INTRODUCTION. } REVELATION. (en. xxir.   
   
 afterwards bishop of that see (a.p. 247). This worthy scholar of Origen   
 remained ever attached to him, loving and honouring him: and wrote   
 him a letter of consolation when he was thrown into prison in the Decian   
 persecution. This Dionysius, as he himself tells us, had become a   
 believer in the Gospel by a course of free investigation, and unbiassed   
 examination of all known systems: and after his conversion, he remained   
 true to this principle as a Christian and as a public teacher. He read   
 and examined without bias all the writings of heretics, and did not   
 reject them until he was thoroughly acquainted with them, and was in   
 a situation to confute them with valid arguments. While he was thus   
 employed, one of the presbyters of his chureh warned him of the harm   
 which his own soul might take by so much contact with their impure   
 doctrines. Of this danger, he says, he was himself too conscious: but   
 while pondering on what had been said to him he was determined in his   
 course by a heavenly vision: and a yoice distinctly said to him, “Read   
 every thing that comes into thy hands: for thou art well able to judge   
 and prove them all: indeed such was at the first the source of thine   
 own faith.” And, he says, “I reeeived the vision as agreeing with   
 the apostolic saying, which says to the strong, ‘Be prudent money-   
 changers.”   
 48. The notices left us of Dionysius in the seventh book of Eusebius,   
 entirely correspond with the above. And the judgment which he passes   
 on the Apocalypse is characterized by sound discretion and moderation,   
 I give it at length in the corresponding place in the Prolegomena to my   
 Greek Testament.   
 49. The general sense of it is, that, while on the one hand he separates   
 himself from those who disparaged the book and ascribed it to Cerinthus,   
 on the other he distinctly repudiates all literal interpretations of it as   
 impossible, and approaches the enquiry with a strong anti-millennial   
 bias. This more especially appears, from a previous chapter of the   
 same book of Eusebius, in which is detailed the proceeding of Dionysius   
 with regard to the schism of Nepos, an Egyptian bishop, of millennial   
 views.   
 50. With regard to the whole character of Dionysius’s criticism, we   
 may make the following remarks :   
 a) its negative portion rests upon grounds common to him and our-   
 selves, and respecting which a writer in the third century, however much   
 we may admire his free and able treatment of his subject, has no adyan-   
 tage atall over one who writes in the nineteenth. It is as open to us as   
 it was to him, to judge of the phenomena and langnage of the Apocalypse   
 as compared with the Gospel and Epistles of St. John.   
 b) the positive result of his argument, if fairly examined, is worth   
 absolutely nothing. The writer to whom he ascribes the book, a second   
 John who is reputed to have lived at Ephesus, is even to himself entirely   
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