On. ii. 2] EXPOUNDED 29  
  
outside, but from the judicial decision of the Lord Him-  
self in the Holy Place.  
The churches here addressed are assemblies of believers ;  
each was a “congregation of faithful men.” It is not  
said, “the Church of Ephesus ;” but “in Ephesus.”  
The faithful were but a portion of the citizens in each  
of the cities addressed. Ephesus was still heathen ; it was  
a witnessing remnant alone that constituted the Church.  
And thus it should ever have continued. Its standing  
was lost, as soon as ever the Church was made co-ex-  
tensive with the population of the city.  
2. ‘IT know thy works, and labour, and thy patience, and that  
thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou triedst them  
which say they are apostles, and are not, and foundest them  
liars.”  
“JT know thy works.” This preface occurs before  
most of the epistles. He who would judge aright must  
previously know. Jesus does. He is the Faithful  
Witness ; and His testimony arises from perfect acquain-  
tance with the facts.  
“ And labour.” The person is accepted, and then the  
service. Jesus begins with praising whatever He can  
find of good in each Church. The angel was active ;  
probably in doctrine, toward the Church ; and in evan-  
gelization, toward the world.  
“ And thy patience.”  
As patience is twice named, and occurs among points  
which specially refer to believers, I am apt to suppose  
that the patience has a double reference. First, toward  
the Church. The body of believers themselves need  
patience from the chief pastor. ‘There are the ignorant,  
perverse backsliders, those compassed with each variety  
of infirmity, and beset with each kind of trial.  
\*\* And thou canst not bear those who are evil.”  
The wicked outside the Church of Christ are not to be  
judged. But discipline comes in to rebuke or exclude