§ 1.) PLACE AND TIME OF WRITING. [iyrropvetioy.   
   
 organization and place of worship wonld be the obvious and immediato   
 consequence of the recognition of Jesus of Nazareth as the Mess   
 seh a congregation, elders (presbyters) would be a matter of cour   
 13. It is also objected, that in the Epistle the readers are treated as   
 mature in the belief and doctrines of the Gospel: that it exhorts, but   
 does not teach’. Witness, it is suid, the allusions to their knowledge, and   
 exhortations to perfection, ch. i. 3; iii 1; iv. 1. But in those passages   
 there is nothing which might not well apply to the primitive Jewish   
 believers: nothing which, from their knowledge of the O, T., and of the   
 moral teaching of our Lord, they might not well have been aware of.   
 14, Yet again it is said, that the character of the faults here stigma-   
 tized in the Christian congregations is such as to require a considerable   
 period for their development\*: that they are those which arise from   
 relaxation of the moral energy with which we must suppose the first   
 Jewish converts to have received the Gospel. In answer to this, we   
 may point to the length of time which may well be allowed as hi   
 elapsed between the first Pentecost sermon and the time of writing   
 the Epistle, and to the rapidity of the dissemination of practical error,   
 and the progress of moral deterioration, when once set in. We may   
 also remind the reader of the state of the Jewish church and the heathen   
 world around, as shewing that it must not be supposed that all these   
 evils sprung up within the Christian communities themselves: rather   
 we may say, that the seed fell on soil in which these thorns were already   
 sown,—and that, even conceding the position above assumed, § i. 1, a   
 very short time,—less than the 20 years which elapsed between the first   
 Pentecost and the Jerusalem council,—would have sufficed for the   
 growth of any such errors as we find stigmatized in this Epistle.   
 15. “ Where,” asks Wiesinger, “ shall we look for the Judxo-Christian   
 churehes out of Palestine, which will satisfy the postulates of the   
 Epistle?” I answer, in the notice of Acts ii. 5—11, in following out   
 which, we must believe that Christian churches of the dispersion were   
 very widely founded at a date immediately following the great outpour-   
 ing of the Spirit. Such a persuasion docs not compel us to believe that   
 our Epistle was addressed principally to the church at Antioch, or to   
 those in Syria and Cilicia, but leaves the address of it in all the extent   
 of its own words, “to the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion.”   
 16. The notice of Acts xi. 19 ff, will amply provide for such Chris-   
 tian congregations, consisting mainly or entirely of Jewish believers,   
 as the purposes of this Epistle require. And that notice may snrely be   
 regarded as a record of that taking place with increased energy nearer   
 home, which must have been long going on far and wide, owing to the   
 agency of the first Pentecostal believers. We find traces of this in tho   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 5 Wiesinger, p. 38. 6 Wiesinger, as above.   
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