13—16. ST. JOHN. 461   
   
 15 ¥ John ° dare witness of him, and ° cried, saying, This "Jer,   
 was he of whom I spake, \* Ie that cometh after me P is xtiatt   
 preferred before me: 34 for he was before me. M:   
 16 And tu   
 3   
 © render, beareth, and crieth. P iii. taketh place. Col   
 @ render, becavse.   
   
 the usage in Ps. xxi. 20. But obviously in tered these words in the power of the   
 the midst of ideas reaching so far deeper Spirit concerning Him whose forerunner   
 than that of regard, or love, of Father he was before he saw and recognized   
 for the Son, the word cannot be interpreted Him in the flesh. Then, on doing so, he   
 except in accordance with them. It refers exclaimed, This was He of whom I spake,   
 to, and contrasts with, the children of God &c. This view seems to be borne out.   
 in vv. 12,13. They reccive their divine by his own statement, ver. 33, and by   
 birth by faith in Him, and through the order of the narrative in Matt. iii. 11,   
 Him; but He is the Only-begotten of 12, 13. cometh after me} In point   
 the Father in the higher sense, in which of time; not of birth, merely or principally,   
 He is begotten the Son of God. nor of commencement of official life: but,   
 The words full of grace and truth (see the inasmuch as John was His Forerunner,   
 note in my Gr. Test.) belong probably to on account of official   
 the last words, the only-begotten of the taketh place before me] This expression,   
 Father, and there is no need of a paren- taketh place, represents one, the original,   
 thesis, as in A. grace and truth] very difficult to render in English. It   
 not equivalent to “true grace,” which is the same word as that rendered “hath   
 destroys the precision of the expression, been made” in ver. 8: hath come to be,   
 and itself conveys no sense whatever ; but is constituted. The A.V., “ts preferred,”   
 setting out the two sides of the divine would be very suitable, setting forth the   
 manifestation in Christ,—grace, as the advancement to official before which   
 result of Love to mankind,—truth (see ch. John’s office and decreased (ch. iii.   
 xiv. 6), as the unity, purity, and light of 30), which took place even while John’s   
 His own Character. 15.] The testi- course was being fulfilled: but the ob-   
 mony of John, so important as being the jection to ‘preferred’ is, its possible am-   
 fulfilment of the very object for which he biguity : the word to prefer meaning to   
 was sent from God, is in this prologue esteem more highly, as well as to advance   
 ranged, so to speak, parallel with the or promote, which is the sense required   
 assertions and testimony of the Evangelist here. Even Dr. Johnson has fallen into   
 himself. So that this verse does not in- the mistake of quoting this very passage,   
 terrupt the train of thought, but confirms his Dictionary, as an instance of the sense   
 by this important testimony the assertion “to love more than another.”   
 “the Word became flesh,” shewing that because (or, for, but better because) He   
 John Lore witness to His pre-existence. was (not “became” or “was made,” but   
 Then (ver. 16) the “full of grace and as in ver. 1) before me; i.e. ‘He existed,   
 truth” is again taken up. Euthymius was in being, before me.’ The question   
 paraphrases: “Even if I,” says the Evan- raised by some, whether it is probable   
 gelist, “may perhaps seem to some not that the Baptist had, or expressed such   
 worthy of credit, yet before me John wit- views of the pri-existence of Christ, is not   
 nesseth to His Godhead, that John, whose one for us to deal with, in the face of so   
 name is great and celebrated among all direct a testimony as is given to the fact,   
 the Jews.” beareth witness, present, here and in ch. iii, ff. In all proba-   
 for solemnity—as part of the testimony to bility, the Evangelist was himself a dis-   
 Him, not only once given, but still sub- ciple of the Baptist: and if he has given   
 sisting. erieth (in the original, us, as compared with the other Evan-   
 perfect, being, in sense, present, ‘hath gelists, a fuller and somewhat differing   
 cried,’ so that the voice is still account of his testimony to Christ, it is   
 see ch. vii. 37: “John cricth out with because his means of information were   
 confidence and joy, as becometh a great ampler than those of the other Evan-   
 herald.” Bengel. This was he of gelists. The questioners seem to forget   
 whem I spake . . .] This reference to a that the Baptist was divinely raised up   
 former saying seems toshew,as indeed would and commissioned, and full of the Holy   
 appear from the announcement of his own Ghost, and spoke in that power; his de-   
 office by the Baptist, that he had ut- clarations were not therefore merely con-