§ vn.] ITS STYLE AND CHARACTER. [intropvcrion.   
   
 tained by rigid criticism, apart from all subjective leanings either way.   
 To dilate on the importance of this conclusion, does not belong to this   
 Introduction; but I cannot avoid pointing it ont, in an age when on   
 the one hand the historic truth of our scriptural accounts is being again   
 boldly denied ;—and on the other, we providentially stand at a point   
 in the progress of criticism, where none but the most rigid trial of them,   
 —none but the fairest and most impartial judgments,—can or ought to   
 satisfy us.   
   
   
   
   
   
 SECTION VII.   
 ITS STYLE AND CHARACTER.   
   
   
   
 1. This is the only one of the four Gospels to which a pre-arranged   
 and systematic plan can with any certainty be ascribed. That such does   
 not exist in the other three, any farther than the circumstances under   
 which they were each respectively written have indirectly modified their   
 arrangement, has been already shewn. But that such a plan is proposed   
 and followed out by the writer of this Gospel, will become evident by   
 an examination of its contents.   
 2. The prologue contains a formal setting forth of the subject-matter of   
 the Gospel: —‘ that the Eternal Creator Word became Flesh, and was   
 glorified by means of that work which He undertook in the flesh.’ This   
 glorification of Christ he follows out under several heads: (1) the testi-   
 mony borne to Him by the Baptist; (2) His miracles; (3) His conflict   
 with the persecution and malice of the Jews; (4) His own testimony in   
 His discourses, which are very copiously related; (5) His sufferings,   
 death, and resurrection. And this His glorification is the accomplish-   
 ment of the purpose of the Father, by setting Him forth as the Light and   
 Life of the World;—the One Intercessor and Mediator, by whose accom-   
 plished Work the Holy Spirit is procured for men; and through whom   
 all spiritual help, and comfort, and hope of glory, is derived.   
 3. Several subdivisions of the Gospel have been proposed, as shewing   
 its arrangement in subordination to this great design. The simplest   
 and most satisfactory is that adopted by Liicke: (1) the prologue,   
 ch. i. 1—18; (2) the first main division of the Gospel, i. 19—xii. 50;   
 (3) the second main division of the Gospel, xiii, 1—xx. 31; (4) the   
 appendix, ch. xxi.   
 4. Of these divisions, I. the prologue, contains a general statement of   
 the whole subject of the Gospel. II. The first main division treats of   
 the official work of the Lord in Galilee, Juda, and Samaria, His recep-   
 tion and rejection, and closes with the general reflections of the Evan-   
 gclist, ch. xii. 37—48, and summary of the commission of Jesus, ib. 44—   
 69] £2