guilty. But seeing that the *participation*  
was that which was common to both, our  
Lord takes that as the point to he brought  
forward) **and to commit fornication.**

**15.] Thus thou also hast** (as well as  
those of old: not, as the Church at  
Ephesus, ver. 6) **men holding** (see above)  
**the teaching of the Nicolaitans in like  
manner** (viz. in eating things offered to  
idols, and fornication. We may remark,  
1) that it is most according to the sense  
of the passage to understand these sins in  
the case of the Nicolaitans, as in that of  
those whom Balaam tempted, literally, and  
not mystically : 2) that the whole sense of  
the passage is against the idea of the identity  
of the Balaamites and the Nicolaitans :  
and would be in fact destroyed by it. The  
mere existence of the etymological relation  
is extremely doubtful [see above on ver.  
6]: and even granting it,—to suppose the  
two identical, would be to destroy the historical  
illustration by which the present  
existing sect is described).

**16.] Repent  
therefore** (the command is addressed  
not only to the Nicolaitans, but to the  
church, which did not, like that of Ephesus,  
hate them, but apparently tolerated them) :  
**but if not, I** [**will**] **come to thee quickly**(here again,—though in the common phrase  
which expresses the last great day,—not said  
of the Lord’s final coming ; as indeed the  
language shews, for then He will no longer  
*“make war”*), **and will make war with  
them** (the Nieolaitans) **with** (literally, in,  
as armed with or arrayed in) **the sword.  
of my mouth** (many expositors suppose an  
allusion to the sword of the angel, armed  
with which he withstood Balaam in the  
way [Num. xxii. 23, 31], or to that and  
the sword by which those who sinned in  
the matter of Baalpeor [Num. xxv. 5]  
and eventually Balaam himself [Num.  
xxxi. 8] were slain: but seeing that the  
connexion with ch. i. 16 is so plainly  
asserted by our ver. 12, it seems better  
to confine the allusion to that sword, and  
not to stretch it to what after all is a very  
doubtful analogy).

**17.]** *Conclusion*. For the former clause  
see on ver. 7. We may notice that in  
these three first Epistles, the proclamation  
precedes the promise to him that conquereth:  
in the four last, it follows the  
promise.**—To him that conquereth I will  
give to him** (see above on ver. 7) **of the  
manna which is hidden** (in this **manna**,  
there is unmistakably an allusion to the  
proper and heavenly food of the children  
of Israel, as contrasted with the unhallowed  
idol-offerings ; but beyond that,  
there is an allusion again [see above on  
ver. 7] to our Lord’s discourse in John  
vi., where He describes Himself as the  
true bread from heaven: not that we need  
here, any more than in ver. 7 [see note  
there], confuse the present figure by literally  
pressing the symbolism of that chapter.  
Christ’s gifts may all be summed up  
in the gift of Himself: on the other hand,  
He may describe any of the manifold proprieties  
of his own Person and office as His  
gift. This manna is **hidden**, in allusion  
partly perhaps to the fact of the pot of  
manna laid up in the ark in the holy of  
holies (Exod. xvi. 33: compare our ch. xi.  
19: not to the Jewish fable, that a pot of  
manna was hidden by Josiah before the  
wasting of the temple, and shall again be  
produced in the time of the Messiah]:—but  
principally to the fact that our spiritual  
life, with its springs and nourishments, is  
hid with Christ in God, Col. iii. 3. See  
also Ps. lxxviii. 24; cv. 40), **and I will**