

The Seventh Vial Chapter XVI. The Two-Horned Beast Of The Earth



Continued from [Chapter XV. The Ten-Horned And Seven-Headed Beast Of The Sea](#)

“AND I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” We intend here simply to indicate, in a few brief sentences, who this lamb-like beast is, and then pass on to the grand catastrophe.

It is the *ecclesiastical hierarchy* which we take to be here symbolized. The vision brings the Pope again before us; in the beast of the sea he is seen as the ruling head of the ten Papal kingdoms; here he is beheld as the ruling head of the Papal clergy. This beast rose out of the earth—the symbol of the western empire in its tranquillised state had two horns like a lamb. He had two horns like a lamb. The key of the symbol is found in our Lord’s warning:—“Beware of them that come to you in *sheep’s clothing*.” Such was the clothing in which the beast of the earth appeared—a circumstance which fixes upon him a clerical character. He is called “another beast.” It has ever been the policy of the Popes to keep their ecclesiastical distinct from their temporal kingdom. They have governed it by distinct assemblies, laws, and officers. Their clergy have generally been exempt from the ordinary tribunals and taxes, and amenable in both respects to the Pope alone. Thus has the ecclesiastical estate appeared before the world as “another beast.”

The two horns indicate, we are disposed to think, the two powerful organizations through which the ecclesiastical jurisdiction was wielded. The clergy of the Pope were divided into regular and secular. They were the two arms of his strength. Bishops and priests, with the machinery of councils and synods, were a powerful instrumentality for executing the pontifical will; but an equally pliable and effective instrumentality for the same purpose did the Pope find in the numerous monkish orders which covered Europe. These were the two horns of the ecclesiastical beast. The beast of the earth was a pretended minister of Christ; we say pretended, because, while he had horns as a lamb, “he spake as a dragon.” The dragon is the symbol of Pagan Rome. The Popes displayed all the lust, cruelty, ambition, tyranny, of the Caesars. But it was in his speech mainly that he was to display the characteristics of the dragon, which clearly points to the character of his teachings.

The religion which the hierarchy of Rome inculcated was paganism very slightly disguised. The doctrine of the Popes was the doctrine of devils. We

might instance in proof, the morality of the Jesuits, some of whose leading maxims are, that it is lawful to do evil that good may come, that excommunicated princes may be murdered, that no faith is to be kept with heretics, and that actions, however contrary to the Divine law, may be innocently performed if the person is able even ideally to join a good end to them, or, in the style of the Jesuits, to direct aright the intention. In these the dragon speaks.

“And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him.” It is here foretold that the last should be first—last in coming up, but first in respect of the rule it should exercise. And as the prophecy foretold, so has it happened. The spiritual has clothed itself with the prerogatives, and executed the functions of the temporal. By his doctrine of pontifical supremacy the Pope really grasped the secular government of Europe. In the middle ages he claimed and exercised *direct* temporal supremacy, and in virtue thereof, he put himself above all kings, and sustained himself supreme judge in all cases temporal and spiritual. In those days he never scrupled to show himself openly to the world with the keys of Peter in the one hand, and the sword of Caesar in the other; pleading as his warrant for thus uniting the diadem and the mitre, the commission given to Jeremiah,

“See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, and to build, and to plant.” -Jeremiah 1:10

After the Reformation the Pope claimed only an *indirect* Temporal supremacy; that is, the power of passing sentences in spiritual matters, carrying temporal effects, however, to the extent, should the case be so, of the dethronement of monarchs, and the releasing of subjects from their allegiance. At this day the Pope claims only the power of DIRECTION. In virtue of this power he can determine whether a sovereign's title be or be not *valid*; whether an oath of allegiance is *existent* or *non-existent*; whether it is or is not the subjects' duty to rebel. In short, he can bring within the province of *Direction* the whole domain of political, social, and moral duty, and the whole question of princes' prerogatives and subjects' rights—sanctioning or annulling them as it may seem right to him, This is naught else than muffled temporal supremacy. It is, in truth, more formidable than direct temporal power, inasmuch as it works noiselessly and invisibly, is believed to be divine and impotent, can evacuate laws of their force, and sovereigns of their authority, and lay prostrate beneath its foot the conscience and the reason the bodies and the souls of men. Thus has the second beast come in before the first, and under pretense of honoring him, has despoiled him of his functions, reduced him to vassalage, and done his work.

It is added, “and causeth the earth, and them who dwell therein, to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.” The Papal clergy were the great preachers of passive obedience. They were the grand supporters both of secular and spiritual despotism. Through their instrumentality mainly was the world plunged into slavery, and kept enslaved for so many ages. No human power can prevent a people enlightened by religion from achieving their independence: and no human power can make a superstitious and ignorant people

other than slaves. What advances might the world, by this time, have made in the principles of civil liberty and of physical science, but for this grand obstacle to progress! The great discoveries in physics and mechanics which have distinguished our times might have been made ages ago, and more numerous, beautiful, and useful applications of them but for this hindrance. The laws by which nations are to be governed, commerce carried on, and the intercourse of States with one another regulated, are only beginning to be understood. And why only now? Because mind was completely overborne by a Church which placed all virtue and wisdom in the maxim, that the world should worship the beast.

“And he doeth great wonders.” Who has not heard of the pretended miracles of the Popish Church—the palpable cheats, gross delusions, and impudent falsehoods, which she has practiced in support of her authority? Transubstantiation alone, which her priests are performing every day, were enough to confer on that Church unrivaled pre-eminence as a wonder-worker. Nor are the wonders of the beast sometimes of a very harmless kind: “He maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.” Has he not arrogated to himself the power of wielding at will the thunderbolts of God? What dreadful curses, with bell, book, and candle, has he not pronounced on the persons, goods, and souls of his victims? These anathemas struck terror into the hearts of the bravest, and laid the mightiest monarchs prostrate in the dust. No armies, no human might, could avail the man against whom had been launched the thunders of the Seven Hills. The fire of heaven could not have been more instantaneous or more deadly. With this fire how often has the Pope scathed whole nations at once! When the sentence of excommunication was thundered against a kingdom, what wailing, despair, suffering, overspread it! The whole course of life was instantly arrested; the churches were closed; the sacraments were interdicted; and whoever died while the excommunication was in force, his body lay unburied, and his soul was cast out of paradise.

The second beast, addressing the dwellers on the Papal earth, said to them, “That they should make an image to the beast that had the wound by a sword.” The “beast that had the wound by a sword” was the Pagan Roman empire; and the project of the lamb-like beast was that a political structure should be set up, bearing a close resemblance to the grand old empire which the Goths had swept out of existence. This was actually accomplished in the revival of the “Roman empire,” under Charlemagne. The Pope had the art to persuade the States of Christendom to form themselves into a federation under the name of the “Holy Roman Empire,” and to place at its head a prince of their own, who should be styled Caesar, and should wear the imperial diadem. This empire was the shadow or “image” of that which had been before it. Its laws, maxims, and religion, were the same as those of imperial Rome, whose likeness it bore. It was the servant of the power which had called it into being. And that it might the more effectually execute the bloody decrees of Rome, her priests were peremptory in enjoining on all the dwellers in Europe the duty of rendering obedience, reverence, and service to it.

“And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the

image of the beast should be killed.” -Revelation 13:15

The image set up by the Pope stood there, not like some great idol, fixed movelessly on its pedestal, and compelling the veneration of a blinded world by its colossal but inanimate bulk, and the resemblance it bore to the terrible empire which had reigned before it. The Pope conjured it unto life. The priests so wrought with their arts that the image spake—spake as they inspired it, and did the deeds they willed it should do. “That the image of the beast should both speak”—speak in blasphemy against God, by arrogating His titles and powers, and speak in anathemas against the saints—“them that dwell in heaven”—by denouncing all who would not worship him as heretics, and giving their bodies to be burned.

It is instructive to observe, that while the first beast is said to make “war with the saints,” the second beast is represented as doing no more than causing them to be killed. The prophecy is in exact accordance with fact. The Popes and bishops did not, with their own hands, murder the saints; they delivered them over to the secular arm, and caused them to be killed.

“And he caused all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.” Revelation 13:16-17

It was customary, in ancient times, for servants and soldiers to have imprinted on their persons the mark of their master and commander. The mark was sometimes a hieroglyphic, sometimes the capital letters of the name, and sometimes the name in full. Popery, too, required its supporters to wear its mark, more or less conspicuously, if not in their forehead, yet in their right hand. That mark consisted in the profession of the Romish faith, without which Rome would not permit any man to enjoy either natural or civil rights: “no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

From instances almost innumerable we shall select only one. Pope Martin the Fifth, in his bull, issued soon after the Council of Constance, enjoined the professors of the Catholic faith not to permit heretics to have houses in their districts, or enter into contracts, or carry on commerce, or enjoy the comforts of humanity with Christians. This furnishes a striking point of resemblance between the beast whose deadly wound was healed, and the image of that beast—between the dragon and the dragon’s successor, which, though it wore the lamb’s skin, had the dragon’s voice; for we find an edict issued against the primitive Christians by the Pagan emperor, Diocletian, in precisely similar terms. According to that edict, “The Christians,” says Justin Martyr, “had not the power of buying or selling anything, nor were they allowed the liberty of drawing water itself, before they had offered incense to detestable idols.”

But what are we to understand by the number of the first beast, which the second beast was to compel every man to wear?

“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the

beast : for it is the number of a man ; and his number is six hundred three score and six.”-Revelation 13:18

Anciently the letters of the alphabet served as numerals: accordingly, a man's name might be expressed by the number indicated by the letters of the name, when used as numerals. *Touth*, the name of the Egyptian Mercury, was expressed by the number 1218; *Jupiter* by 737—that being the sum of the letters taken numerically. We are told that the letters of the name of the beast would make up the number 666. To discover the name, we have only to take the Greek alphabet, and select from it those letters that contain this number. On doing so, we have the word LATEINOS, or Latin. This shows us that the Latin empire is meant. The word Lateinos contains the number 666, and is, moreover, the name of the founder of the fourth monarchy, the name of that monarchy itself, and the name of all its individual members. The evidence appears perfectly satisfactory; according to which we conclude that LATIN is the true interpretation of the number of the beast.

We might go on in this way presenting the portraiture of Popery; but many volumes would not suffice to contain it, and a whole lifetime would not be long enough to finish it.

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