**See more there**], **a woman clothed with the  
sun, and the moon beneath her feet** (see  
Cant. vi. 10, which seems to be borne in  
mind), **and on her head a crown of twelve  
stars** (the whole symbolism points to the  
Church, the bride of God: and of course,  
from the circumstances afterwards related,  
the Old Test. church, at least at this   
beginning of the vision. That the blessed  
Virgin cannot be intended, is plain from  
the subsequent details, and was recognized  
by the early expositors. The crown of  
twelve stars represents the Patriarchs.  
Victorinus interprets the woman as the  
ancient church, and the twelve stars as  
above), **and [she is] (or, being) with child  
[and] crieth out in pangs and tormented  
to bring forth. And another sign was  
seen in heaven: and behold, a great red  
dragon** (interpreted below, ver. 9, to be  
the devil, the ancient serpent: see also vv.  
13, 15. He is **red** perhaps for the combined   
reasons, of the wasting properties of  
fire, and the redness of blood: see John  
viii. 44)**, having seven heads and ten  
horns, and upon his head seven diadems**  
(the Dragon being the devil, these symbolic   
features must be interpreted of the  
assuming by him of some of those details  
in the form of the beast in ch. xiii. 1 ff., to  
whom afterwards he gives his power and  
his throne: in other words, as indicating  
that he lays wait for the woman’s offspring  
in the form of that antichristian power  
which is afterwards represented by the  
beast. At the same time, the *seven crowned  
heads* may possess an appropriateness of  
their own, belonging as they do to the  
dragon alone [the beast has the crowns on  
his *horns*, ch. xiii. 1]. They may represent,   
as he is Prince of this world, universality   
of earthly dominion. The ten horns  
belong to the fourth beast of Daniel, vii.  
7,20). **And his tail draggeth down the  
third part of the stars of the heaven, and  
cast them to the earth** (so the little horn  
in Dan. viii. 10, “cast down some of the  
host and of the stars to the ground, and  
stamped upon them.” The allusion here  
may be to the devil having persuaded and  
drawn down to perdition the rebel angels.  
The magnitude and fury of the dragon are  
graphically given by the fact of its tail, in  
its lashing backwards and forwards in fury,  
sweeping down the stars of heaven). **And  
the dragon standeth** (not *“stood.”* Pliny  
describes the *dragon* as not prone and  
gliding like a serpent, but walking lofty  
and erect) **before the woman which is  
about to bear, that when she hath borne  
he may devour her child** (this was what  
the devil instigated Herod the Great to  
do, who was the dependant of the Roman  
Empire. But doubtless the reference is  
wider than this: even to the whole course  
of hostility against the Lord during His