

The Seven Heads of Revelation 12, 13, and 17

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In advocating the view that the seven heads of the dragon of Revelation 12, and the beasts of Revelation 13 and 17, represent seven forms of government that have existed in the Roman Empire, the writer deems it necessary to remind the reader that he is not dealing in novelties. He is not introducing a new view to appeal to the curiosity of the reader, and to cater to the not always healthy excitement of pursuing a line of thought because it is strange. But the view which will be advocated in this paper is one which has characterized the Adventist movement from the beginning, through the first, second, and third messages, to the present time, and is only beginning within a few years to be called in question. Nor can the view be said to be peculiar to Adventists in its historical aspect, - a scheme devised by them to meet their peculiar views of prophecy, - for scholars declared before the Adventist movement began, that Rome had presented to the world, as a *unique* and *marvelous* feature of history, *seven distinct forms of government*. All that the Adventists did, was to say, as the most natural thing in the world, that if Rome did have seven forms of government, the seven heads of the dragon, which was a symbol of Rome, must be designed to represent that fact. The old Roman historians, Livy and Tacitus, acknowledged the different forms of government

2

in Rome, to be so many "heads" of the Roman commonwealth, and expressly name these four forms: Kings, Consuls, Dictators, and Decemvirs. And one of the earliest Protestant commentators, Osiander, as early as 1511, names the whole seven as we have them; namely, Kings, Consuls, Decemvirs, Dictators, Triumvirs, Emperors, and Popes, as the forms of Roman government represented by the seven heads of the dragon of Revelation 12, and the seven-headed beasts of Revelation 13 and Revelation 17. Adventists, under the first message, at once adopted this view.

It may be said that this is going too far back for light and prophetic instruction. But we trust it will not be assumed that there have been no scholars who have been able to interpret history aright till within the last decade, or that none of the prophetic applications made by the men who lived in that era when the seal was broken from the book, and who were impelled by the Spirit of God to prophetic study, were entitled to any respect.

But the view that the seven heads of the dragon of Revelation 12 represent seven forms of government that were developed in the Roman Empire alone, is

now called in question: whether with good reason or not, it is the purpose of this paper to try to determine. The new views which are now brought forth to take the place of the old, vary with every different exponent, but it will be necessary to notice only those to which most prominence has been given. But before this is done, a few words must be offered to show what the dragon itself signifies; for, strange to say, it is also denied that this is a symbol of pagan Rome. It has always been thought to be an easy task to demonstrate that the Roman power in its first religious form, is what is set forth under the symbol of the great red dragon of Revelation 12. Symbols are applied in accordance with the position in which they are placed and the work which they are said to perform. In the present case, the dragon certainly represents that human government which attempted

3

to destroy the Lord Jesus when he came into this world. And there can be no dispute that that power was Rome. But does it not say in verse 9, that the great dragon is the old serpent, the Devil and Satan? - Very true; but it does not say that the great *red* dragon, spoken of before, was the Devil and Satan. Mark how carefully the prophecy distinguishes between these two symbols. One is a great *red* dragon, having *seven heads*, *ten horns* and a *tail*, that sweeps a third part of the stars of heaven from their orbit, and casts them to the earth. Surely such a description cannot be made to apply to Satan as a person. Such an application would be more grotesque than the burlesques of Satan, born in the envenomed and hostile minds of skeptics and scoffers, wherein he is shown with a cloven foot, bat's wings, cattle's horns, and a dart-pointed tail. The other is a reference to Satan personally, and the explanation is immediately added, stating that by *this* dragon, Satan is meant. How particular the angel is here to define the term *dragon*, so that no mistake can be made. There is no need of confounding the two descriptions. The dragon by which the devil, personally, is represented, is not a "great *red* dragon," is not a dragon with *seven* crowned *heads*, nor one with *ten horns* and a *tail*. This dragon is a symbol of Rome, while the religion of the empire was pagan.

In "The Great Controversy" by Mrs. E.G. White, p. 138, we find the following on this point: "The dragon is said to be Satan[Rev.12:9]; he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and his people during the first centuries of the Christian era, was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense *a symbol of pagan Rome*." This is the only reasonable and Scriptural view to take of this matter. And how may we know when a dragon is thus used in a secondary sense applying to some earthly power? - It is when some specific

4

features are ascribed to it, as multiplied heads, horns, etc. For a dragon, unqualified, has no such peculiar features, but is simply a hideous creature, conforming to what we see in nature. So when it is applied to Satan, personally, it is explained as applying to him, and none of these features appear, but an additional phrase, "that old serpent," is added to guard us further upon this point.

Therefore when such features as heads and horns are noted, as in Rev.12:3, we may know it is used in its secondary sense, and applies to an earthly government, that earthly government being in this case his *chief agent*, pagan Rome. So in Eze.29:3, Egypt, then a prominent agent of Satan, is symbolized by a "great dragon." But there it is represented as a river monster having "scales." It is certainly bad enough for unbelievers and worldlings to caricature the Devil, as having two horns, and a tail; how much worse is it for Bible students to emphasize that caricature by giving him seven heads and ten horns, as well as the inevitable tail!

John had the vision of the Revelation in A.D. 96, and here he is shown a symbol of the government under which he lived and was suffering persecution; and that symbol was a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns. Then all the features which appear in the dragon, we should expect to find, should we not, in some features or characteristics of the Roman Empire? This would certainly seem to be most natural. But the new view is a departure from this "natural method." According to this view, contrary to all precedent, the scope of this vision was retroactive, going back not merely to the beginning of the history of the then current government, but away outside of its limits, to take in the great governments of the earth, which had been already symbolized in prophecy, some of them three times over, and which had passed away centuries before, never again to appear or to have any influence among men. Such kingdoms as these, it is contended, are included among the heads of the dragon, the new enumeration being

5

given as follows: 1. Babylon; 2. Medo-Persia; 3. Grecia; 4. Rome pagan; 5. Rome papal; 6. United Italy; 7. A future head yet unknown; 8. The papacy restored.

Another view leaves out United Italy, and gives in its stead the pagan-Protestant nations of Europe, as the sixth head, and makes the seventh head some condition of things yet undeveloped, with an imitation that it is the time of trouble and anarchy that is before us. This view is inconsistent with itself in that it assumes that a head must be a separate government, and yet makes the sixth head a multiplicity of state-church governments spread all over Europe, and the seventh head, a state of anarchy, which is the absence of all government!

The objection to such an application is that already intimated - it is contrary to all precedent. No prophecy can be found dealing with subjects in that way: that is, introducing *new* symbols to represent *old* governments which had had their day, and passed away, never again to appear among men. What conceivable reason could there be for prophecy thus to deal with them? Prophecy relates to the future from the time it is given not to the past. It only goes back far enough into the past to show the grounds for the future events which it predicts, and to identify the symbols which it introduces. Of this we have an illustration in Rev. 12:1,2. And just as soon as a nation has performed its part and passed away, it is *dropped out* of the chain of events, and the prophecy goes on with the *future*. This is illustrated in the vision of Daniel 8, which was given in the last year of the

Babylonian supremacy, and therefore begins with the Medo-Persian Empire, because nothing further of the empire of Babylon was to be taken into account.

But it may be asked if, on the ground that these seven heads denote the seven forms of government in the Roman Empire, the prophecy does not go back to a time centuries before John's day, when some of these heads existed. Very true; but it does not go *outside* the government to which they belonged. As they were features

6

which belonged to that government which the angel was *then* showing to John, it was necessary to go back far enough to take them all in. It was necessary to show the government in its entirety. The view would not have been complete without this. But to suppose that the symbol goes outside of Rome, to buried nations which *never had any connection* with Rome, is to suppose that the prophecy brings in a lot of effete and dead matter, useless lumber, lifeless members, which had no connection and never had had any connection with the government then reigning, and passing under review when this vision was given to John. Such an application is thus shown to be *unnatural* as well as *unscriptural*.

According to the uniform showing of symbolic prophecy, if any one symbol was designed to take in at one view all the great governments of the world, the symbol by which this is shown should have been introduced while the *first* of those governments was a reigning power instead of waiting till one or more of them had passed away and then giving us a picture of their ghosts after they had gone into their graves. But is it not said of those first beasts, that when their dominion was taken away, their lives were prolonged? - Yes; but it was only for "a season and time." It is not intimated that the life of the first beast is continued till the time of the fourth, or that the lives of the second and third were so continued. But the life of the first was continued for a time into the second, the second into the third, etc. That is, when there was a transition from one kingdom to another, there was not an instantaneous change of people, customs, institutions, and influences. But these continued to be felt in the succeeding kingdom, till a new generation arose, and everything was finally molded over into the new kingdom, and so on from one to another. But when we come to the fourth kingdom, the prophecy sees fit to show that the spirit, elements, and some of the characteristics of those first beasts, have been absorbed into, and show themselves in, this fourth kingdom, by giving to the Roman beast (Rev. 13:1,2)

7

the body of a leopard, feet of a bear, and mouth of a lion. So of the image of chapter 2, it can be said that the iron, brass, silver, and gold are broken to pieces together, because the elements of those kingdoms exist to the end. This reasoning could not be applied to the symbol of the heads; for they all belonged to *one* kingdom; while these were all outside of Rome, separate and independent kingdoms.

2. In the vision of Daniel 7 in which Babylon, Medo-Persia, and Grecia are brought to view, consecutively, under their own specific symbols, it is not till the fourth, or Roman, kingdom is reached, that the feature of ten horns is introduced,

because it was out of Rome *alone* that the ten kingdoms, symbolized by those horns, were to be developed. But when we come to the vision of the great red dragon of Revelation 12, these same ten horns again appear, showing that the vision of John does not begin till the time of the fourth beast of the prophecy of Daniel 7, and that what John has in view is *that identical power* shown to Daniel out of which the ten horns, or ten kingdoms were to arise. It is not intimated that these ten horns were confined to *one* of the heads of the dragon, but they were common to all the heads, one to every head, and two to a sufficient number to make out the ten. But if one of these heads represents Babylon, another Medo-Persia, and another Grecia, the ten horns would pertain as much to them as to any other heads. But this was not the case. These ancient empires were never any part of the kingdom out of which the ten horns arose. Therefore it is *impossible* that those heads can have any refer to any of those preceding kingdoms, out of which the ten kingdoms did *not* arise. In view of such facts, it must be evident that the seven heads cannot be applied outside the Roman Empire.

3. The chronological standpoint from which John speaks is that of his own time. It was just so with the prophet Daniel. He tells when he had his visions, where he was, and the circumstances then existing. So John says, I was in the isle called Patmos, on the Lord's day, and had a

8

vision in which the angel told me such and such things. And so, when the angel in his more particular explanation of the heads, in Revelation 17, says of them to John, that five of them had passed away, and one is, etc., he shows that the heads are consecutive, and that five were then in the past, and that John was living under the sixth. Any correct application of these heads, therefore, must show the political power of the symbol vested in the sixth head, in A.D.96, when this vision was given. To say that John speaks from the standpoint of some indeterminate future time - a time when five of the heads would have passed away, and the sixth be reigning - without giving the least intimation as to when that time would be, is to pull up the anchor, throw away chart and compass, and drift out upon an unknown sea, subject to every fancy that every fitful gust of wind may blow across one's path. In this case, we could know nothing about the prophecy, and Swedenborgianism would be as good a guide as any. To apply the same principle to Daniel's prophecy, it might just as well be claimed that when he says in chapter 9, that the angel came to explain to him the vision of chapter 8, and tells him that seventy weeks were cut off upon his people, etc., he did not mean that such was the case *then*, but that the time *would* come in the unknown future, when it would be determined to set apart seventy weeks for his people, leaving the way all open for some Jew to claim that the time has not yet come for the fulfillment, and therefore the revelation of the Messiah is yet future. Daniel names the time and place when the angel assured him that certain circumstances existed. Just so John states that he was in the isle called Patmos, and in vision, a government was presented before him under the symbol of a great red dragon, with seven heads, and of these the angel says, "Five *are* fallen, and one *is*." When would John understand that to be true? - In his own day, the

time then present, of course. It would indeed be a very strange announcement to say of seven consecutive heads, that the time would come sometime,

9

when five of them would have passed away, and the sixth would be in power, and the other would be coming. The same might be said of the whole series, in reference to the others. It is certain, then, that the sixth head was the reigning head in John's own day. But the view under consideration does not have the sixth head the reigning head, at the time the Revelation was given; and therefore it stands condemned by the conditions which the prophecy itself plainly imposes.

4. The disposition of the crowns on the dragon and the succeeding beast, also serves to guide us to the correct application. Through all the period covered by the dragon form of the Roman Empire, the crowns are upon the *heads*. Crowns must be taken to indicate civil power; and the thought evidently to be conveyed is that, during the time covered by the dragon form, the civil power was vested in the heads. In verse 7 of Revelation 12, Satan is introduced as a dragon, without interfering at all with the symbol of verses 3 and 4: and the remainder of the chapter may perhaps be mainly applicable to his work personally. Then in chapter 13:1, the angel takes up the great Roman system again, by bringing to view the same seven heads and ten horns. But now such a change has occurred that the Roman power is no longer represented by a dragon, but by a beast having the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion. But a still further change will be noticed, and that is that the crowns are all removed from the *heads*, and the crowns that now appear are placed upon the *horns*. This accords most harmoniously with the facts of history. The ten horns represent the ten kingdoms that came up out of Rome; and these all arose while the empire was still pagan. But almost immediately the religion of the empire changed from paganism to that mongrel form of Christianity, known as the papacy.

This was at first a spiritual power. It had no crown upon it; for the power had now passed over to the horns. To maintain the unity of the symbol of the dragon, he had seven crowns upon

10

his heads; but to maintain the unity or the consistency of the symbol under the change, all the heads of the leopard beast now have *blasphemy* written upon them, and the crowns are placed upon the *horns*. No head appears after this with a crown upon it; and this shows that there is *no* other head to be developed, to receive a crown, after the civil power had passed to the horns. But, it will be said, Was not the papacy clothed with civil power? - The papacy, to be sure, subjected the civil power to itself; but the relation of religion to the state was not the same as it was under paganism. There the emperor was *pontifex maximus*, because he was emperor. He held his *religious* office because of his *civil* office. But here the popes assumed civil authority, because of their religious power. They presumed to control both the civil and spiritual affairs of men, not because they were emperors, but because they were God's vicegerents upon the earth. That is, one assumed control of the spiritual interest of his subjects, because of his *civil* elevation: the other reversed the relation, and assumed control of both the civil

and spiritual interests of all men, because of his *spiritual* elevation. That was the difference. It was this *spiritual* tyranny that constituted the special phase of the great Roman colossus, under the papacy. Hence this head has no crown upon it, but is covered with the names of *blasphemy*. It is agreed on all hands that the papacy constitutes one of the heads; and it is shown by what is here presented in reference to the crowns and horns, that that head is absolutely the last in the series of seven.

5. The action of the dragon in reference to the following or leopard beast, still further shows that the dragon, as a symbol, is confined to pagan Rome. The dragon gives to the papal beast, his seat, his power, and great authority. His seat was Rome, which has been occupied by the popes ever since it was abandoned by the emperors. This as a matter of history was a transaction wholly between pagan and papal Rome, and as a matter of prophecy, wholly between the dragon and the leopard beast. The dragon, therefore,

11

represents Pagan Rome, and the beast, papal Rome. Neither Babylon, Medo-Persia, nor Grecia had anything whatever to do with this transfer to the papacy, as they must have had, if they constituted three of the heads of the dragon. Therefore the conclusion again follows that the seven heads of the dragon *cannot* take in those ancient empires.

But again it may be asked, What had the other heads of Rome which had passed away years before, to do with it? - They had to do with it, of course, only as they had been a part of the Roman power, all included within its past history. When the transfer was made to the papacy, all the heads except the last preceding has passed away, which must be the one, as a matter of necessity, to make the transfer. But that head represented all the Rome that had gone before. Was it not Rome when Constantine moved the seat of empire to the Bosphorus, and left the city of Rome to become the seat of the popes? and was it not just as much Rome, the same Rome, when the proud Tarquins were expelled from the throne by an indignant populace, nearly a thousand years before? But neither Babylon, Medo-Persia, nor Grecia were a part of Rome, and never had been, and consequently can sustain no claim to any relation with this transfer to the papacy of the seat of the ancient Caesars.

On this point we have another evidence of the absurdity of applying the seven-headed and ten-horned dragon to the Devil; for in this case we would have the Devil giving up his seat and his power to the papacy. But we may be sure the Devil has not *abdicated* in any such manner. While he uses the papacy as his agent, it is certain that he still retains his place as the god of this world, and the prince of the power of the air. Another quotation from "Great Controversy" will make this point plain. Speaking of the leopard beast of Rev.12:13, it says (p. 439): "This symbol, as most Protestants have believed, represents the papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once possessed by the *ancient Roman Empire*."

12

6. Is it said that as Rome was the successor of all these governments, and assimilated to itself the elements of them all, they should be represented in the

Roman symbol? Then we ask if such is not already the case, independently of the heads? Thus the papal beast has the body of a leopard, as the successor of Grecia, the feet of a bear, reminding us of Persia, and the mouth of a lion, a characteristic of Babylon. And do not these features represent all that needed to be represented in Rome of its relation to those preceding kingdoms? Why should three of the seven heads of the beast be taken to represent those kingdoms also? If they do, then those kingdoms are represented *twice over* in that symbol, and we may be sure that prophecy is never guilty of any such *tautology*.

Such are some of the objections to going outside of the Roman Empire to find the seven heads, or any of them. And they are submitted as conclusive evidence that we cannot go back of, nor outside of, the Roman Empire for any of the heads.

7. That portion of the view under discussion which applies to the present or the future, seems equally objectionable. Thus the sixth head, under which we understand the angel told John he was living, is held to be the united Italy of the present day. But what is there peculiar about united Italy to make it a head? - Italy has been united before; and if that condition makes it a head, it has been a head before as well as today. But more than this, Italy is simply one of the ten horns; and these horns do not turn into heads. Italy cannot therefore be the sixth head.

8. In the new view the seventh head is made to refer to a new and unknown power yet to arise. This is the most objectionable feature, perhaps, of the whole scheme. Here again we are all at sea. The effect upon those who receive it can easily be imagined. It will throw *uncertainty* and *confusion* over all our work. There is danger in deferring to the future, events which may, even possibly, have been fulfilled in the past.

13

And against this danger, in the view of the writer, a most solemn voice of warning should be raised. First-day Adventists have largely fallen into this practise, till with some of them, even the 2300 days are all thrown over into the future. If we are yet to wait for two more heads to be developed and run their career before the end, the inevitable tendency is to put off the coming of the Lord. It thrusts in between ourselves and that event, other movements to which the mind will be attracted, curiosity excited, and the spirit of speculation let loose, and thus the attention be diverted from a proper sense of the nearness of the end. But it may be asked, Are there not future events which we expect to be fulfilled before the Lord comes? Yes; but they are events which stand in immediate connection with that event. The coming to his end, of the king of the north (Dan.11:15); the going into the burning flame of the papal beast (Dan.7:11); the completion of the work of the two-horned beast, now in the advanced stages of its development (Rev.13:12-17) can hardly be said to be independent events between us and the coming of the Lord; for they are so intimately connected with the coming that to all practical purposes they are inseparable, and in each case only another step remains to be taken: and to this we see everything now rapidly tending. But to say that two future heads of the beast are yet to be developed is a very different thing from saying that the last head, even the eighth, has already

been for centuries developed, has done the great burden of its work, and now virtually only waits to go into perdition. Such we believe to be really the situation at the present time. In the one case we wait for new movements to be inaugurated, run their allotted career, and come to their end, before the Lord comes; in the other, we only look for the final acts in movements well declined and already far advanced toward their completion. The one prospect presents *uncertainty* and *delay*; the other, the *speedy realization* of all our hopes. Again we say, Beware of any theory which throws in so much between our own time and the coming of

14

the Lord as to produce inevitably the impression, unconsciously to ourselves it may be, that the coming of the Lord is not so near as we had been accustomed to believe. Such a result would be very deplorable.

9. Lastly, we are told that the eighth head is the papacy restored. It has already been noticed that the papacy, in the new scheme, constituted the fifth head. But why should the simple restoration of this head, constitute *another* head? Would it not, to all intents and purposes, be the same thing? How much is intended by the expression, "The papacy restored," we are not aware. But might it not be pertinent to inquire if the papacy ever is to be restored to be again a civil power. An event which one prophecy of the papacy has seen fit to notice, is spoken of as the taking away of his dominion. "But the judgement shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to *consume* and to *destroy* it unto the end." Dan.7:26. Whether we take the last clause to mean the end of his dominion or the end of time, if the prophecy means anything, it means that after that dominion is taken away, whatever it is, the papacy *never becomes repossessed* of it again. We are certainly past the time of the sitting of the judgement, here brought to view, even if we apply it as late as 1844. We must be past the taking away of the dominion, even if we apply that to the taking away of the temporal dominion in 1870, which Victor Emmanuel himself declared should never be restored to the papacy again. So for twenty-six years, we have seen the pope shutting himself up in his palace in Rome, posing as a martyr, and sulking like a spoiled child. If by the "restoration" is meant the regaining of his temporal dominion (and how could it be said to be restored without this?), the prophecy forbids it. It will still exist and enjoy prestige, as a spiritual power, as it does to-day, and will to a still greater extent in the future; for it will virtually co-operate with the two-horned beast while it does its work (Rev.13:12), and with it, it will go alive into the lake of fire. Rev.19:20.

15

With these insuperable objections to applying the heads anywhere outside of Rome, pagan and papal, and against looking for any of them to come up in the future, the question may still exist in some minds, Where shall we apply them? The old position remains that they denote seven distinct forms of government that have appeared in the Roman Empire. And now if it can be shown that such is actually the fact, that seven forms of government have been there exhibited, will it not satisfy the prophecy most completely? - Assuredly it will. And if this unique feature did appear in Roman history, that seven distinct classes of rulers

did at different times control the government, so *unlike* the general history of other nations, this fact would certainly be *worthy to be noted* in prophecy. To this point, then, let us now direct attention.

The seven forms of government claimed for Rome have been named as follows: (1) Kings; (2) Consuls; (3) Decemvirs; (4) Dictators; (5) Triumvirs; (6) Emperors; and (7) Popes. Did these classes of rulers at different times appear as heads of the government? What is a head of government? It is not the whole nation itself, but that person, persons, or organization, in whose hands is the supreme executive control of the government or nation. In the case of Rome it will not be questioned that kings would properly constitute a head. The same would be true of emperors and true of popes; for by common agreement the papacy comes in as one of these heads. But by parity of reasoning, if the papacy was a head, these other classes of rulers must have been heads, too. Therefore, we need inquire only in reference to four of these; namely, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, and triumvirs. If we find that these acted such a part in the government that they could properly be called "heads" of the government, and that no other Roman officers did, except kings, emperors, and popes, already mentioned, then the whole ground is covered, and the prophecy is fairly met.

Consuls. Concerning consuls we read from Johnson's New Universal Cyclopedia as follows: -

16

"Consul (from the Latin *consulo*, to 'consult,' or 'advise'), the *supreme magistrate* of ancient Rome, after the expulsion of the kings. The number was two, and the period of office one year, but there was no restriction as to the number of times the same individual might be elected, although a certain interval was at length required before again holding the office. Consuls were the *supreme executive* officers, but had no legislative authority. They were originally chosen only from the patricians, but afterward from the plebeians also."

From this it appears that originally the consuls occupied a position similar to that of the president in our own United States, while they were in office, and the consulship was the head of the state, as the presidency is in our own land at the present time. But it is said that Rome was then a republic. Very well, is it not necessary that a republic have a head? and did not those who were the *supreme magistrates* constitute that head? Is not the president the head of this nation? But it is said further that the office of consul was common to all Roman history, and was continued even under the emperors, and down to the extinction of the Western Empire. True, the historian states that under the emperors, the office was only nominal, its substantial power being destroyed. But that does not change the fact that the office at *first* was *real* and *powerful*, and the consuls were the *supreme magistrates* of the land. If that did not constitute a head, what could constitute one? It is said the Theodoric, the conqueror of Italy (A. D. 493), congratulated the consuls as the "favorites of fortune, who, without the care, enjoyed the splendor of the throne." This shows the real nature of their position, originally, when they *did* have the cares as well as the splendor of the *throne*. There seems therefore no rational ground to deny that consuls once constituted

the head of the Roman state, as much as kings, emperors, or popes. (See the remarks of Livy, already referred to.)

Decemvirs. Next in order come decemvirs. Of these we read from the Encyclopedia above quoted: -

17

"Decemviri (sing., decemvir), (Lat. from *decem*, 'ten,' and *vir* (plural, *vir*. a 'man'), a name applicable to ten persons appointed for particular purposes, but more especially applied to the ten magistrates elected from the Roman patricians to draw up a code of laws founded on the more approved institutions of Greece; they were also invested with *supreme authority to govern the state*. The experiment proved entirely successful; their laws were approved by the senate and engraven on ten metal tablets; and their official duties were discharged with so much satisfaction that, at the expiration of their year of office, it was resolved, as their work was not completed, to continue the same *form of government*. A new commission, invested with the same power, was appointed for the next year, to which the plebeians were admitted, the result of which was two additional tablets, thus completing the famous Twelve Tables which in subsequent times became the *foundation of all Roman law*. The new decemviri, however, proceeded to the most violent acts of despotism, perpetrating various outrages on the persons and families of the plebeians, which so exasperated the people that an insurrection broke forth; the decemviri were driven from office, and the ordinary magistrates were re-established."

From this testimony it is clear that the decemvirs acted no inconsiderable part in Roman history, and made as much impression upon that history as any other body of men. It is by the laws that a nation is molded; and their famous Twelve Tables became the "foundation of all Roman law." Moreover during their term of office, they were clothed with "*supreme authority to govern the State*," and their administration is called a "*form of government*." What more is necessary to constitute this body a head of the state? But it is said it cannot be a head, because it was of so short continuance; it did not last two years. And what difference, pray, does that make? Where is it said that a government must continue a certain *length of time* to constitute a head? These men were not conquerors of the state nor usurpers of power. They were placed in office by

18

the people, were clothed with supreme authority to govern the nation, are called a form of government, and had full control of all its affairs. Now if their administration in that position with that power in their hands had continued no more than a week or a day, that would have made no difference. There would have been a *separate and distinct form of government* standing uniquely out in the history of Rome, and peculiar to that nation. The decemvirs, surely, were one of its heads.

Dictators. Let us now look at the place dictators held in the Roman state. Concerning this officer, the following testimony is given: -

"Dictator (Fr. *dictateur*, from the Lat. *dicto*, dictatum, to 'say often,' to 'dictate'), the title of an extraordinary magistrate in the republic of ancient Rome, who was invested with nearly *absolute power* for a period of six months, and was

irresponsible. Dictators were appointed when the republic was in danger, or when an important crisis demanded the prompt decision and vigorous action of a single executive chief. The first dictator, according to some authorities, was Titus Lartius, who was appointed 501 B. C.; the last, Marcus Junius Perae, 216 B. C. In general no one could be made dictator who had not previously been consul. It is doubtful whether election by the curia was necessary to his appointment, but the nomination by the consul was indispensable. . . . The office of dictator was at first confined to patricians, and the first plebeian dictator was C. Martius Rutilus, appointed in 356 B. C. The power of the dictators was subject to these limitations; they could not touch the treasury, they were not permitted to leave Italy, not to ride through Rome on horseback without the consent of the people. The dictatorships of Sulla and Caesar, both of whom transcended their limitations, were irregular and illegal, entirely different from the former dictatorships." - *Id.*

Duruy's History of Rome, Vol. 1, p. 282, describing the creation of the office of Dictator, says that they "revived royalty with all its power for a time. In 501 B. C. they created the dictatorship, the powers of which were unlimited."

19

According to the principle that the controlling power in a state is the head of the state, have we not here another head of the Roman government? Was there ever a like arrangement in any other government? Here was an "extraordinary magistrate," vested with absolute power saving only that he must have the consent of the people to draw upon the treasury, to leave Italy, or to ride through Rome on horseback. If the president of the United States, subject to all his limitations, is the head of this nation, much more were dictators, during their office, the head of the Roman government. If it is said, by way of objection, that the term of office was of short duration, the answer is, What possible difference can that make? There was a *form of government*, devised by the people, to control the affairs of the nation in times of emergencies, to which for the time being everything else became subordinate; and the arrangement was continued, and put in operation more or less, according to the foregoing testimony, for the space of two hundred and eighty-five years. If this feature of the government did not constitute a head, it would be hard to conceive what would constitute one. If, while the dictator had affairs in his hands, any stranger had asked, Who is the governor of Rome? What would the answer have been? It would have been nothing else but this - The dictator. And if any one had something to do with the government, to whom would he have been sent? - To the dictator. If any still deny that dictators constituted one of the various forms of government that have appeared in Rome, will they please tell us what was the head of the government while the dictators had the power in their hands? It was not the consuls, nor the senate, nor the tribunes, nor any other officers; for these were *all subject* to the dictator. Nor does it matter that this form of government was resorted to at different times, and was each time of short duration; for as already remarked, time does not enter into the account at all; that does not alter the fact that there was a different, distinct well defined, and independent form of government presented

to the world and peculiar to that nation: and no one can deny it.

Triumvirs. Every one acquainted with Roman history is familiar with the name "triumvirs," and the part they acted in the conduct of the Roman State. Of these the historian speaks as follows: -

"*Triumviri*, or *Tres viri* (Lat. *tres*, 'three,' and *vir*, 'men'), in ancient Rome, a board of three men appointed for some special public duty. A number of kinds of *triumviri* are specified by Roman authors. In B. C. 60. Julius Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus, formed a coalition for the conduct of public affairs; this is called the '*first triumvirate*,' but the men who constituted it bore no official title of *triumviri*, and exercised only an usurped power. The '*second triumviri*,' that of Octavian, Mark Antony, and Lepidus, was officially recognized by the senate, and the three magistrates bore the name of *Triumviri Republicae Constituendae* ('triumvirs for arranging public affairs')." - *Id.*

Here, then, we have two periods in Roman history when the government was administered by three men, another form of management of the state peculiar to Rome. If we throw out the first as not officially recognized, we still have the second, which was officially recognized by the senate, and a title given them accordingly. Does any one doubt that the supreme authority of the state was for a time in their hands? And as that which controls and manages the government, is the "head" of the government, was not this, beyond all question, another head which appeared in the Roman state, peculiar to that nation? - It most certainly was. In the light of the fact that the "head" of a government, or nation, is that person or body of persons in whose hands the supreme executive, or controlling, power of the administration is lodged, we ask the reader to take a reasonable view of the conduct of the affairs of Rome throughout its history. We find just seven different classes of rulers who at different times occupied this position and exercised this power; and these were as already stated,

kings, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, triumvirs, emperors, and popes. And the power of Rome was continually in the hands of some of these seven classes, with the short exception noticed in Revelation 17, when between the imperial and papal heads, the "Exarch of Ravenna" ruled Rome for some sixty years. The tribunes, aediles, praetors, lictors, etc., were all subordinate officers and magistrates, and neither these, alone or in combination, nor the senate alone, or in conjunction with these, ever exercised the *supreme authority* of the Roman government.

It is said by way of objection to this view, that kings and emperors were too near alike to constitute two separate heads. But surely they could not be more alike than "the papacy" and "the papacy restored" which are now said to constitute two of the heads. The emperors were not simply kings restored. It was a *new phase* of the government coming in after many years of change and growth, and the method of its exercise and the circumstances connected with it were as different from the original kingly office, as can well be imagined. To illustrate: A course of study is commenced in the common school, but the common school is a very different thing from the university where the course is

completed. The position of emperor in later Rome, was no more the same as the original office of king, than the university is the same as the common school. Coming in after so long an interval, after so many changes and different forms of government had intervened, and under such different conditions, the emperorship could not be anything else than a separate and distinct head.

This view of the heads is not only confirmed, but practically demonstrated by the only other prophetic symbol in which a plurality of heads is presented; namely, the four-headed leopard of Daniel 7. We are told that these four heads of the leopard were four distinct kingdoms, and therefore heads must always denote separate kingdoms. But let us inquire further, as to the nature of these kingdoms. They were all *Grecian* kingdoms: for they were simply divisions of the

22

empire of Alexander, which was the kingdom of Grecia. But the kingdom of Grecia is treated in prophecy as a unit, not only during the lifetime of Alexander, when it had one head, but during the whole history of the four divisions into which the empire was separated, denoted by the four heads of the leopard and the four horns of the goat. This is shown by the great symbolic image of Daniel 2, where Grecia is represented by the one portion of brass. This fact is also acknowledged in the new view now under consideration, in which Grecia, with its *four* heads is held to constitute only *one* of the seven heads of the symbols of Revelation, according to the new enumeration. Now the four heads of the leopard of Daniel 7, all being Grecian in character, instead of proving the new view of the seven heads, that is, that they must be different and alien kingdoms, as claimed for the apocalyptic symbols, utterly *disprove* that idea, by showing that heads on a symbolic beast must all belong to the *same government* represented by that symbol. Therefore the seven heads of the dragon of Revelation 12, instead of denoting entirely distinct and foreign kingdoms, some of which lived and died before Rome came onto power, must all be confined to the government represented by the dragon, which was Rome.

But why did the leopard have four heads? - Simply because in the divided state of the empire, four different governments exercised the power and authority which pertained to the kingdom as a whole: and hence four heads were necessary to represent that fact. But if a new government, in simply a *division* of an empire, required a separate *head* to represent it, surely a change in the form of government sufficient to constitute a new controlling power in the *whole empire* would, with still greater reason, be represented by a separate head. All the students of this prophecy hold in common that Rome papal constitutes one of the seven heads; and this gives us a key to the application of the whole; for this was only a different form of power by which the Roman state was ruled. Then, by parity of

23

reasoning, the other forms of government in the Roman commonwealth should be represented by heads also. But it is said that the gift of Justinian, of power and authority to the papacy, was sufficient to constitute that an independent empire, and thus make it a separate head. But if this is so, then we ask if the power and authority bestowed in a distinct and formal manner by the whole

strength of the nation upon the other forms of government in Rome, were not sufficient to constitute them heads just as much? Was not the whole authority of the empire, by explicit and formal legislation, conferred consecutively upon consuls, decemvirs, dictators, and triumvirs? - Surely it was according to the testimony of history.

It now remains to apply the facts herein briefly touched upon, to the prophecy of the seventeenth chapter of Revelation. And in this there will be no difficulty if we bear in mind and apply the principles which can be clearly deduced from the language of the prophecy itself.

1. In the first place the fact that it was one of the seven angels who had the seven last plagues, that showed to John the judgment of great Babylon, has no bearing upon the chronological standpoint from which John views the scenes he describes; for it was one of the same seven angels which showed him the holy city coming down from God out of heaven. Rev.21:10. But this is not till a thousand years after the same seven angels have poured out the vials of the judgement of God's wrath upon the earth. They could just as appropriately be employed to show John events which were to take place long before the time when they would perform their specific mission, especially if connected with that government or organization on which the plagues were to fall. Why one of the angels having charge of the seven plagues was selected to show John this view, is clearly apparent from the fact that the judgments to fall on Babylon find their climax and completion in these plagues.

2. The angel himself acknowledges that there is mystery connected with the symbols of this

24

seventeenth chapter; for he says to John, "I will tell thee the *mystery* of the woman, and [the mystery] of the beast that carrieth her." Verse 7. We need not, therefore, be surprised if the rules of interpretation that can be adhered to in some other prophecies cannot be so rigidly followed here.

3. The compound symbol first presented (a beast and a woman seated upon it) is evidently designed to show the relation of the ecclesiastical to the civil power in the earthly government to be brought into view, or rather the distinction between them, the state dominated by the church, as the horse is controlled by its rider. It is also to show the corrupt nature of that church; for it is generally agreed that the woman, here, as a symbol, includes the papal church.

4. But in other statements this distinction (having once been clearly defined) seems to be dropped; and the beast is considered as embracing the religious element also; for he is "full of names of blasphemy," which is a religious characteristic; and further on in the prophecy some statements are made concerning the beast, which apply to the papacy. We are thus, in some instances, obliged to interpret the prophecy in accordance with the facts in the case, instead of maintaining, throughout, a rigid uniformity of the symbol, as for instance, when the symbol of the beast, and where the beast himself is finally called only a head. Verse 11.

5. The beast is of a scarlet color, the same *color* as the *dragon*, indicating that this beast covers Rome *from the beginning* of its history in its pagan form, to the

end of its career in its papal form; for it goes into perdition, the landing place of the papacy. (See Alford and Meyer.)

6. The verb, "to be," in this prophecy is sometimes used to express events to take place consecutively from a historical present; and again it is used for the purpose of expressing great facts without reference to the time of their occurrence. See illustrations of this in the following expressions: "Five are fallen, and one

25

is, and the other is not yet come." This is spoken concerning seven heads which were to appear in consecutive order; and as there is no intimation of any arbitrary point of view from which the reckoning is to be made, it would mean nothing at all unless calculated from John's own day; and then it would clearly mean that John was living in the time of the sixth head, five having passed away before his day, and that two more were to appear after that under which John was living had completed its period. But here is another expression that cannot be applied in this way; namely, "The beast that was, and *is not*, and yet *is*." Now a beast cannot be in a condition expressed by the words "is not" and "is," at the same time; that is, he cannot *be*, and *not be*, at one and the same instant. But it will be said that it means, "is not, and *shall be*." Very true; but that is a *comment* and explanation, and not a *translation*; and we are now speaking only of the *language* and its use. We have another instance in this expression: "And the beast that was, and *is not*, even he *is* the eighth." It could not be said of this beast that he "*is not*," and at the same time that he "*is*" the eighth head. These expressions must therefore be understood as simply setting forth the great fact that this beast would for a time exist, then seem to disappear, or cease to exist, and then appear again in an active, living condition, without any reference to the time when these changes should occur.

In accordance with these principles, let us proceed to the application. The first statement concerning this beast is, that it "was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition." This statement must cover the *whole period* of the existence of the government represented by this symbol; and as the symbol represents Rome in its whole history, the expression, "it was," must cover the pagan form of that empire; otherwise there would have been no need of giving a symbol which covered Rome in its whole history. In this case the angel would have contented himself with a symbol representing

26

only the papacy, as for instance, the leopard beast of chapter 13. Then the expressions, "is not," and "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit," or "is not, and yet is," or "is not, even he is the eighth," must refer to some great changes to take place in the Roman Empire, subsequently to its pagan form. What these changes were is clearly set forth in another prophecy concerning Rome, given us in the eighth chapter of Daniel, to a brief consideration of which the attention of the reader is now invited. Here Rome throughout its entire history is represented by the *single* symbol of a horn, little at first, but waxing exceeding great, and finally being broken without hand, the same as is said of the great image of chapter 2, when the stone smites it upon the feet. But Rome went through some

very wonderful metamorphoses; and the prophecy undertakes to note these changes without destroying the unity of the symbol. It is all the while *one* horn; but it appears in *two* characters apparently antagonistic to each other. One phase which the empire had long maintained was suddenly met by a hostile influence which arose in the empire itself, and which completely changed it over into another phase; and this, though prompted by the same spirit, was apparently the deadly antagonist of the first. The symbol is viewed as an oppressor of the church, and in its first phase is called "the daily" (desolation), and in its second phase, "the transgression of desolation." The first was pagan, the second professedly Christian. And this change could be accomplished only by the taking away of paganism by the corrupted form of Christianity which finally took possession of the Roman world. Rome in its pagan form was a persecutor of the people of God, first in the persons of the Jews, and, secondly, in the persons of Christians. And in its papal form, it persecuted more terribly still, true Christians who refused to follow the apostasy. But between the gradual undermining and overthrow of paganism, and the degeneracy of a professedly Christian church into a persecuting power, there must have been a period during which Christians ceased to be the

27

object of persecution and the state ceased to be a persecuting government. The prophecy describes this change in the following words: "And by him the daily sacrifice was *taken away*, and the place of his sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression," etc. This language indicates a most remarkable transformation in the government. Now let it be borne in mind that John in Revelation 17, is viewing the *same power*, covering the *same time*, and noting the *same changes*, and he describes this marvelous metamorphosis by saying, "The beast that *was*, and *is not*, and yet *is*;" that is, a beast which for a time existed, and afterward for awhile ceased to be, and then again appeared, as an active, persecuting power. Thus Rev.18:8, becomes an *exact parallel* to Dan.8:11,12; and the course of history has filled out fully and impressively the picture drawn by both Daniel and John. Bearing in mind that it is the persecuting character of this power that gives it a place in prophecy, how would the scene appear to a beholder? He would see, first, "the daily," or paganism, oppressing the church; then, after a time he would see paganism undermined, restrained, and taken away, and the place of his sanctuary cast down. The oppression of the church under that phase, would be caused to cease, and so the beast as a persecutor would disappear and apparently cease to be. For a time, then, the beast "is not." Then under apostate Christianity, it begins its work of persecution again, and thus reappears, so that it can be said of it, that it "yet is." These facts very clearly meet the conditions set forth in the prophecy; and it seems very certain to the writer that they are the only ones in all the range of history to which the expression "was, and is not, and yet is," can apply.

Without sufficient thought it is very easy to drop into the conclusion that the deadly wound of Rev.13:3,10, refers to the time and condition of the beast when

it is said of it in Rev.17:8,11, that it "is not." But that *cannot possibly be the case*. The expression, "it is not," denotes that

28

the power, as a subject of prophecy, *ceases to exist*. But this could not be said of that experience in which it only receives "a deadly wound," which is *healed* before life becomes extinct. Looking over the whole history of Rome, and considering that the scarlet beast of Revelation 17, takes in *both* the "daily" and the "transgression of desolation," of Daniel 8, we can see very clearly where the expression "was not," must come in. It was in the transition from paganism to the papacy, when the "daily" (paganism) was *taken away*, and the place of his sanctuary was *cast down*, and the beast under its pagan form, as a persecuting power *ceased to exist*. The beast, for a time, "*was not*." But under a new form, after some two centuries or more, it reappeared as the papacy, and the persecution began again. There was an *end* of one form of the beast, and it "was not," till it assumed another form. This meets completely the end of the prophecy; but as already remarked, the wounding of one of the heads *would not* by any means meet said conditions. In the case of the wounding of the head, the life of the beast is recognized as continuing right along; for the prophecy, after saying that he had a wound by a sword, does not say that he *did die*, but that he had a wound by a sword, and "*did live!*" But he received a wound, which, if it had not been healed, would soon have resulted in death. It is most infelicitous to say, as some do, that the papacy was wounded by the Reformation, in the sense of this prophecy, though not complete till its overthrow in 1798; for that was simply the earth opening her mouth and swallowing up the flood sent out to destroy the church (Rev.12:15,16); but the wounding brought to view in the prophecy is a violent attack, with *carnal weapons*; it is "*by the sword*." I hope many have not departed from the view generally held among us, that the deadly wound was inflicted in 1798. And what was then done? - The papacy was for the time being abolished; Rome was erected into a republic; the pope was carried away into exile, and

29

died there; the college of cardinals was scattered and the whole papal machinery was thrown out of gear. It was a *deadly* wound; that is, had it continued for any great length of time, the papacy would by that calamity have then and there become *defunct*. But in 1800 a new demand arose for the influence of the papacy. Its sanction was wanted for the coronation of the elder Bonaparte - not the sanction of a *dead*, but of a *living*, power. The scattered cardinals were called together; another pope was elected; and the whole papal machinery was again put in operation. The wound was *healed!* The pope resumed his position of influence among the rulers of Europe: and that system of error, superstition, and opposition to God and his truth in the earth has gone on from that day to this. The *effect* of the wound is seen in the restraint of the open and boasted persecution formerly inflicted; but does any one doubt that the papacy is the same dragonic power as formerly? that it is ever carrying on a deadly warfare against the truth? and that in its secret dungeons, both in Europe and in our own country, there are multitudes even now suffering the horrors of the Inquisition?

Doubt it who can, so long as its convents, nunneries, and other buildings are closely barricaded against even the demands of the *government* for an investigation of their secret workings! The papal power was symbolized in prophecy before it received power and authority from the emperor of the East, which marked the beginning of the 1260 years. Hence it is not necessary that a new decree should be issued by any earthly government, declaring the pope to be the head of all the churches, to constitute the papacy the beast of Revelation 13 and 17, or to heal the deadly wound, any more than it is already healed.

But more than this, if the deadly wound is not yet healed, we have anticipated the prophecy in regard to the two-horned beast; for the very first actions of the two-horned beast are done in the sight of the first beast, *whose deadly wound was healed*; for that point is especially noted. Now if the deadly wound is not yet healed, the two-horned

30

beast has not yet done anything in fulfilment of the prophecy; which would be about as absurd as to say that the wound is not yet healed. The deadly wound was given in 1798; and if that wound is not yet healed, the beast has survived now nearly a century; for the wound, it will be noticed, does not kill the the beast. This is shown by the fact that when recovery is made from the wound, it is simply the *healing* of the *wound*, not the *resurrection of the beast*. But a beast that can survive a deadly wound for a century, has certainly enormous vitality. Should it, however, be said that the deadly wound was not given till 1870, then we *destroy entirely* the application of the prophecy of the 1260 years; and even then, the beast has been getting along very comfortably with the deadly wound for more than a quarter of a century, and yet lives, with a prospect of continuing in just as good circumstances while time shall last. And this has been the most active, and in some respects the most prosperous period of its existence. But the theory under review compels the position on this point that the papacy *does not now exist*; for this is made to cover the time when the beast "was not;" that since the deadly wound was given, whether in 1798 or in 1870, there has been *no papacy in the world!* But an ecclesiastical organization which controls the countries that the Catholic Church controls, which holds the balance of power in large portions of our own country, which appropriates millions of funds of some of our city treasuries to its own use, and dictates the policy of our great national political parties, as it has just dictated to the Republican party (1896), is certainly a *very lively and powerful corpse!* and to say under these circumstances, that the papacy *does not exist*, is, with all due respect to those who have persuaded themselves into that belief, the climax of absurdity.

There is another point on which it is supposed that a difficulty exists, but in reference to which it will be necessary to say but few words. The point is concerning the Exarchate of Ravenna.

31

In the scheme here advocated, the Exarchate of Ravenna comes in after the imperial form of government as the seventh head. This form of government ruled Rome some sixty years. But the prophecy says of it, according to the common version, that it was to continue but a "short space." Now, it is asked, How can the

sixty years of the exarchate be called a *short* space when the decemvirs continued less than two years, and dictators not more, usually, than six months at a time? True, the time of the continuance of the decemvirs, and of any individual dictators, or of the individual triumvirates, was shorter than the sixty years of the exarchate; but it ought not to be necessary to remind the reader that the prophet is not drawing any comparison between the heads, as to the *time* of their continuance, previous to his time. If the prophet had had occasion to speak of the relative duration of all the heads, he doubtless would have called those named very short; but he makes no allusion whatever to them, but speaks only of the *then reigning head*, and the ones which were *to come* in the future, *one* of which was to be comparatively short. And what were the facts? - John was living under the imperial head, which continued over *five hundred and sixty years!* Surely a little head coming in between these two, for only *sixty years*, might very properly be spoken of as continuing only a "short space." But another point should be taken into consideration; and that is, the standing or influence of this little head as a factor in the empire. The decemvirs swayed and made laws for the *whole vast empire*. And what was the exarchate as a ruling power, in comparison with these? - Of no account whatever. The exarchate was, in reality, only a lieutenant of the emperor of the East, without any particular influence in the affairs of those times; yet, as the governor of Rome, he must have a place in that enumeration of the ruling heads of Rome, which

32

undertakes to cover fully and minutely the whole ground.

But another view may be taken of this point. It seems by no means certain that the prophecy has any reference to the time of the continuance of this shadowy seventh head. In reference to it the original has these words: *oligon anton dei meinai*. The word *oligon*, construed, in the common version, as an adverb, and rendered, "short space," may just as accurately be taken as an adjective, and be rendered "small," that is, "little in size, proportion, or influence." It is the same as if the prophet had said, When that head comes which is in reality the seventh, though not of enough importance to be generally reckoned among the heads, it will necessarily be small, and of no consequence; so inferior, in fact, that in no other prophecy of this line of events is it taken into account at all, but only *seven* heads, instead of *eight*, appear on the symbols. Thus the construction last named would harmonize most completely with the whole tenor of the prophecies on this point. Verily, if we had no harder prophetic problem than this to wrestle with, we might well think ourselves very fortunate.

Some other features of one of the new views proposed, demand a word of notice, as they seem so utterly untenable.

1. The seventh head is to appear in the coming state of anarchy in Europe, when the existing governments will break up into chaos, and the present ten horns will cease to exist and disappear. Then the pope assumes the role of pacificator; all is submitted to him, and he divides Europe into ten new provinces which constitute the ten horns of the beast of Rev.17:12. This makes these horns still future, and entirely different from the ten horns or Rev.13:1. But does the prophecy give any intimation that a new set of ten horns is to arise? - Not a

syllable. Besides, this conjecture is directly contrary to the prophecy of Daniel. All must agree that the "kings" mentioned in Dan.2:44 are the original ten kingdoms that arose out of

33

the old Roman Empire. But these kingdoms, which can be so clearly traced in Europe to-day, exist to the end; for it is "in the days of *these* kings" (not a new set), that the God of heaven sets up his kingdom. Then these kingdoms cannot lose their identity, cease to exist, and a new set arise, as this scheme proposed, before Christ comes. In Dan.7:7,11, there is no intimation that a new set of just ten horns takes the place of the first that arose out of Rome, before the beast goes into the burning flame. Or, do these ten horns refer, not to the past divisions of Rome, but only to the future ten horns? and is there another little horn to arise among them? and have our past expositions of this prophecy been *all wrong*?

2. When the pope erects the ten new provinces in Europe, then it is said his dominion has returned to him, and the deadly wound (received in 1798) is healed, but is not healed before. Then these ten give their power and strength to the beast one hour, which is taken as a prophetic period, meaning fifteen days. If this is so, the angel of Rev.10:6, swore to a falsehood, or the views of that prophecy heretofore held are *all wrong*. He swore that time should be no longer; that is, not that time might not be spoken of in a prophetic sense, as of the days "of the seventh angel," but that every prophetic period had expired, and there was to be *no more prophetic time* in that sense. But lo! here comes up a definite prophetic period of fifteen days, to begin somewhere in the future. Such an idea must be abandoned, or we must apply the message of the angel of Revelation 10 to this future time; but this would disarrange the messages of Revelation 14, concerning which the Spirit of prophecy has warned us not to "move a block or stir a pin." - "*Spiritual Gifts*," Vol. 1, page 121.

3. But what about the work of the two-horned beast? It will be noticed that this beast has no work attributed to it, till *after* the deadly wound of the first beast is healed. He speaks as a dragon, but he could not do this without exercising the power of the first beast; and he must

34

exercise such power before he could cause men to worship the first beast; but when worship is rendered to the beast, it is said of him that his "deadly wound was *healed*." Again, the image that is caused to be made, is "to the beast which had the wound by a sword and did *live*," or whose deadly wound had been healed. Now mark the conclusion to which we are driven by the new view: At the beginning of the future fifteen days of papal triumph, the deadly wound is healed. At the close of the fifteen days, the new ten horns turn against the harlot, and destroy her with fire. Rev.17:16. And this is the last time of trouble and the winding up of all earthly affairs. So then the two-horned beast must accomplish all his work within this period of fifteen days! That is, after the deadly wound is healed and these days begin, the two-horned beast causes the earth and them that dwell therein to worship the first beast; he performs great wonders so that he makes fire come down from heaven in the sight of men; he says to the people that *they* should make an image to the beast; they make the image, and then he

gives it life; then the image speaks and utters its demands, and then passes a decree that all who will not worship it shall be killed; and time must be given for all these acts to take effect, and yet all must be accomplished within the insignificant period of just two weeks and one day! Was ever any view presented more fanciful, improbable, and unreasonable? Then it follows that nothing has yet been done in this country toward enforcing the worship of the beast by trying to compel men to accede to its demands and keep Sunday. Then the acts of Congress, decisions of courts, and the infliction of fines, imprisonments, and chain-gang labor, for refusing to keep Sunday, all amount to nothing, and the views heretofore held on these points are *allwrong*.

4. That there is a time of trouble and anarchy before us, not only for Europe, but for all the world, is evident, but that it will exalt the papacy and cause it to triumph, is hardly probable. Rather it will result in the overthrow and destruction

35

of that evil system, as set forth in Rev.17:16. One traveling in Europe can easily feel the pulse of the people in regard to religious matters. The masses are permeated with infidelity. They attribute their wrongs and oppression more to ecclesiastical than to civil tyranny; and when they throw off restraint, ecclesiastical powers with the papacy at their head, will be the first object of their vengeance, instead of being regarded as the palladium of their rights, and appealed to to remedy their wrongs.

A brother in the ministry, having seen advance sheets of the view presented in this tract, writes that he considers some points new light, and that he is glad to see the light shining along the *old paths*; but he says that when the light is new, and the *path* is new too, he fears it may turn out an *ignis fatuus*, and only lead the inquirer into dangerous bogs. There is still a worse aspect that may be presented; and that is when the new light makes it necessary to consider that that which has been hailed and cherished and rejoiced in as light in the past, was after all only darkness. If the Adventist people have been, as we believe, a people called out by the providence of God into new light, and are walking in the light, new light ought not to reveal the past as darkness, and oblige us to tear up and throw away positions which have been held for years without question as well-established truth, but it ought only to make the evidence clearer, and our position stronger. A good illustration of this was when the light of the sanctuary dawned upon us in 1844, confirming the past, and lighting up the future. So the examination in the present case compels the verdict that what is true is not new, and what is *new* is not *true*.

Where the insuperable difficulty in understanding Revelation 17, which some claim to find, comes in, we have never been able to see. Let us glance over the chapter and see if we can find it.

1. The scarlet-colored beast covers not simply the time of the papacy, but Rome from its beginning.

36

2. It *was*, as a persecuting power when Rome was pagan.

3. Afterward it could be said of it, that it "is not," while in the transition from paganism to the papacy.

4. Then it "shall ascend out of the bottomless pit," or "yet is," when it appeared again, as the papacy. Verse 8.

5. It goes into perdition, just where the papacy lands at last, showing that the papacy is here referred to.

6. Men wonder when they see a beast that was, and then was not, and then appears again. It is this last appearance in his long and bloody career that causes the wonder. For what cause? - The same that caused John to wonder with great amazement, as stated in verse 6, when he saw the woman drunk with the blood of saints. So much for the beast in these two remarkable metamorphoses.

7. Then John begins particular mention of the seven heads. First he likens them to seven mountains on which the woman sits, and then explains further that they are seven kings. But these all belong to one beast, or great earthly power, and being successive, not contemporaneous like the horns, they cannot denote seven distinct and separate kingdoms, but must refer to seven phases which appear in the government of the beast. Seven different forms of government, as we have seen, did successively rule the Roman state, and the general consensus of Protestant commentators applies these heads to these forms.

8. Five of these forms had existed and passed away when John had his vision, and he was living under the sixth, or imperial, head. He was banished, under Domitian, one of the emperors of Rome, to Patmos, where he received The Revelation.

9. After Rome had fallen from her throne of glory, and the imperial form of government was extinguished in disgrace, Rome, the seat and representative of the old empire, was ruled by a lieutenant of the Eastern emperor, under the title

37

of the Exarch of Ravenna, for about sixty years, a "short space," or a government of no account compared with the five hundred years of imperial rule which preceded it, or the twelve hundred and sixty years of papal rule which was to follow it.

10. Then the beast in his third phase, the papal form, is called an eighth head, but is of the seven, that is, is to be reckoned as one of the seven, and goes into perdition, just as is said of the same power, under the symbol of the beast, in verse 8.

11. Having finished the notice of the heads, John takes up the horns in verse 12. These denote the same ten kingdoms which appear in all the symbols of Rome except that of Daniel 8; namely, the toes of Dan.2:41,42, the ten horns of Dan.7:24, and the ten horns of Rev.12:3, and 13:1. They are the ten kingdoms which arose out of the Roman Empire between the years 351 and 483 A.D.

12. These kingdoms had not arisen in John's day, and hence it is said of them, "which have received no kingdom as yet;" that is, their development was then future.

13. They receive power as kings, or come into existence as independent kingdoms, one hour, or in the same era (Croly), with the beast, the papacy, which is here again called, not the eighth head, but the beast. The word, "hour," is often used in an indefinite sense, as when Christ said, "This is your hour, and the

power of darkness." Luke 22:53; or as it is said in Rev.3:10, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." And the word "one," often has the signification of "the same," as in Luke 12:52; Rom.3:30; etc. This was all true respecting the ten kingdoms and the papacy. The last of these kingdoms was developed as early as 483 A.D., and only forty-five years later, in 538, the papacy was established. They all belong to the same prophetic era.

14. These were to have one mind and give their power and strength to the beast, the papacy. All these kingdoms were adherents of the papacy,

38

and for long centuries upheld it in its blasphemous pretensions and bloody persecutions.

15. The prophet then, in verse 14, glances forward to the end, when these horns make war with the Lamb, as described in Rev.19:19.

16. There is no difficulty with the explanation of the symbol of waters in verse 15.

17. In verses 16,17, the final attitude of these powers toward the papacy is described. This brings about her destruction. Ever since the deadly wound in 1798, the power and influence of the papacy, as a political factor in European affairs, has been waning. In 1870, the last vestige of her temporal power disappeared. Never again can she have prestige in this respect; and she lives only as a spiritual power, till she goes into the lake of fire. The two-horned beast is the leading power in the last conflict.

18. Then in verse 18, the whole ecclesiastical element is presented under the symbol of the woman. This of course includes the papacy presented before as "the beast" and the "eighth" head. But it includes more - it takes in the ecclesiastical element under paganism as well; but it wrought its most repulsive and cruel work as the papacy.

Thus the difficulties which have been supposed to exist in the application of Revelation 17, prove to be only imaginary, disappearing before a simple and harmonious adjustment of the facts in the case. It is therefore to be regretted that any have suffered their minds to become *unsettled* and *confused* on this important portion of scripture.

NOTE. - Elliott, in his *Horae Apocalypticae*, Vol. 3, page 102, introduces an argument to show that "all the mutations of the seven-headed beast, from its earliest beginning to the end, must be confined to the seven-hilled locality;" that is, to Rome. As to the application of the seven heads themselves, he further says on page 106: "In explanation, then, of the first six heads, I adopt, with the most entire satisfaction, that generally

39

received Protestant interpretation, which, following the authoritative statements of Livy and Tacitus (the latter great historian John's own contemporary), enumerates Kings, Consuls, Dictators, Decemvirs, and Military Tribunes, and the five first constitutional heads of the Roman city and commonwealth; then, as the sixth, the Imperial head, commencing with Octavian, better known as Augustus Caesar." He then refers to the view of Mede and Bishop Newton, that the seventh head was the dukedom of Rome, under the Exarchate of Ravenna, about sixty

years. Page 110. Further, on pages 119-121, he presents evidence to show that the papacy is the last, or eighth, head. The only change in this enumeration, it will be noticed, is that "military tribunes" are put in place of triumvirs. But he quotes on page 106, other prominent and respectable authorities, who give the triumvirs as one of the heads. A footnote on the words, "generally received Protestant interpretation," page 106, as quoted above, presents these facts: "Daubuz, page 514, attributes its discovery to King James. But I find it noticed in the early Protestant commentator, Pareus, page 422, as the solution of Aretius, Napier, and Brightman; each of whom probably - some of them certainly - preceded King James. Indeed, I find almost the same in the yet earlier commentator, Osiander, . . . who published A.D. 1544. He gives as the seven heads: (1) Kings; (2) Consuls; (3) Decemvirs; (4) Dictators; (5) Triumvirs; (6) Caesars (that is, Emperors); (7) External Caesars [under which head would come in the Exarchate of Ravenna]; (8) the popes."

Again he quotes a work by Fulco on the Apocalypse, London, 1573, who, writing in Latin, gives the Latin name of the seven heads, as follows: "Reges, Consules, Decemviri, Triumviri, Dectatores, Caesares, Pontifex" (the pope). This writer, it will be seen, drops out the little head to follow the imperial, and calls the last, the seventh, which is the papacy. Thus the view advocated in this paper stands as "the generally received Protestant view," and seven authors are specified, who

40

advocate it in their published works. These certainly furnish a degree of authority and scholarship, in behalf of what may also be called the Adventist view, that is at least entitled to respectful consideration, and from which, as we have endeavored to show, there is no occasion to dissent.

The fact that no two of those who have written on the new views, agree in their expositions, is evidence that the Lord is not leading out in this matter to bring the church into a larger place of light and truth: for in this case the evidence would be such as to appear in the same light, and commend itself to the generality of the earnest students of this prophecy. If it is said by way of objection to the old view, that all are not agreed in that, inasmuch as some suggest military tribunes in the place of triumvirs, the reply is, that that does not make so material a difference, as all accept as *unquestionable* the fact that all the heads of the dragon must represent some feature of that government which the dragon symbolizes, which, according to the Spirit of prophecy, is Rome; and hence they do not ignore the *fundamental* principle that we cannot go outside of Rome for any of the heads. Adhering to this self-evident principle, one cannot go far astray in his application of these features of the great red dragon, and the same seven heads of the beasts of Revelation 13 and 17.

URIAH SMITH.

¹ A limited number of this tract is published by the author for gratuitous circulation, so firmly persuaded is he that the original Adventist position on this question is correct, and that the contradictory views recently suggested are calculated to work mischief by confusing and unsettling the mind of the reader in regard to prophetic applications. Till the supply is exhausted, address the author at Battle Creek, Mich.