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 is the moral and conservative influence of political states, restraining this   
 great final outbreak. See more on this below.   
 16. On the other hand, some have regarded the prophecy as one   
 already fulfilled. So Grotius, Wetstein, Le Clere, Whitby, Schottgen,   
 Nésselt, Krause, and Harduin. All these concur in referring the “advent   
 of the Lord” to the coming of Christ in the destruction of Jerusalem.   
 17. Grotius holds Antichrist to be the godless Caligula, who ordered   
 universal supplication to himself as the High God, and would have set   
 up a colossal image of himself in the temple at Jerusalem: and in “him   
 that hindereth” he sees L. Vitellius, the proconsul of Syria and Judea,   
 whose term of office delayed the putting up of the statue,—and in “that   
 lawless one,” Simon Magus. ‘This theory is liable to the two very serious   
 objections, 1) that it makes “the man of sin” and “ the lawless one”   
 into two separate persons: 2) that it involves an anachronism, our   
 Epistle having been written after Caligula’s time.   
 18. According to Wetstein, the “man of sin” is Titus, whose army,   
 “while the temple was burning and all around it, taking their standards   
 into the sacred enclosure, and placing them before the eastern gate,   
 sacrificed to them there, and saluted Titus imperator with great cheer-   
 ing” (Josephus), His “ hinderer” is Nero, whose death was necessary   
 for the reign of. Titus,—and his apostasy, the rebellion and slaughter   
 of three princes, Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, which brought in the Flavian   
 family. But this is the very height of absurdity, and surely needs no   
 serious refutation.   
 19. Hammond makes the man of sin to be Simon Magus, and the   
 Gnostics, whose head he was. The “gathering together to Christ,”   
 ver. 1, he interprets as the “greater liberty of assembling in Church   
 meetings to worship Christ :” the apostasy, the falling off of Christians   
 to Gnosticism (1 Tim. iv. 1): the revelation of the man of sin, the   
 Gnostics “putting off their disguise, and revealing themselves in their   
 colours, i.e. cruel, professed enemies to Christ and Christians :” ver. 4   
 refers to Simon “ making himself the supreme Father of all, who had   
 created the God of the Jews” (Iren. i. 20). By that which hindereth,   
 he understands the wnion yet subsisting more or less between the Chris-   
 tians and the Jews in the Apostle’s estimation, which was removed when   
 the Apostles entirely separated from the Jews: and him that hindereth   
 he maintains to be virtually the same with that which hindereth, but if   
 any masculine subject must be supplied, would make it the law. The   
 mystery of lawlessness he refers to the wicked lives of these Gnostics, but   
 mostly to their persecution of the Christians. Ver. 8 he explains of the   
 conflict at Rome between Simon and the Apostles Peter and Paul, which   
 ended in the death of the former. Liimemann adds, “The exegetical and   
 historical monstrosity of this interpretation is at present universally   
 acknowledged.”   
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