INTRODUCTION. ] THE THREE GOSPELS. (cu. 1.   
   
 ledge as such, and with the design of presenting to his readers Jesus of   
 Nazareth as the promised Messiah,—should have omitted all mention of   
 the raising of Lazarus,—and of the subsequent prophecy of Caiaphas,   
 whereby that Messiahship was so strongly recognized? The ordinary   
 supposition, of silence being maintained for prudential reasons concerning   
 Lazarus and his family, is quite beside the purpose. For the sacred   
 books of the Christians were not published to the world in general, but   
 were reserved and precious possessions of the believing societies : and   
 even had this been otherwise, such concealment was wholly alien from   
 their spirit and character.   
 2. The absence of completeness from our Gospels is even more   
 strikingly shewn in their minor omissions, which cannot on any sup-   
 position be accounted for, if their authors had possessed records of the   
 incidents so omitted. Only in the case of St. Luke does there appear to   
 have been any design of giving a regular account of things throughout :   
 and from his many omissions of important matter contained in Matthew,   
 it is plain that his sources of information were, though copious, yet   
 fragmentary. For, assuming what has been above inferred as to the   
 independence of our three Evangelists, it is inconceivable that St. Luke,   
 with his avowed design of completeness, ch. i. 3, should have been in   
 possession of matter so important as that contained in those parts of   
 Matthew, and should deliberately have excluded it from his Gospel.   
 8. The Gospel of St. Mark,—excluding from that term the venerable   
 and authentic fragment at the end of ch. xvi..—terminates abruptly in   
 the midst of the narrative of incidents connected with the resurrection of   
 our Lord. And, with the exception of the short prefatory compendium,   
 ch. i. 1—13, there is no reason for supposing this Evangelist to be an   
 abbreviator, in any sense, of the matter before him. His sources of   
 information were of the very highest order, and his descriptions and   
 narratives are most life-like and copious; but they were confined within   
 a certain cycle of apostolic teaching, viz. that which concerned the   
 official life of Lord : and in that cycle not complete, inasmuch as he   
 breaks off short of the Ascension, which another Evangelistic hand bas   
 added from apostolic sources.   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 SECTION VI.   
   
 THE INSPIRATION OF THE EVANGELISTS AND OTHER N. T. WRITERS.   
   
 1. The results of our enquiries hitherto may be thus stated :—That   
 our Three Gospels have arisen independently of one another, from   
 sources of information possessed by the Evangelists :—such sources of   
 information, for a very considerable part of their contents, being the   
 narrative os of the Apostles ; and, in cases where their personal   
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