CHAPTER XVII

THE GREAT HARLOT

1. “And there came one of the seven angels who have the  
seven bowls, and spake with me, saying, ‘Come hither, I will  
show thee the judgment of the Great Harlot that sitteth on many  
waters: with whom the kings of the earth fornicated, and the  
dwellers on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her  
fornication.’”  
  
IT will perhaps be the simplest way of leading the  
reader to the main features of this scene of the prophecy  
to sketch the chief positions of Babylon.  
 1. Babylon is literal. The Babylon of Euphrates is  
well known by us, from its notices in the Old Testament.  
It was the first great city of man. There flourished  
the first great rebel monarch, Nimrod. There men  
were centred in unbelief, and thence were they scattered.  
But after the flow of ages, and the wrath of God  
against the kingdom of Judah, Babylon became the  
great metropolis of the first Gentile kingdom, and  
Nebuchadnezzar was its head. It was the mighty  
opposer of Israel, the instrument of God’s vengeance  
in destroying the city and temple of God, and in carrying  
captive His people. After this Babylon herself  
was gradually made desolate, and has for ages lain so.  
Did Babylon cease then to exist? If not, what became  
of Babylon during that time? For here it is supposed  
not only to be in existence, but to be known as the  
sovereign city, having supremacy over the kings of  
the earth.