CH. xviii. 2] EXPOUNDED 469  
  
that some shall abandon the faith, giving heed to  
“seducing spirits, and teachings of demons who speak  
lies in hypocrisy ” (1 Tim. iv. 1, 2).  
Babylon becomes a “ prison” for such beings. They  
are shut up within its precincts, it would appear, by  
God. These ruined ones are imprisoned amidst ruins.  
These spirits of the dead are confined to the city of the  
dead.  
As the heavenly city is the free abode of angels, and  
of the holy risen of men; so is this unholy city the  
gloomy jail for the lost.  
Bossuet, in order to get rid of the terrible woes  
which here encircle Rome, endeavoured to prove that  
the description refers not to Rome papal, but to Rome  
pagan: and that the destruction of Rome took place at  
the commencement of the dark ages. But the net of  
God still entangles his feet. If so, from that day for-  
ward Rome has become the habitation, not of saints and  
angels, but of demons and of every unclean spirit !  
“And the prison of every unclean and hated bird.”  
How can we call it “the prison ” of every bird? Must  
we not alter the sense of the word here? Our trans-  
lators thought so; and accordingly rendered the same  
Greek word first “hold,” and then “cage.” But  
‘prison ’ is the one sense of it in the New Testament.  
And here it applies also, though less strictly ; God will  
confiné them to the desolations of Rome and its Cam-  
pagna. They love and choose ruins, and beyond them  
they will not venture; specially when millennial life  
and joy fills all other parts of the earth.  
This is foretold by the Old Testament prophets also.  
Isa. xiii. 21, 22; Isa. xxxiv. 13, 17. See also Jer. 1.  
39.  
The kings of the earth fornicated with her. Pagan  
Rome toyed not with kings. It ruled them sternly by  
the sword. Rome papal, then, is here.