§ uJ TO WHOM ADDRESSED. TRODUCTION.   
   
 and Tralles. The number seven then is representative, not exhaustive.   
 These seven are taken in the following order: Ephesus, Smyrna, Per-   
 gamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea.   
 with Ephesus, the first city in the province (sce note, hat is, beginning it   
 follows a line from South to North up to Pergamum, then takes the   
 neighbouring city of ‘Thyatira, and follows another line from North to   
 South.   
 4. As regards the general state of these churches, we may make the   
 following remarks :   
 We have from St. Paul, setting aside the Epistle to the Ephesians, not   
 from any doubt as to its original destination, but as containing no local   
 notices, and that to Philemon, as being of a private character,—three   
 Epistles containing notices of the Christian churches within this district.   
 The first in point of time is that to the Colossians (a.p..61—63) : then   
 follow the two to Timotheus, dating from 67 to 68. It is important to   
 observe, that all these. Epistles, even the latest of them, the second to   
 Timotheus, have regard to a state of the churches evidently preceding   
 by many years that set before us in this book. The germs of heresy   
 and error there apparent (see Introduction to the Pastoral Epistles, § i.   
 par. 12 ff.) had expanded into definite sects (eh. ii. 6,15): the first ardour   
 with which some of them had received and practised the Gospel, had   
 cooled (ch. ii. 4, 5, iii, others had increased in zeal for God, and were   
 surpassing their former works (ch. ii. Again, the days of the martyr-   
 dom of Antipas, an eminent servant of Christ, are referred back to as   
 some time past (ch. ii. 13).   
 5. It is also important to notice that Laodicea is described (ch. iii. 17)   
 as boasting in her wealth and self-sufficiency. Now we know from Tacitus   
 (see below, § iv. par. 12), that in the sixth year of Nero, or in the tenth,   
 according to Euschius (and apparently with more accuracy), Laodicea was   
 destroyed by an earthquake, and recovered herself by her own resourees,   
 without any assistance from the Head of the state. How many years it   
 might take hefore the city could again put on such a spirit of sclf-sufficing   
 pride as that shewn in ch. iii. 17, it is not possible to fix exactly: but it   
 is obvious that we must allow more time for this than would be consistent   
 witb the Neronie date of the Apocalypse. This is confirmed when we   
 observe the spiritual character given of the Laodiccan church,—that of   
 lukewarmness,—and reflect, that such a character does not ordinarily   
 accompany, nor follow close upon, great judgments and afilictions, but is   
 the result of a period of calm and prosperity, and gradually encroaching   
 compromise with ungodliness.   
 6. I may further mention, that the fact of the relation here shewn to   
 exist between John and the churches of proconsular Asia, points to a   
 period wholly distinct from that in which Paul, or his disciple Timotheus,   
 exercised authority in those parts. And this alone would lead us to meet   
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