**that thou hatest the works** (“he  
says not, the Nicolaitans themselves, but  
their works: because the persons are to  
be loved in charity, but their vices had in  
detestation.” Lyra. It would have been  
well for the church, had this always been  
remembered. **the works**, see below, must  
be referred to the moral delinquencies of  
this sect) **of the Nicolaitans** (there has  
been much dispute who these were. The  
prevailing opinion among the fathers was,  
that they were a sect founded by Nicolaus  
the proselyte of Antioch, one of the seven  
deacons. But there early becomes evident  
a desire to vindicate Nicolaus the deacon  
from the opprobrium of having been the  
founder of such a sect; and in consequence  
we soon find another Nicolaus substituted  
for the deacon of that name. An  
apocryphal Acts of the Apostles speaks of  
a Corinthian of this name, infamous for  
licentious practices. We come now to the  
second principal view with regard to this  
sect, which supposes their name to be  
symbolic, and Nicolaus to be the Greek  
rendering of Balaam, and to mean, *“He  
ruined, or absorbed the people.”* Consequently  
the name Nicolaitans is said to  
be equivalent to Balaamites, as is also  
inferred from ver. 14. This view seems  
first to have been broached by Heumann  
in 1712, and since then has been the prevailing  
one. But in the first place, the  
names are by no means parallel; and next,  
the view derives no support from ver.  
14 f., where the followers of Balaam are  
distinct from the Nicolaitans: see note  
there. And besides, there is no sort of  
reason for interpreting the name otherwise  
than historically. It occurs in a passage  
indicating simple matters of historical fact,  
just as the name Antipas does in ver. 13.  
If we do not gain trustworthy accounts of  
the sect from elsewhere, why not allow for  
the gulf which separates the history of the  
apostolic from that of the post-apostolic  
period, and be content with what we know  
of them from these two passages? There  
is nothing repugnant to verisimilitude in  
the report mentioned by the Fathers, that  
Nicolaus fell into impurities; nor need all  
of those who were chosen to aid the  
Apostles in distributing alms, have been  
even to the end of their lives spotless and  
infallible. At least it may be enough  
for us to believe that possible of one of  
them, which the post-apostolic Fathers  
did not hesitate to receive), **which I also  
hate** (this strong expression in the mouth  
of our Lord unquestionably points at  
deeds of abomination and impurity: compare  
Isa. lxi. 8; Jer. xliv. 4; Amos v. 21;  
Zech. viii. 17).

**7.]** Solemn conclusion  
of the Epistle. **He that hath an ear**(no fanciful distinction must be imagined  
between the singular, and the plural which  
is found in the Gospels [Matt. xi. 15,  
xiii. 9, &c.]. We have precisely the same  
use of the singular in Matt. x. 27, where  
a distinction will hardly be maintained),  
**let him hear what the Spirit** (speaking in  
its fulness, through Him to whom it is  
given without measure, to John who was  
*in the Spirit*, in a state of spiritual ecstasy  
and receptivity: compare John xvi. 13)  
**saith to the churches** (Ebrard well notices  
that not a colon [or semi-colon, as in A.V.],  
but a fall stop must be put here, as indeed  
might be shewn from the way in  
which the proclamation is repeated in  
ver. 29 and in ch. iii. 6, 13, 22. It directs  
attention, not to that which follows only,  
but to the whole contents of the seven  
Epistles), **To him that conquereth** (the  
verb is absolute, without any object expressed.  
So of Christ Himself in ch. iii.  
21) **I will give to him** (so literally: the  
personal pronoun is repeated both idiomatically  
and for emphasis) **to eat** (i. e.  
I will permit him to eat: not in the ordinary  
sense of *giving to eat*: see ch. iii.  
21) **of** [the fruit of] **the tree** (see Gen. ii. 9,  
from which the words come: and to suit  
which apparently the words *in the midst of*