan rites, images, and superstitions; actually the continuators, under a different name, of the same worship in the same places — that of the Virgin for that of Venus, Cosmas and Damian for Romulus and Remus, the image of Peter for that of Jupiter Tonans.

He is of the Seven

II. "*And is of the seven.*" He is similar in spirit and character to the seven previous heads; though professedly Christian, yet essentially Heathen; professedly gentle as a lamb, but really cruel against Christ's saints as the Dragon, of whom he is the creature, the representative, and the chosen delegate. What an awful indictment for a professedly Christian Power! But these inspired Visions tell the real truth, whether or not it agree with popular notions.

The symbol employed to prefigure this evil Power demands its dynastic character, and forbids the thought that an individual man is intended. It is represented as an Eighth Head of the Roman Beast, an eighth form of government, having its seat at Rome. Now none of the previous heads of the Roman world were individual rulers, but each consisted of a series of rulers. The Man of Sin was to be the last and the most important of these heads of this same Roman Beast. If he be a race of rulers enthroned at Rome, and thence governing the Roman world for more than twelve centuries, he keeps in proportion and harmony with all the rest. But if the Eighth Head represent only one individual man, who exercises authority for only a very short period, there is a violation of symmetry and proportion in the symbol. Analogy demands that the last head, like all the previous ones, be a race or succession of rulers.

But it must be borne in mind that though a certain Power may be a race or succession of rulers, yet at any particular date the then representative

of the succession will be an individual. Thus we speak of “the King of England,” meaning thereby the whole succession of our kings and queens, and we say, “the King never dies.” But in A.D. 1066 this corporate King of

THE SEVEN HEADS OF THE DRAGON
AND THE
EIGHT HEADS OF THE ROMAN BEAST

Dan. vii. 7; Rev. xiii. 1, 3, xvii. 3, 10–12.

<u>B.C.</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>HEADS</u>
753.	First Head	KINGS. Romulus, etc. <i>(Only this head had yet come in Daniel's day.)</i>
509.	Second Head	CONSULS. L. Jun. Brutus, L. Tarqu. Collat. etc.
498.	Third Head	DICTATORS. T. Lartius, etc.
451.	Fourth Head	DECEMVIRS.
443.	Fifth Head	MILITARY TRIBUNES. <i>(These five had fallen, or ceased to rule, before the time of St. John.)</i>
31.	Sixth Head	EMPERORS. Augustus, etc. <i>(This head was in power in St. John's day.)</i>
CROWN WORN		
<u>A.D.</u>		
292.	Seventh Head	ABSOLUTE MONARCHS. Diocletian, etc. DIADEM ADOPTED
363.	This head was wounded to death at the downfall of to Heathenism. to	
395.	The first Seven Heads are the same for Dragon and Beast. <i>(The Christian Headship, being at Constantinople, does not appear at all on this Western Beast. It begins in the interval between the "deadly wound" and the healing.)</i>	
476.	End of the Western Roman Empire.	
TEN HORNS GROW		
530.	Eighth Head	POPES. Deadly wound healed. or or
606.	Revived Seventh Head: Rev. xiii. 3, xvii. 8. The Last Form of Roman Power.	

England was an individual, William the Conqueror; in 1568, Elizabeth; in 1900, Victoria; in 1910, George V. And so with any other race or succession of rulers.

Woman and Beast contemporaneous

The Woman is contemporaneous not with any earlier form of Roman Power, nor with the brief interval in which Roman Power seemed wounded to death; but with its last revived form — that is, with the Eighth Head. Now as Babylon, the Romish Church, has existed for more than twelve centuries, this Beast must also have been in existence for the same period; and therefore the Eighth and last and peculiarly evil and Antichristian form of Roman Power predicted cannot be a short-lived individual, but must be a dynasty or succession of rulers, like all the other heads. And further, since no other succession of rulers has swayed the Roman earth from Rome during the career of Babylon, that must be the line of Roman Pontiffs.

The Ten Horns receive Authority

These Ten Kingdoms which were to arise out of Rome's Western Empire, and were to receive power together and to be allied with Rome, did not yet exist in St. John's age. Heathen Rome was destroyed before any such kingdoms arose.

12. *"They receive authority as kings, with the beast."* But the real sovereign of their subjects is the Beast. *"For one hour"* — that is, they retain their authority as kings only for a very short time, and then (13), *"they give their power and authority unto the beast."* The verb "give" is in the perfect tense, meaning a continuing act. The Pope is their common father and head, and they do not exercise their authority apart from him. They recognise his authority as superior to theirs, and they allow him to make use of their power as he may require. These finally war against the Lamb, under the leadership of the Beast (Rev. xix. 19).

The Judgment on the Harlot

16. “*The ten horns...and the beast...shall hate the harlot.*” This is a description of the judgment itself, a description promised by the Angel in ver. 1, but delayed owing to the astonishment shown by St. John, and the need of fuller explanation as to the history and relations of the Beast and the Woman.

Here is a reversal of the attitude of the Kings to the Harlot, maintained for twelve centuries before. To hate, after having loved, represents ceasing to be under that influence to which the person was before subject.

Taking “Beast” in its broadest sense, the statement is that the kingdoms of Western Europe, the mass of the people as well as their rulers, the entire body politic, “*the ten horns and the beast,*” shall at last come to hate and forsake the Harlot, the corrupt Roman Church; they shall strip her of her glory, cast her down from her high position among them, eject her religious orders, limit the powers of her priesthood, refuse her doctrines, scoff at her authority, appropriate her revenues and substance to secular uses, and at last adjudge her to utter destruction. The flesh of the Harlot denotes her temporal possessions, and “devouring” is the confiscation or secularisation of her temporalities.

The Two-Horned Beast of Rev. xiii. 11, 12 represents the Papal Clergy, the officials of the Papacy, as a class distinct from the laity. The Harlot is the Roman Church with her adherents and possessions, church buildings, monasteries, convents, lands, sumptuous worship and ceremonial, wealth and influence of all kinds, dispersed throughout the world. These are her “flesh,” which the Ten Horns and the Beast are to “eat.” This explains how that the Beast and the False Prophet are still found together (Rev. xix. 20) even after the Harlot has been completely despoiled and burnt with fire. The Harlot rides on the Beast’s back; the False Prophet stands in front of the Beast. (See the author’s *Present-Day Papers on Prophecy*)

The Process begun

This process is now actually begun; it is in fact the state of things amidst which we are living. Ever since the French Revolution of 1789, when judgment began, and the Romish Church in France was despoiled, the Ten Horns, as was foretold, have been making her desolate and naked, and have been eating her flesh. All through “the time of the end” this process has been going on, and it will continue at an accelerated rate till the final destruction comes.

The Roman Catholic nations of Modern Europe have begun to hate the Roman Catholic Church, to which in bygone ages they all yielded admiration, affection, and obedience. The past century has witnessed an ever-growing and deepening disaffection. Entire nations have defied that Church’s censures, confiscated her property, and wrested every department of politics from her control. The full results of this modern movement are not seen as yet, for it is only in progress, not completed. We see that the very nations which for ages, under the Papacy, upheld and obeyed the Roman Catholic Church, now hate, despise, and despoil her. Frequent instances of this are to be seen in the newspapers. But there is worse to come.

Her Sudden Destruction

The destruction of the mystic Babylon is to be effected all unexpectedly to those remaining in her, as well as to herself. Complete carnal security to the very end is the characteristic of Babylon and her constituents. To the last she says (Rev. xviii. 7): “*I sit a queen.*” It is effected all in a moment by the sudden and tremendous agency of earthquake and volcanic fire. The expressions may be understood symbolically in reference to the Romish Church, in the sense of revolutionary earthquake and fire; and literally in reference to the literal city Rome. The very nature of the soil of Italy has forced on many a mind, in different ages, the thought of its physical preparedness for such a catastrophe.

The Pope remains

After the burning of the Harlot, the Pope still remains as a great leader of men. The destruction of Babylon by fire and earthquake precedes, by whatever interval, that of the Beast, with his Helper and his Confederation.

The Horns and the Beast that have hated and destroyed the Harlot remain in close confederacy to the very last conflict. But when the Beast, the Ten Kings, and the False Prophet appear in the final warfare with the Lamb (Rev. xix. 19), the Harlot (who represents the Church of Rome as an ecclesiastical system) is seen there no more; before this date she has disappeared.

“Come hither, I will show thee the judgment of the great harlot.”

Index

(Search for Terms: Page numbers not Accurate)

Abraham, Promised Land, 43.

Adultery, 138.

Advent, publicity of, 18.

Adversary’s efforts, 3, 9.

Agitators, 85, 87.

Air, Vial upon, 111, 112, 119.

Aircraft, 6, 119, 120.

Alcasar, Jesuit

Anarchy, 117.

Antichrist, meaning, 52, 59, 60, 64, 99.

Oxford Tracts, 108.

Antipope, 53.

Anti-Protestant expositions, 108.

Apathy, 16.

Apostasy, 9, 57, 66, 97. its grand object, 67.

Apostolic Succession, 96, 98.

Arabah, 44.

Arabian Desert, 45.

Armageddon, 121, 123.

Armour, 32.

Artillery, modern, 120.

Astrology, 90.

Attacks on Bible, 88.

Authority weakened, 89.

Babylon destroyed, 13, 159. drunken, 65, 115.
identified, 7, 54. remembered, 6, 115.

Bagdad taken, 23.

Baptismal error, 57, 67.

Baxter, Mr. R., 19.

Beast, 7, 31, 36, 37, 81, 82, 123, 129, 130, 147.

Beheading martyrs, 10, 42.

Bible attacked, 88.

Birds and beasts called, 36.

Bishop of Rome transformed, 64, 72.

Bohemia, 65.

Bourne, Cardinal, 68. 11

British and the Jews, 23, 32.

Brutality, 122.

Burgh, Futurist, 107.

Campagna, 132.

Catholicity, 130.

Celibacy, 99.

Chartism, 87.

Church and State, France, 14.

Church Universal, Pope s claim, 31.

Cities of nations fell, 1 14.

City “Jehovah Shammah,” 48.

Clairvoyance, 90.

Colonial Empire, 32.

“Come out of her,” 54.

Confession to priest, 99.

Confessors, 42.

Constantinople, 57, 149, 154.

Context and connection, 5.

Conversion of Jews, 39.

Counties in Palestine, 46.

Crusades, 30.

Crystal-gazing, 90.

Cup, golden, 137.

Darby, J. N., 20.

David, House of, 26, 39.

Death, last enemy, 39, 43.

Deception, 76.	First rehearsal, 14, 31.
Deity of our Lord, 89.	First Resurrection, 17, 34.
Democracy, 91.	Fornication, 138.
Denying Father and Son, 65.	Forty-two months, 10.
Deserts of Syria and Arabia, 44.	France, Church and State, 14.
Destruction of Gog, Beast, and False Prophet, 36, 37.	Protectress of Roman Catholicism, 92.
Development theory, 97.	French Revolution, 7, 31.
Devil, 82, 122.	Frivolity, 90.
Diadems gone, 136, 153.	Futurist Antichrist, 76, in.
Dictatorships, 7.	Futuristic efforts, 106, 108.
Disguised enemy, 54.	Gases in warfare, 120.
Dissenters unchurched, 99.	German spies, 104.
Diverting attention, 3, 9, 12, 21, 55, 76, 78, 110, 126.	Germany, Christianity abandoned, 123.
Dragon, 82, 147.	Gog, Who ?, 27.
Drift Homeward, 94.	Gog's expedition, 21, 26, 32, 36, 37.
Drunken, 139.	Goode, Dean, on Tractarianism, 100.
Dutch Republic, 65.	Gothic invasions, 133.
Earthquake, Revolution, 6, 23, 59, 113, 116, 120.	Great City, 6, 59, 114.
Ecclesiastical Discipline Report, 101.	Great Earthquake, 59, 136.
Eighth Head of Beast, 62, 153.	Hail, 117. Tribulation, 9, 20. White Throne, 43.
“Eldest son of Church,” 93.	Hail, Great, 117.
England and Scotland united, 26.	Halt on way, 17.
England, asylum of true religion, 86, 103, 118, 126.	Harlot exposed, 15, 99, 129, 131.
England's “conversion,” 101.	Har-Magedon, 70, 102, 106, 125.
Euphrates boundary, 47. drying up, 81, 86, 96.	Hating the Harlot, 157.
Europe, Mediaeval and Modern, 57, 59.	Hatred of England, 103.
Evangelical religion, 86, 96, 103, 104.	Heretics, 141.
Ezekiel and Palestine, 21.	Higher Criticism, 88, 123.
False Prophet, 7, 31, 37, 81, 83.	Hildebrand, 135.
Fathers light imperfect, 108.	Hindrance to Antichrist, 55, 58.
Feast of Tabernacles, 48.	History illuminates, 63.
Fiction, 90.	Holy Oblation, 47.
Fifth Seal martyrs, 42.	Holy Roman Empire, 72.
Fifty millions slain, 10.	Horn, Little, 59, 62.

Indifference, 3.

Indulgences, 93.

Infidelity, 82, 87.

Inquisition, 65, 140.

Interpretations, mistaken, 3.

Irish Papal party, 92.

Irving, Rev. E., and “Secret Rapture,” 191.

Israel’s Restoration, 21, 23, 44.

Japheth’s descendants, 28.

Jerusalem, new city, 45. taken, 23.

Jesuits, 90, 107, 109.

Jesus of Nazareth, Messiah, 39.

Jewish University, 23.

Jews and Messiah, 74.

Jews tribulation, n, 33, 37.

Jordan Valley, 45.

Judgment of Righteous, 40.

Justification by Faith, 98, 99.

Kingdom, Millennial, Eternal, 43.

Last form of Gentile Power, 62.

Latin nations, 113.

Left behind, 35.

“Let” removed, 71, 75.

Levelling, 6, 116.

Light for the Last Days, 108.

Lions, young, 32.

Little Horn, 59, 62.

Lollards, 65.

Lord s Day, 89.

Luxury, 90.

Lying, 122.

Maitland, Dr., 107.

Man of Sin, 20, 59, 62, 63, 75, 97, 155.

Marriage, 89.

Marriage of Lamb, 16, 34.

Martyrs, two companies, 10, 42, 141.

Matthew and Revelation, 4, 121.

Mede and Antichrist, 75.

Mediaeval and Modern Europe, 57.

Mediatorship of Christ, 68.

Mediums, 90.

Merchants of Tarshish, 32.

Messiah and Jews, 74. recognised, 39.

Military dictatorship, 7.

Millennium, 35, 39, 40, 43, 72.

Missions and Higher Criticism, 89.

Antagonistic, 94.

Mistaken interpretations, 3.

Mitre, 7, 31, 73, 146.

Modern Europe, 57.

Mohammedanism, 28, 29, 32, 112.

Motley, Dutch Republic, 65.

Mountain of Lord’s House, 47.

Mourning in the land, 38.

Napoleon, 7, 31.

New Testament attacked, 88.

North, as to Palestine, 28.

Not in darkness, 105.

Occult sciences, 90.

Olives, Mount, 34, 37, 44.

“One that restraineth” is a succession, 56, 62.

Our Lord and the Old Testament, 88.

Oxford Movement, 95, 108.

Tracts and Antichrist, 108.

Palestine invaded, 23, 31, 32.

physical changes, 43.

repeopled, 21.

Palm-bearers, 9.

Palmistry, 90.	Rewards for Righteous, 41.
Pan-Islamism, 29.	Ribera, Futurist, Jesuit, 107.
Papacy, Gog, 29, 30, 37. twofold, 7, 30, 52, 59, 73, 145.	Righteous, their Judgment, 40.
Parental authority, 89.	Rivers in Palestine, new, 45.
Peaceful penetration, 94, 104.	Roman Campagna, 132. Imperial Power hinders, 56.
Peoples go to worship, 48.	Romeward drift, 94, 101, 124.
Perverts,	Romish Church, 7, 115, 134, 143, 158. destroyed, 13.
Physical changes in Promised Land, 43	priesthood, 38. progress in England, 92.
Piedmont, 65.	Rosary, 93.
Popery, 82, 90.	Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, 28.
Portraits of Antichrist, 69.	Russian Revolution, 120.
Praeterism, 109.	Sacerdotalism, 83, 100.
Prayers for dead, 99.	Sacramentalism, 98.
Priestcraft, 83, 95, 124.	Saints massacred, 8, 9, 54, 64, 142.
Primitive practice, 98.	Saracens, 112.
Prince and his possession, 48.	Satan and Millennium, 35, 39.
Promised Land, 43, 46.	Satanic power, 70.
Propaganda Missions, 94.	Scarlet, 136.
Prophecy disbelieved, 88.	Scotland and England united, 26.
Protestant expositions, 108.	Sealing Vision, 9.
Publicity of Second Advent, 18.	Second Advent, 34.
Rapture of saints, 13, 15, 17.	“Secret Rapture” theory, 19.
Reformation “schism,” 99.	Secret societies, 96.
Reformers and Antichrist, 139.	Secular power, 140.
Rehearsal, first, 14, 31.	Services Romanised, 94.
Resist the devil, 126.	Seven Hills, 8, 149. Kings, 150
Restraint to Antichrist, 55, 58.	Seventh Trumpet, 41, 118.
Resurrection, First, 17.	Vial, 6, 18, 23, 59, 71, 118, 121, 130, 136.
Reunion, 16, 24, 94.	Seventieth week, 61.
Revelation and Matthew , 4, 1 2 1	Seventy weeks, 60.
Revelation and three systems, 109.	Signs of Advent, 13, 33.
Revolution, Earthquake, 6, 59, 71, 113, 116.	of AntiChrist’s coming, 57.
French, 7, 31, 158.	simultaneous, 18.
Revolutionary fire, 13.	Sixth Vial, 6, 70, 81, 102.

Snow mountains, 45, 46.

Socialism, 87.

Stages in settlement, 4.

Stone and Image, 40.

Strikes, 89, 118.

Study of prophecies, 5-

Succession, not individual, 62.

Sunday observance, 89.

Supernatural disbelieved, 88.

Superstition, 90.

Switzerland and Palestine, 46.

Syrian Desert, 46.

Tabernacles, Feast of, 48.

Tacitus, 152.

Tarshish merchants, 32.

Temporal Power, 73, 74, 132.

Ten Kingdoms, 6, 8, 58, 114, 132, 156-

“Thief, I come as,” 105.

Three and a half years, 10.

Frogs, 11, 20, 70, 75, 82, 121.

systems of Interpretation, 109.

Thundering, 23.

Tiara, 7, 31, 73, 93, 146.

Time of the end, 31.

the interpreter, 64.

Times of the Gentiles, 62.

Tractarianism, 95, 97.

Tradition, 97.

Transubstantiation, 99.

Tregelles, Dr. S. P., 19.

Tremendous issues, 76.

Tribe names, 46.

Tribes reunited, 24.

Tribulation, Great, 9, 12.

Tripartition, 6, 59, 114.

Turkey drying up, 70, 81, 96, 119.

Two sticks, 25.

Universal Israelite Alliance, 23.

Unprofitable Servant, 41. Unrest, 71, 118.

Usurper destroyed, 37.

Uttermost part of north, 28.

Valley of Dry Bones, 23.

Vaudois, 65.

Vicar of Christ, 7, 31, 37, 54, 73, 82, 93, 123, 146.

Vice-Christ, 53, 54.

Virgin Mary, 67, 68, 93.

Warfare against saints, 10, 64. in Palestine, 22.

present, 6, 71, 119.

Warning, 121. Watershed and water supply, 44.

Western Europe, 113. Roman Empire, 8.

Wilderness and waters, 131. shall blossom, 46.

“Wine,” 137.

Winepress, 106.

Wondering of St. John, 142.

Year-Day system, 107.

Young lions, 32.

Zionism, 23.

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