“And the merchants of the earth grew rich through  
the power of her luxury.”  
 This charge appears now for the first time. It  
appears in conjunction with the description of a great  
commercial and wealthy city. From this I gather  
that the description is intended to apply not to Rome,  
but to the literal Babylon. It describes her standing  
just before the Saviour’s manifestation.  
 How differently does the sacred writer regard commerce and its widely extended operations from the  
view taken by statesmen! They foster it, boast of it,  
regard it as the glory of a nation, the source of its  
greatness and power. It is not indeed evil in itself to  
barter one thing for another: but as pursued in its  
higher walks, it can scarcely be followed without the  
soul being devoted to the world.  
 This was a city of excessive luxury: and commerce  
was at work in all its avenues, to supply that luxury.  
This, then, discovers to us the selfishness and covetousness of it. It spent needlessly, on its pleasures, what  
would have relieved the pains of sickness, and the hunger and nakedness of poverty. The hearts of the inhabitants were fixed on earth, and the enjoyments of a  
sentenced life; not on heaven and the resurrection.  
How little is excessive luxury regarded as a provocation of God! The warning of the parable of the  
rich man and Lazarus falls on unwilling ears.  
  
 4. “And I heard another voice out of the heaven, saying, ‘Come  
out of her, my people, that ye have no fellowship with her sins,  
and that ye receive not of her plagues. 5. For her sins reached  
to heaven, and God remembered her iniquities.’”  
  
 “Come out of her, my people.”  
 Of what people is this said?  
 1. Not of the Church. That is no longer recognized,  
and its better part has long been on high. This people