§ 1] ITS OBJECT, CONTENTS, &c. [inrropucrion,   
   
 And the side of our Lord’s own Person and Office on which attention   
 is fixed is not so much His historical life, as His “might” and “authority”   
 in His exalted state of triumph (i. 16). The promises which are intro-   
 duced refer to His second coming and kingdom (i. 4; iii. 13).   
 4. And in this peculiar setting forth of the Christian life must wo   
 look for the necessary bringing ont of the dangers of seduction by false   
 teachers, and the placing of this knowledge and these promises over   
 against it. The “false teachers” (ii. 1; “lawless men,” iii. 17) are   
 described partly theoretically, as denying the lordship of our glorified   
 Savionr which He has won by Redemption (ii. 1, contrasted with His   
 might, i. 16), and His promise of coming again (iii. 1 ff., with   
 His presence, i. 16),—partly practically,—as slandering God’s way of   
 rightcousness (ii. 2) and Tis majesty (ii. 10 ff.),—as disgracing their   
 profession of Christian frecdom (ii, 19),—as degraded by a vicious life   
 (ii. 13),—full of Inst and covetousness (ii. 14),—speaking swelling words   
 (ii. 18), deserters of the right way (ii. 15 f.), traitors (ii. 17), seducing   
 the unstable (ii. 14, 18),—the objects of God’s inevitable judgment   
 (ii, 8—9, 17),—preparing destruction for themselves (ii. 12, 19), and   
 the more so, because their guilt is increased by the sin of apostasy   
 (ii, 20—29),   
 5. In strong contrast and counterpoise against both sides of this   
 heretical error stands their knowledge: against the former of them, in   
its theoretical aspect, as the right knowledge of the power and coming   
 of Christ (i, 16: see above): against the latter, in its practical, as   
 insight into the way of righteousness, This latter contrast is ever   
 brought up in the description of the fulse teachers in ch. ii. Noah, as   
 an herald of righteousness, is excepted from the judgment of the Flood   
 (ii. 5): Lot, as “righteous,” from that of Sodom (ii. 7, 8): God knows   
 how to punish the “unrighteous,” and resene the “godly” (ii. 9): the   
 heretics are described as having left the “straight way” (ii. 15), and the   
 example of Balaam applied to them (ii, 15, 16). And accordingly it is   
 the “knowledge of Jesus Christ” which is to preserve the readers from   
 “corruption” (i. 4; ef, i, 12), and from falling away (i. 10).   
 6. This main subject of the Epistle, which not only occasions the   
 minute depiction of the adversaries, but also keeps together the whole,   
 is, notwithstanding the parenthetical allusions and polemical digressions,   
 in close coherence. The later portions are all based on the earlier,   
 Thus ch. i. 16 ff. is the foundation of ii. 1 ff, iti. 1 ff: thus the con-   
 clusion is in intimate connexion with the opening, the same union of   
 “knowledge,” “grace,” and “ peace,” being found in both (i. 2 ; iii. 14,   
 18): thus the words, “that ye fall not from your own stedfustness,”   
 iii. 17, refer back to i, 10, 12: thus the conditioning clause, “ having   
 escaped the corruption which is in the world through lust,” i. 4, is vemem-   
 bered in the warning “ beware lest, being led away together with the error   
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