all, if singly written down; thus setting  
forth the superfluity and cumbrousness of  
any thing like a perfect detail, in the  
strongest terms,—and in terms which   
certainly look as if fault had been found with  
this Gospel for want of completeness, by  
some objectors.  
  
The reader will have perceived in the  
foregoing comment on the chapter a manifest   
leaning to the belief that it was written  
by St. John himself. *Of this I am fully  
convinced*. In every part of it, his hand is  
plain and unmistakeable: in every part of  
it, his character and spirit is manifested in  
a way which none but the most biassed can  
fail to recognize. I believe it to have been  
added by him, some years probably after the  
completion of the Gospel ; partly perhaps to  
record the important miracle of the second  
draught of fishes, so full of spiritual   
instruction, and the interesting account of  
the sayings of the Lord to Peter ;—but  
principally to meet the error which was  
becoming prevalent concerning himself.  
In order to do this, he gives a complete  
account, with all minute details,—even to  
the number of the fish caught,—of the   
circumstances preceding the conversation,—  
and the very words of the Lord Himself:  
not pretending to put a meaning on those  
words, but merely asserting that they   
announced no such thing as that he should  
not die. Surely nothing can be more natural   
than this.   
  
External evidence completely   
tallies with this view. The chapter  
is contained in *all the principal* MSS.;  
and there is no greater variety of reading  
than usual. In these respects it differs  
remarkably from John vii. 53—viii. 11,  
and indeed from even Mark xvi. 9—20.  
Internal evidence of style and diction is  
nearly balanced. It certainly contains  
several words and constructions not met  
with elsewhere in John (see these noticed in  
my Greek Test.); but, on the other hand,  
the whole cast of it is his;—the coupling  
particles are his ;—the train of thought, and  
manner of narration. And all allowance  
should be made for the double alteration  
of style of writing which would be likely  
to be brought about, by lapse of time,  
and by the very nature of an appendix,—  
a fragment,—not forming part of a whole  
written continuously, but standing by itself.   
The last two verses, from their contents,   
we might expect to have more of  
the epistolary form; and accordingly we  
find them singularly in style resembling  
the Epistles of John.  
  
  
On the whole, I am persuaded that in  
this chapter we have a fragment, both  
*authentic* and *genuine*, added, for reasons  
apparent on the face of it, *by the Apostle  
himself*, bearing evidence of his hand, but  
in a ‘second manner,’—a later style ;—probably   
in the decline of life.