

But as in process of time all miraculous assistance became by degrees withdrawn, the Christian teachers found it more and more necessary to avail themselves of human wisdom; and the writings of the Fathers of our Church contain not only a fund of Biblical criticism, but almost all the literature of the earlier and middle ages. Strange! that it ever could be supposed that learning is not necessary for the propagation of the Gospel. Are not the Scriptures written in languages which have long ceased to be vernacular? Are not the versions of them numerous, and do they not abound in various readings? Surely then, in the collation of these, both study and judgment are required, to enable us to fix the reading, or ascertain the sense of any passage in Scripture. Proverbial comparisons also, and eastern imagery, are frequently made use of by the sacred writers. Many and very important truths are couched under parables. The customs, moreover, the rites and opinions of Jewish and contemporary nations, are continually brought forwards or alluded to. An acquaintance therefore with all these points, cannot but be necessary before we can fully comprehend, or explain, the word of God. In short, the expounder of Revelation should