His eternal purposes, of the times and seasons  
which He holds in His own power.  
For this unrolling, every thing has been  
prepared: even to the taking off of the last  
seal which bound the mysterious roll. But  
as to what the roll itself contains, there is  
silence. 2) But it also imports, as Victorinus  
beautifully says, *“that the half-hour  
is the beginning of eternal rest:*” the commencement  
of that blessed sabbatical state  
of rest, during which the people of God  
shall be in full possession of those things  
which ear hath not heard nor eye seen.  
With equal truth and beauty does the  
same, our earliest apocalyptic expositor,  
proceed; “but he takes merely a part,  
because the interruption repeats the same  
things as far as order is concerned. For if  
the silence had been eternal, there would  
have been an end of narration.” So that  
the vexed question, whether what follows  
belongs, or not, to the seventh seal, is, in  
fact, a question not worth seriously answering.  
Out of the completion of the  
former vision rise up a new series of visions,  
bearing a different character, but distinguished  
by the same number, indicating  
perfection, and shewing us that though  
evolved ont of the completion of the former  
series, they do not belong to the last particular  
member of that series, any further  
than as it leads the way to them. Even  
more marked is this again below in ch. xi.  
—xvi., where the pouring out of the seven  
vials ean in no way be said to belong to or  
form part of the blowing of the seventh  
trumpet. It will be seen then that I believe  
all interpretation to be wrong, which  
regards the blowing of the seven trumpets  
as forming a portion of the vision accompanying  
the seventh seal in particular : and  
again that I place in the same category all  
that which regards it as taking up and  
going over the same ground again. In the  
seven seals, we had revealed, as was fitting,  
the opening of the great Revelation, the  
progress and fortunes of God’s Church and  
people in relation to the world, and of the  
world in relation to the church.

With regard to the trumpets themselves,  
we may observe, 1) That they repeat again  
the same mystic number *seven*, indicating  
that the course of events (see below) represented  
by this sounding is complete in itself,  
as was that indicated before by the  
breaking of the seals, and as is also that  
afterwards to be indicated by the pouring  
ont of the vials: 2) That as in the case of  
the seals, there is a distinction made between  
the first four and the following  
three. Compare below, ver. 13. 3) That  
as also in the case of the seals, there is an  
interval, with two episodical visions, between  
the sixth and the seventh trumpet.  
Compare ch. x., and ch. xi. 1–14. 4) That,  
of the trumpets, six only announce visions  
partaking of the common character of  
judgments, whereas the seventh forms, as  
we also saw in the case of the seventh seal,  
the solemn close to the rest. 5) And further,  
that as regards this seventh trumpet,  
the matters imported by it as being *the  
third woe* (ch. xi. 14) are not given, but  
merely indicated by “*the time of the dead  
is come to be judged, &c.*” (ch. xi. 18):  
just as we saw that the things imported  
by the opening of the seventh seal were  
not detailed, but only indicated by the  
episodical visions, and by the nature of the  
similitude used. 6) That before the sounding  
of the seventh trumpet, the mystery of  
God is finished, as far as relates to the  
subject of this course of visions. This is  
indicated by the great Angel in ch. x.7;  
and again by implication in ch. xi. 15—19,  
both by the purport of the voices in heaven,  
v. 15, and by the ascriptions of praise,  
vv. 16—18. This is the same again at the  
pouring out of the seventh vial, where the  
great voice from the throne announces “*It  
is past*,” ch. xvi. 17: as we saw that it was  
at the opening of the seventh seal, as indicated  
by the silence of half an hour, Each  
course of visions is complete in itself: each  
course of visions ends in the accomplishment  
of that series of divine actions which  
it sets forth. 7) That as, when the preparation  
for the seven angels to sound their  
trumpets is evolved out of the opening of  
the seventh seal, the vision of the seals is  
solemnly closed in by “*there were thunders  
and voices and lightnings and an  
earthquake*,” so the vision of the trumpets  
is solemnly closed in by “*there were lightnings  
and voices and thunders and a great  
hail*.” That the similar occurrence, ch.  
xvi. 18, does not close the series of the  
vials, seems to be owing to special circumstances  
belonging to the outpouring of the  
seventh vial: see there (ch. xvi. 21). 8)  
That as in vv. 3—5, which form ey close  
of the vision of the seals, and the opening