

## LECTURE

ON

2 *Thessalonians*: ch. 2, v. 13-17.

The preceding verses contain one of the plainest predictions of the rise of the Man of Sin, and most striking delineations of the character of that apostacy, to be found in all the Bible. The general consent of Protestant interpreters has referred the passage to the church of Rome; and its agreement with history as to the manner in which the great antichristian system attained to such formidable influence is certainly confirmatory of this interpretation. It may be observed that the Apostle speaks of the subject as one with which the Christians at Thessalonica were familiar, and on which he had discoursed when present with them. "Remember ye not that when I was yet with you, I told you these things; and now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work; only he who now letteth will let until he be taken out of the way." The prophet Daniel had foretold the rise of the great spiritual usurpation as coincident with the dismemberment of the Roman Empire, and the Apostle had no doubt pointed the attention of the Church to so remarkable a prediction; since he supposes those to whom he wrote to understand what was yet the let or hinderance to the full development of the Apostacy. Rome Pagan—the empire—still stood, of whose dismemberment when it should occur the Papal power was to take advantage. It is in dreadful terms that the havoc this antichristian system should make of men's souls is here described, as well as the diabolical policy by which it should insinuate itself: "Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved." It is not necessary, indeed, to take these words and the following—