**earth have been made drunk from the wine  
of her fornication** (the figure here used,  
of a harlot who has committed fornication  
with secular kings and peoples, is frequent  
in the prophets, and has one principal  
meaning and application, viz. to God’s  
church and people that had forsaken Him  
and attached herself to others. In eighteen places out of twenty-one where the figure occurs, such is its import; vis. in Isa. i. 21;  
Jer. ii, 20, iii. 1, 6,8; Ezek. xvi. 15, 16,  
28, 31, 35, 41, xxiii 5, 19, 44; Hosea  
ii. 5, iii. 3, iv. 15 [Micah 7]. In three  
places only is the word applied to heathen  
cities: viz. in Isa, xxii, 15, 16 to Tyre,  
where, ver. 17, it is also said, “she shall  
commit fornication with all the kingdoms  
of the world upon the face of the earth:”  
and in Nahum iii. 4 to Nineveh, which is  
called the well-favoured harlot, the mistress  
of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through  
her whoredoms, and families through her  
witchcrafts. And there the threat is pronounced of a very similar ruin to that  
which befalls Babylon here. So that the  
Scripture analogy, while it points to unfaithfulness and treachery against God’s  
covenant, also brings to mind extensive  
empire and wide-spread rule over the kingdoms of the earth. It is true, that as far  
us *the image itself* is concerned, pagan  
Rome as well fulfils its requirements as  
Tyre and Nineveh. It will depend on  
subsequent features in the description  
whether we are to bound our view with  
her history and overthrow. Still, it will  
not be desirable to wait for the solution  
of this question till we arrive at the point  
where those features appear: for by so  
doing much of our intermediate exegesis  
will necessarily be obscured. The decisive  
test then which may at once be applied to  
solve the question, is derived from the  
prophecy of the destruction of Babylon in  
ch. xviii. 2. It is to be laid utterly waste,  
aud to “become the habitation of devils,  
and the hold of every foul spirit, and a  
cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”  
Now no such destruction as this has yet  
befallen Rome, unless her transfer from pagan to papal rule be such a destruction,  
and the Pope and his ecclesiastics be described in the above terms. In an eloquent passage of Vitringa, he presses Bossuet  
with this dilemma. Again, it is said  
of this harlot, “*with whom the kings of  
the earth committed fornication*.” But  
we may ask, if this be pagan Rome, who  
and what are these kings, and what is indicated by her having been the object of their  
lustful desires? In the days of Imperial  
Rome, there were no independent kings of  
the earth except in Parthia and Persia.  
Rome in her pagan state, as described for  
the purpose of identification in ver, 18, was  
not one who intrigued with the kings of  
the earth, but “she which hath kingdom  
over the Kings of the earth:” she reigned  
over them with undisputed and crushing  
sway.  
I do not hesitate therefore, induced  
mainly by these considerations, which will  
be confirmed as we proceed step by step in  
the prophecy, to maintain that interpretation which regards papal and not pagan  
Rome as pointed out by the harlot of this  
vision.  
The “sitting upon many waters” is  
said of Babylon in Jer. in reff., but has  
here a symbolical meaning; see below, ver.  
15. On the drunkenness see ch. xiv. 8.  
‘The same thing is said of Babylon in Jer.  
l.e. But there she herself is the cup in  
the Lord’s hand). {3} **And he** (the angel)  
**carried me away to the wilderness** (not,  
as Elliott and others, and even Düsterdieck, “a wilderness.” ‘The most natural  
way of accounting for the Seer being taken  
into the wilderness here, is that he was to  
be shewn Babylon, which was in the wilderness, and the overthrow of which, in the  
prophecy from which come the very words  
‘*Babylon is fallen, is fallen*” (Isa. xxi. 9),  
is headed “*the vision of the wilderness.*”  
So that by the analogy of prophecy, the:  
journey to witness the fall of Babylon  
would be to the wilderness. The question  
of the identity of this woman with the  
woman in ch, xii. is not affected by that of  
the identity of this wilderness with that)