INTRODUCTION. ] THE THREE GOSPELS. [cw. 1.   
   
   
 still shrinking from the danger of human disapproval ;—we see John   
 still exhibiting the same union of deep love and burning zeal ;—we find   
 them pursuing different paths of teaching, exhibiting different styles of   
 writing, taking hold of the truth from different sides.   
 6. Again, we do not find the Apostles put in possession at once of the   
 divine counsel with regard to the Church. Though Peter and John   
 were full of the Holy Ghost irmediately after the Ascension, neither   
 at that time, nor for many years afterwards, were they put in possession   
 of the purpose of God regarding the Gentiles, which in due time was   
 specially revealed to Peter, and recognized in the apostolic council at   
 Jerusalem.   
 7. These considerations serve to shew us in what respects the working   
 of the Holy Spirit on the sacred writers was analogous to His influence   
 on every believer in Christ ; viz. in the retention of individual character   
 and thought and feeling.—and in the gradual development of the ways   
 and purposes of God to their minds.   
 8. But their situation and office was peculiar and unexampled. And   
 for its fulfilment, peculiar and unexampled gifts were bestowed upon   
 them. One of these, which bears very closely upon our present subject,   
 was, the recalling by the Holy Spirit of those things which the Lord had   
 said tothem. This was His own formal promise, recorded in John xiv.   
 26. And if we look at our present Gospels, we see abundant evidence   
 of its fulfilment. What unassisted human memory could treasure up   
 saying and parable, however deep the impression at the time, and report   
 them in full at the distance of several years, as we find them reported,   
 with every internal mark of truthfulness, in our Gospels? What in-   
 vention of man coald have devised discourses which by common consent.   
 differ from all sayings of men—which possess this character unaltered,   
 notwithstanding their transmission through men of various mental   
 organization—which contain things impossible to be understood or appre-   
 ciated by their reporters at the time when they profess to have been   
 uttered—which enwrap the seeds of all human improvement yet attained,   
 and are evidently full of power for more? I refer to this latter alter-   
 native, only to remark that all considerations, whether of the Apostles’   
 external circumstances, or their internal feelings respecting Him of   
 whom they bore witness, combine to confirm the persuasion of Chris-   
 tians, that they have recorded as said by our Lord what He truly did say,   
 and not any words of their own imagination.   
 9. And let us pursue the matter further by analogy. Can we suppose   
 that the light poured by the Holy Spirit upon the sayings of our Lord   
 would be confined to such sayings, and not extend itself over the other   
 parts of the narrative of His life on earth? Can we believe that those   
 miracles, which though not uttered in words, were yet acted parables,   
 22)