CHAPTER XII

THE DRAGON AND THE WOMAN

1. “And a great sign was seen in the heaven, a woman clothed  
with the sun, and the moon underneath her feet, and on her head  
a crown of twelve stars: 2. and she being with child is crying  
out, travailing, and agonizing herself (with a view) to bring  
forth.”  
  
THIS is not properly a “wonder,” but a “sign.” It  
is a sign of future events; as the cloud out of the west  
is a sign of rain at hand. Matt. xvi. 3. It is the sign  
of Satan’s head about to be bruised, of Israel’s deliverance, and of the kingdom at hand. It is a “sign,” as  
offering truth symbolically. As the parable of the fig  
tree, in the xxivth of Matthew, shows Israel in a figurative point of view, nigh to the “summer” of the  
kingdom, so does it answer to the woman’s pregnancy  
here. Symbol runs through this series of related chapters (xii.—xiv.).  
 “Why are we to take this woman as symbolic, and not  
literal?” Because of her place in heaven, her clothing,  
and Child. None of these can be literal. She is presented  
symbolically, because she has two places; a literal one  
on earth, and another on high. Since she is now away  
from her place, she, that is a city literally, appears as a  
woman.  
 Who is this Woman?  
 1. Some say, It is THE CHURCH. But no: this cannot be. The Church is a “chaste virgin” (2 Cor. xi. 2).