CH. xvii. 7, 8] EXPOUNDED 439  
  
tempted union of Christianity with “dwelling on the  
earth” in the Apocalyptic sense. But in chapter xviii.  
we have the dwellers on earth fully developed; and  
Christianity, even in its outward form, is gone. John  
might mourn over the failings of the Churches of his  
day, and Jesus might send sharp messages to them,  
but they were not beyond hope: she is.  
  
7. ““ And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou wonder ?  
I will tell thee the mystery of the Woman, and of the Wild Beast  
that is carrying her, that hath the seven heads and the ten horns.”  
  
The angel would explain what was symbolic. His  
explanation, then, is to be taken literally.  
Babylon in chapter xvii. is Babylon mystical, or  
Rome. In the next chapter it is Babylon literal. The  
angel’s explanation ceases with chapter xvii. The  
passing away of mystery is characteristic of Revelation.  
There is mystery, while the Church lasts: when the  
Jew returns to his place, literality returns again.  
The Woman is an impersonation of the spiritual  
power centred at Rome, and displaying itself chiefly  
in the dark ages. The Wild Beast is an impersonation  
of the temporal power centred at Rome. ‘This is the  
reason why the two are brought into such close con-  
tact. The seven heads are common to both; to the  
city in one sense; to the Antichrist in another. \_  
In this chapter the previous life of the False Christ  
is opened to us. In chapters xi. and xiii. his history  
commences with his rise from the abyss. This tells  
us of his predecessors, and of his former life.  
  
8. ‘‘ The Wild Beast which thou sawest was and is not, and is  
about to ascend out of the bottomless pit, and to go into per-  
dition : and the dwellers on the earth shall wonder, whose names  
were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the  
world, when they behold the Wild Beast, because it was, and is  
not, and shall be present.”