INTRODUCTION. ] 1 THESSALONIANS. (cn. vi   
   
 to send Timothy back to Thessalonica to ascertain the state of their   
 faith ©.   
 6. The nature of the message brought to the Apostle at Corinth   
 (Acts xviii. 5) by Timothy on his arrival there with Silas, must be   
 inferred from what we find in the Epistle itself. It was, in the main,   
 favourable and consolatory (1 Thess. iii. 6—10). They were firm in   
 faith and love, as indeed they were reputed to be by others who had   
 brought to him news of them (i. 7—10), full of affectionate remem-   
 brance of the Apostle, and longing to see him (iii. 6). Still, however,   
 he earnestly desired to come to them, not only from the yearnings of   
 love, but because he wanted to fill up “the defects of their faith”   
 (iii. 10). Their attention had been so much drawn to one subject—his   
 preaching had been so full of one great matter, and from the necessity   
 of the case, so scanty on many others which he desired to lay forth to   
 them, that he already feared lest their Christian faith should be a dis-   
 torted and unhealthy faith. And in some measure, Timothy had found   
 it so. They were beginning to be restless in expectation of the day of   
 the Lord (iv. 11 ff.),—neglectful of that pure, and sober, and temperate   
 walk, which is alone the fit preparation for that day (iv. 3 ff. ; v. 1—9),   
 —distressed about the state of the dead in Christ, who they supposed   
 had lost the precious opportunity of standing before Him at His   
 coming (iv. 13 ff.).   
 7. This being so, he writes to them to build up their faith and love,   
 and to correct these defects and misapprehensions. I reserve further   
 consideration of the contents of the Epistle for § iv., ‘On its matter and   
 style.’   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 SECTION II.   
 PLACE AND TIME OF WRITING.   
   
   
   
 1. From what has been said above respecting the state of the Thes-   
 salonian Church as the occasion for writing the Epistle, it may readily   
 be inferred that no considerable time had elapsed since the intelligence   
 of that state had reached the Apostle. Silas and Timothy were with   
   
 5 I cannot see how this interpretation of the difficulty to the mission of Timothy   
 lies open to the charge of “diving beneath the surface to pick up what is really on the   
 surface,” and thus of “introducing into Scripture a hypercritical unreal method of   
 interpretation, which may be any where made the instrument of perverting the meaning   
 of the text.” (Jowett, i. p. 120.) Supposing that at Berea it was fixed that Timothy   
 should not accompany St. Paul to Athens, but go to Thessalonica, and that the Apos-   
 tle should be deposited at Athens and left there alone, the brethren returning, what   
 words could have more naturally expressed this than “wherefore no longer being able   
 to bear it we determined to be left behind at Athens alone”?   
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