32 THE APOCALYPSE fou. ii. 5  
  
The first epistle leads us to recognize the general  
tone of these seven addresses. It is not the testimony  
of God’s grace, and His provisions of mercy, for the  
solace, and enlightening, and standing of the saints,  
individually, or as a body, before God. The tenor of  
the seven epistles is that of demands levied on parties  
responsible. The mercies which they had previously  
received, embracing everything needful, are assumed ;  
and thereupon, answerable conduct is expected. De-  
fection from this high standard is everywhere rebuked.  
The place of witness given by God is to be sustained in  
its fullness, both before God and men. The past is  
noticed, as the subject of praise or blame. Their  
juture destiny is spoken of, as dependent upon their  
deeds. The issue of their trial is mentioned, not  
directly as prophecy, but as made to turn upon their  
acquitting themselves answerably to their responsibilities  
or not. ii. 5, 16, 21, 22 ; iii. 2, 11, 18, 20.  
  
5. ‘“‘ Remember therefore whence thou hast fallen, and repent,  
and do the first works: or else I am coming to thee [quickly]  
and I will move thy lamp-stand out of its place, except thou re-  
pent. 6. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the  
Nicolaitans, which $ also hate.”  
  
Here is a fall, not of the star from Christ’s right  
hand : for John saw all seven there: but a descent from  
the previous high degree of grace.  
“ Or else I am coming.’’!  
Jesus threatens to remove the lamp. What is in-  
tended by that? It means, not the destruction of  
Ephesus, though Ephesus has been destroyed. The  
removal was an invisible one, in the heavenly sanctuary.  
To worldly eyes all might have been the same ‘after the  
act, as before it: but its standing as God’s accepted  
witness, would be gone. So, when Jesus left the temple  
  
1The word “‘[quickly]”? is noted by Tregelles as doubtful.