intRopuction.] THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES. Fou. vI.   
   
   
 some one person of rank or influence, and describing it as written for   
 him. The same applies also to the Acts. and the class of readers for   
 whom Luke wrote is the same as before ; viz. Christians, whether Jews   
 or Gentiles.   
 3. If a further specification of his object in writing be required, it   
 ean only be furnished by an unprejudiced examination of the contents   
 of the book. These are found to be, The fulfilment of the promise of   
 the Father by the descent of the Holy Spirit: the results of that out-   
 pouring, by the dispersion of the Gospel among Jews and Gentiles.   
 Under these leading heads, all the personal and subordinate details may   
 be ranged. Immediately after the ascension, Peter, the first of the   
 twelve, the Rock on whom the Church was to be built, the holder of   
 the keys of the Kingdom, becomes the great Actor under God in the   
 founding of the Church. He is the centre of the first great group of   
 sayings and doings. The opening of the door to Jews (ch. ii.) and   
 Gentiles (ch. x.) is his office,—and by him, in the Lord’s own time, is   
 accomplished. But none of the existing Twelve were (humanly speaking)   
 fitted to preach the Gospel to the cultivated Gentile world. To be by   
 divine grace the spiritual conqueror of Asia and Europe, God raised up   
 another instrument, from among the highly educated and zealous Pha-   
 risees, The preparation of this instrument for the work to be done,—   
 the progress in his hand of that work—his journeyings, preachings and   
 perils, his stripes and imprisonments, his testifying in Jerusalem, and   
 being brought to testify in Rome,—these are the snbjects of the latter   
 half of the book, of which the great central figure is the Apostle Paul.   
 4, Nor can we attribute this with any probability to a set design of a   
 comparison between the two great Apostles, or of an apology for Paul by   
 exhibiting him as acting in consonance with the prineiples which regu-   
 lated Peter. All such hypothesis is in the highest degree unnatural   
 and foreed. The cireumstance before the narrator’s view would, with-   
 out any such design, have led to the arrangement of the book as we now   
 find it, The writer was the companion of Paul ;—and in the land which   
 had been the cradle of the Church he gathered materials for the portion   
 whieh might join his Gospel to the narrative with whieh Paul's history   
 begun. In that interval, Peter was the chief actor: Peter was the   
 acknowledged ‘chosen vessel’ in the first days of the Gospel. But   
 Luke does not confine himself to Peter’s acts. He gives at length the   
 mission of Philip to the Gaza road and the conversion of the Ethiopian   
 Eunuch, with which Peter had no connexion whatever. He gives at   
 length the history of Stephen—the origin of the office which he held,—   
 his apology,—his martyrdom,—how naturally, as leading to the nar-   
 rative of the conversion of him who took so conspicuous a part in the   
 transactions of that day \*.   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 § Schneckenburger, who (as well as Griesbach and Baur) holds the theory against   
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