CH. 1x.] 2 THESSALONIANS. [introruction   
   
   
   
   
 CHAPTER IX.   
   
 THE SECOND EPISTLE TO THE THESSALONIANS.   
   
   
 SECTION I.   
 ITS AUTHORSHIP.   
   
   
 1. Tue recognition of this Epistle has been as general,—and the   
 exceptions to it for the most part the same,—as in the case of the last.   
 2. The principal testimonies of early Christian writers are the fol-   
 lowing :   
 (a) Ireneus:   
 “But that the Apostle (Paul) frequently uses hyperboles, on   
 account of the rapidity of his sayings, and the impetus of the Spirit   
 which is in him, we may see from many other examples. . . . And   
 again in the second to the Thessalonians, speaking of Antichrist, he   
 . says, ‘And then shall be revealed,’” &c. (ch. ii. 8, 9).   
 (6) Clement of Alexandria:   
 «Not in all,’ saith the Apostle, ‘is knowledge: but pray that we   
 may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all have   
 not faith.’”   
 (c) Tertullian: following on the citation from the first Epistle given   
 above, ch. viii. § i. 3, . . . . “and in the second, even with more   
 anxiety he saith to the same persons: ‘ But I beseeeh you, brethren,   
 by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ,’” &c. (ch. ii. 1, 2).   
 8. The objections brought by Schmidt, Kern, and Baur against the   
 genuineness of the Epistle, in as far as they rest on the old story of   
 similarities and differences as compared with St. Paul’s acknowledged   
 Epistles, have been already more than once dealt with. I shall now only   
 notice those which regard points peculiar to our Epistle itself.   
 4, It is said that this second Epistle is not consistent with the first :   
 that directed their attention to the Lord’s coming as almost immediate :   
 this interposes delay,—the apostasy,—the man of sin, &c. It really   
 seems as if no propriety nor exact fitting of circumstances would ever   
 satisfy such critics. It might be imagined that this very discrepancy,   
 even if allowed, would tell most strongly in favour of the genuineness.   
 5. It is alleged by Kern, that the whole prophetic passage, ch. ii. 1 ff.,   
 does not correspond with the date claimed for the Epistle. It is assumed,   
 that the man of sin is Nero, who was again to return, Rev. xvii. 10,—he   
 that hindereth, Vespasian,—the apostasy, the falling away of the Jews   
 and Christians alike. This view, it is urged, fits a writer in A.p. 68—   
 70, between Nero’s death and the destruction of Jerusalem. But than   
 75