§iv.] TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING. [inrropuction,   
   
   
 5. Any view which attributes ulterior design to the writer, beyond   
 that of faithfully recording such facts as seemed important in the   
 history of the Gospel, is, I am persuaded, mistaken. Many ends are   
 answered by the book in the course of this narration, but they are the   
 designs of Providence, not the studied purposes of the writer :—e. g.,   
 the sedulous offer of the Gospel to the Jewish people,—their continual   
 rejection of it,—the as continual turning to the Gentiles :—how strik-   
 ingly does this come out before the reader as we advance,—and how   
 easily might this be alleged as the design,—supperted as the view would   
 be by the final interview of Paul with the Jews at Rome, and his solemn   
 application of prophecy to their unbelief and hardness of heart. Again,   
 in the course of the book, more and more strongly does it appear that   
 God’s purpose was to gather a people out of the Gentiles to His name:   
 so that by Michaelis éhis is assigned as one of two great objects of the   
 book. And so we might pass on through the whole cycle of progress   
 of the faith of Christ, and hypotheses might be raised, as each great   
 purpose of Providence is seen unfolding, that to narrate it was the   
 object of the work.   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 SECTION IV.   
 AT WHAT TIME AND PLACE IT WAS WRITTEN.   
   
   
 1. Isee no cause for departing from the opinion already expressed   
 in the Introduction to Luke’s Gospel (§ iv. 1) that the Acts was   
 completed and published at the expiration of the two years described in   
 the last verse of chap. xxviii. No reason can be assigned, why, had   
 any considerable change in the cireumstances of Paul taken place, it   
 should not have been mentioned by Luke. ‘The same will hold still   
 more strongly of the death of the Apostle.   
 2. The prevalent opinion of recent critics in Germany has been, that   
 the book was written much later than this. But this opinion is for the   
 most part to be traced to their subjective leanings on the prophetic   
 announcement of Luke xxi. 24. For those who held that there is no   
 such thing as prophecy (and this unhappily is the case with many of the   
 modern German critics), it becomes necessary to maintain that that   
 verse was written after the destruction of Jerusalem. Hence, as the   
   
   
   
   
   
 which this paragraph is directed, is obliged to suppose that Stephen was purposely   
 introduced to be exhibited as the prototype and forerunner of Paul. That Stephen   
 was so, in some sense, is true enough: but the assimilation of Paul to Stephen is a   
 result springing naturally out of the narrative, not brought about by the writer of the   
 history. Supposing the facts to have heen as related, it was most natural that Paul   
 should earnestly desire the whole particulars respecting Stephen to be minutely re-   
 corded: and so we find them.   
   
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