InTRODUCTION.] THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. (ou. 1.   
   
 advancing in the main path,—whereas in most human arguments each   
 digression must have its definite termination, and we must resume the   
 thesis where we left it. A notable instance of this is seen in ch. vi. of   
 our Epistle ; in which while the mischievous fallacy of ver. 1 is discussed   
 and annihilated, the great subject of the introduction of Life by Christ is   
 carried on through another step—viz. the establishment of that life as   
 one of sanctification.   
 Among the minor characteristies of the Apostle’s style, may be   
 enumerated,   
 (d) Frequent and complicated antitheses, requiring great caution and   
 discrimination in exposition. For often the different members of the   
 antitheses are not to be taken in the same extent of meaning; some-   
 times the literal and metaphorical significations are interchanged in a   
 curious and intricate manner, so that perhaps in the first member of two   
 antithetical clauses, the subject may be literal and the predicate meta-   
 phorical, and in the second, vice versa, the subject metaphorical and the   
 predicate literal. Sometimes again, the terms of one member are to be   
 amplified to their fullest possible, almost to an exaggerated meaning:   
 whereas those of the second are to be reduced down to their least   
 possible, almost to a depreciated meaning. The English reader must   
 remember, that to retain such antitheses in a version or explanation is   
 of course, generally speaking, impossible: the appropriateness of the   
 terms depends very much on their conventional value in the original   
 lauguage. Then comes the diflicult task of breaking up the sentence,   
 and expressing neither more nor less than the real meaning under a   
 different grammatical form ; an attempt almost always sure to fail even   
 in the ablest hands.   
 (e) Another difficulty besets the mere English reader. Frequent plays   
 upon words, or rather perhaps, choice of words from their similarity   
 of sound. Much of the terseness and force of the Apostle’s expressions   
 is necessarily lost in rendering them into another language, owing to the   
 impossibility of expressing these ; and without them, it becomes exceed-   
 ingly difficult to ascertain the real weight of the expression itself : to be   
 sure that we do not give more than due importance in the context to a   
 clause whose aptness was perhaps its chief characteristic, and ou the   
 other hand to take care that we do not overlook the real importance   
 of clauses whose value is not their mere aptness, but a deep insight into   
 the philosophy of the cognate words made use of, as exponents of lines   
 of human thought ultimately convergent.   
 (f) Accumulation of prepositions, often with the same or very slightly   
 different meanings. That this is a characteristic of St. Paul’s style   
 there can be no doubt: and the difficulty created by it is easily obviated   
 if this be borne in mind. The temptation of an expositor is, to   
 endeavour to give precise meaning and separate foree te each pre-   
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