the following description) {17} **saw I the horses  
in my vision** (Düsterdieck suggests, and  
it seems likely enough, that this express  
reference to *sight* is inserted on account of  
the words “*I heard*,” which preceded)  
**and those who sat upon them, having**(most naturally refers to both horses and  
riders, not to riders only. The armour of  
both was uniform) **breastplates red, as fire**(the three epithets express the colours of  
the breastplates, and are to be separated,  
as belonging each to one portion of the  
host, and corresponding to the fire, smoke,  
and brimstone which proceeded out of the  
horses’ mouths below), **and blue, as smoke**(literally, hyacinthine. The hyacinth of  
the Greeks is supposed to have been our  
dark blue iris)**, and yellow, as brimstone**  
(light yellow: such a colour as would be  
produced by the settling fumes of brimstone):  
**and the heads of the horses** (the  
horses are taken up again, both horses and  
riders having been treated of in the preceding  
sentence) [**were**] **as heads of lions,  
and out of their mouths goeth forth fire  
and smoke and brimstone** (i. e. separately,  
one of these out of the mouths of each  
division of the host. It is remarkable, that  
these divisions are *three*. though the angels  
were *four*). {18} **From** (indicates not directly  
the instrumentality, but the *direction from  
which* the result comes) **these three plagues  
were killed the third part of men, by the  
fire and the smoke and the brimstone  
which goeth forth out of their mouths.  
{19} For the power of the horses is in their  
mouth** (principally; seeing that by what  
proceeded from their mouth their mission,  
to slay the third part of men, was accomplished)  
**and in their tails: for their tails  
were like serpents, having heads, and  
with them they hurt** (i.e. inflict pain: viz.  
with the bites of the serpent heads in which  
they terminate.

I cannot but mention, in no unfriendly spirit, but because,  
both being friends, Truth is the dearer,  
that which may be designated the culminating  
instance of incongruous interpretation  
in the modern English historical exposition  
of these prophecies. These tails  
are, according to the Commentator, the  
horsetails, borne as symbols of authority by  
the Turkish Pachas. Well may Mr. Barker  
say [Friendly Strictures, p. 32], “an interpretation  
so wild, if it refutes not itself,  
seems scarcely capable of refutation.”  
Happily, it does refute itself. For it is  
convicted, by altogether leaving out of view  
the power in the *mouths*, which is the principal  
feature in the original vision: by  
making no reference to the serpent-like  
character of these tails, but being wholly  
inconsistent with it: by distorting the  
canon of symmetrical interpretation in  
making the *heads* attached to the tails to  
mean that the tails are symbols of authority:  
and by being compelled to render  
instead of **they hurt**, “*they commit injustice*,”  
a meaning which, in this reference,  
the word will not bear. When it is said  
of fire- and smoke- and brimstone-breathing  
horses which kill the third part ot  
men, that besides having power in their  
mouths they have it in their tails, which