458 THE APOCALYPSE [on. xvii. 16  
  
mind, and to give their kingdom to the Wild Beast until the  
words of God shall be fulfilled.”  
  
Very important is the reading, “Anp the Wild  
Beast.” It stands on sure grounds, both external  
and internal.  
1. It is the more difficult reading: the received one  
has evidently sprung out of the difficulty of compre-  
hending it.  
2. It rests on the authority of the best MSS. and  
the decision of critical editors.  
The Wild Beast is distinct from the ten kings. The  
Wild Beast here is not, as generally taken, the Roman  
empire divided into ten kingdoms. The Wild Beast  
differs from the Woman.  
The Wild Beast is the special, individual emperor.  
The Woman is the Harlot, or the city’s last develop-  
ment. While the emperor and his city were both  
pagan, there was harmony between both, as in John’s  
day. But the Woman has become nominally Christian,  
since John wrote of the reigning heathen emperor,  
“ The one is.”  
In this change, then, lies the root of the enmity of  
the Wild Beast or eighth head. He was pagan when  
he lived on earth: he returns to earth with the same  
religious predilections. Is it Nero? Imagine with  
what disgust and enmity he would learn that Rome had  
become Christian ! That his Rome had imbibed that  
magical and execrable superstition, which it was his  
delight to persecute to death !  
With the False Christ arise new kings. They are  
the result of the infidelity engendered by Romish  
superstitions : the reaction of the intelligence of the  
last age against anile doctrines and fables. They re-  
gard Romanism as Christianity, and reject it. ‘They  
are military adventurers, and their acts are wars.  
“THEsn,” then, ‘hate the Harlot.”