INTRODUCTION. ] REVELATION. [on. xx1c.   
   
 yentus” during the Roman empire. It was utterly ravaged by the   
 Turks, and “nothing,” says Hamilton, “can excced the desolation   
 and melancholy appearance of the site of Laodicca.” A village exists   
 among the ruins, named Eski-hissar.   
 14. See for further notices on the Seven Churches, Dr. Smith’s   
 Dictionary of Geography, from which, among other sources, the above   
 accounts are compiled. In those works will be found detailed references   
 to the works of various travellers who have visited them.   
   
   
   
   
 SECTION Iv.   
 OBJECT AND CONTENTS.   
   
   
 1, The Apocalypse declares its own object (ch. i. 1) to be mainly   
 prophetic; the exhibition to God’s servants of things which must   
 shortly come to pass. And to this by far the larger portion of the   
 book is devoted. From ch. iv. 1 to xxii. 5, is a series of visions pro-   
 phetie of things to come, or introducing in their completeness allégories   
 which involve things to come. Intermixed however with this pro-   
 phetic development, we have a course of hortatory and encouraging   
 sayings, arising out of the state of the churches to which the book is   
 written, and addressed through them to the church universal. \*   
 2. These sayings are mostly related in style and sense to the Epistles   
 with which the book began, so as to preserve in a remarkable manner   
 the unity of the whole, and to shew that it is not, as Grotius and some   
 others have supposed, a congerics of different fragments, but one united   
 work, written at one and the same time. The practical tendency of the   
 Epistles to the Churches is never lost sight of throughout. So that we   
 may fairly say that its object is not only to prophesy of the future, but   
 also by sneh prophecy to rebuke, exhort, and console the Chureh.   
 8. Such being the general object, our enquiry is now narrowed to   
 that of the prophetic portion itself: and we have to enquire what was   
 the aim of the Writer, or rather of Him who inspired the Writer, in   
 delivering this prophecy.   
 4, And in the first place, we are met by an enquiry which it may be   
 strange enough that we have to make in this day, but which nevertheless   
 must be made. Is the book, it is asked, strictly speaking, a revelation   
 at all? Is its so-called prophecy any thing more than the ardent and   
 imaginative poesy of a rapt spirit, built up on the then present trials and   
 hopes of himself and his contemporaries ? Is not its future bounded by   
 the age and cirewmstances then existing ? And are not all those mis-   
 taken, who have attempted to deduce from it indications respecting our   
 own or any subsequent age of the Church ?   
 5. Two systems of understanding and interpreting the book have   
 844