INTRODUCTION. ] 2 THESSALONIANS. [on. rx.   
   
 altogether wrong, who finds here any more thau the Apostle’s sub-   
 jective anticipation from ‘his own historical position, of the future of   
 the Christian Church ;” and expanded by Mr. Jowett (vol. ii. p. 178),   
 “Such passages (Eph. vi. 12) are a much safer guide to the interpreta-   
 tion of the one we are considering, than the meaning of similar passages   
 in the Old Testament. For they indicate to us the habitual thought of   
 the Apostle’s mind: ‘a falling away first,’ suggested probably by the   
 wavering which he saw around him among his own converts, the grievous   
 wolves that were entering into the Church of Ephesus (Acts xx. 29):   
 the turning away of all them of Asia (2 Tim. i. 15), When we con-   
 sider that his own converts, and his Jewish opponents, were all the   
 world to him,—that through them, as it were in a glass, he appeared to   
 himself to see the workings of human nature generally, we understand   
 how this double image of good and evil should have presented itself to   
 him, and the kind of necessity which he felt, that Christ and Antichrist   
 should alternate with each other. It was not that he foresaw some   
 great conflict, decisive of the destinies of mankind. What he antici-   
 pated far more nearly resembled the spiritual combat in the seventh   
 chapter of the Romans. It was the same struggle, written in large   
 letters, as Plato might have said, not on the tables of the heart, but on   
 the scene around: the world turned inside out, as it might be described:   
 evil as it is in the sight of God, and as it realizes itself to the conscience,   
 putting on an external shape, transforming itself into a person.”   
 26. This hypothesis is so entirely separate from all others, that there   
 seems no reason why we should not deal with it at once and on its own   
 ground, before proceeding further. It will be manifest to any one who   
 exercises a moment’s thought, that the question moved by it simply   
 resolves itself into this: Was the Apostle, or was he not, writing in the   
 power of a spirit higher than his own? In other words, we are here at   
 the very central question of Inspiration or no Inspiration: not disputing   
 about any of its details, which have ever been matters of doubt among   
 Christians: but just asking, for the Church and for the world, Have we,   
 in any sense, God speaking in the Bible, or have we not? If we have,   
 then of all passages, it is in these which treat so confidently of futurity,   
 that we must recognize His voice: if we have it not in these passages,   
 then where are we to listen for it at all? Does not this hypothesis, do   
 not they who embrace it, at once reduce the Scriptures to books written   
 by men,—their declarations to the assertions of dogmatizing teachers,—   
 their warnings to the apprehensions of excited minds,—their promises   
 to the visions of enthusiasts,—their prophecies to anticipations which   
 may be accounted for by the circumstanees of the writers, but have in   
 them no objective permanent truth whatever ?   
 27. On such terms, I fairly confess I am not prepared to deal with   
 a question like that before us. I believe that our Lord uttered the   
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