INTRODUCTION. ] JOHN’S GOSPEL. [cu. v.   
   
 of Matthew and Mark. (4) Writings compiled with a more set pur-   
 pose of giving a complete account, in order, of the events of our Lord’s   
 life on earth. Jn this division he classes the Gospel of Luke. (c) The   
 third class would arise from the growing up of the faith, which at first   
 was a simple historical belief, into the maturer philosophical form of   
 doctrinal system. In the course of this progress, various questions would   
 arise respecting the life and teaching of the Lord Jesus, which the gene-   
 rally-received oral narration was not competent to answer. And these   
 writings would be composed to satisfy such enquirers by presenting such   
 an apologetic view of the Lord’s life, and such a doctrinal account of His   
 teaching, as might tend to set their questionings at rest. To this class   
 he supposes may have belonged some of the gnostic apocryphal writings ;   
 and to this class certainly does belong the Gospel of John.   
 12. At the time of its composition, many questionings were already   
 raised between the believing and unbelieving, and among the believing   
 themselves. Traces of such we find even in the Pauline Epistles, 1 Cor.   
 i, 23; xv. 1. Liicke instances some of these questions which this   
 Gospel was well adapted to answer. (a) The rejection of the Lord   
 Jesus by His own people the Jews, was an event likely to prove a   
 stumbling-bloeck, and to be used by unbelievers against our religion.   
 To the elucidation of this,—the tracing its progress, step by step,—the   
 shewing its increasing virulence amidst the blameless innocence and   
 holy words and deeds of the Redeemer,—does John especially devote   
 the middle and principal section of his Gospel. He shews that thereby   
 His enemies were fulfilling the divine purpose, and that they were even   
 forewarned of this by one among themselves, ch. xi. 51, 52. (b) We   
 may evidently see, from the diligence with which John accumulates   
 autoptic evidence on the subject of the actual death of Christ, and His   
 resurrection, that he has in this part also some in view, who did not   
 receive those great events as undoubted facts, but required the authority   
 of an Apostle to assure them of their truth. (c) The way also in   
 which he relates the testimonies of our Lord respecting the manner,   
 results, and voluntary nature of His own death,—that it was His true   
 glorification,—that it was undertaken freely, but in complete accordance   
 with the Father’s will,—seems to point to doubts as to the character of   
 that event, which the Evangelist meditated removing. (d) It was cer-   
 tainly, later (see Origen against Celsus, quoted in note on Matt. ix. 9—13),   
 a reproach against the Apostles, that they were low-born and ignorant   
 men. In the case of Paul, we find very early a disposition on the part   
 of some in the Churches, to set aside apostolic authority. And those who   
 were so disposed might perhaps appeal to the oral narrative which forms   
 the foundation of the three former Gospels, to prove that the Apostles   
 often misunderstood the sayings of the Lord, and might from thence take   
 oceasion to vilify their present preaching as resting on similar misunder-   
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