INTRODUCTION. } 2 PETER. (cn. xvi.   
   
   
 short time would suffice for the springing up, or for the becoming   
 formidable, of these deadly forms of error. As the Apostles were one   
 by one removed by death, on the one hand their personal influence in   
 checking evil tendencies was withdrawn, on the other that coming   
 of Christ, of which they had once coufidently spoken as to be in their   
 own time, became in danger of being disbelieved. This would be a   
 sufficient reason for the one supposed difficulty: and as regards the   
 other, it is quite answer enough to say, that this second Epistle heing   
 written on a special oceasion and for a special object, is, as we have   
 seen, coherently and consistently devoted to that object, and does not,   
   
   
 in its course, travel out of its way to speak of things with which the —   
 first Epistle was concerned. It is obvious that, supposing the two to   
 have been written by the same person, he is not likely to have dwelt   
 again in his second letter on things already brought forward in his first.   
 6. Besides, it has been not unjustly thought that we can discover   
 traces in our Epistle of the same characteristics as those which marked   
 the readers of the former one, or of others which would be probably sub-   
 sequent to them. We have there the caution to take care that none of   
 them suffer as an evil doer, “a murderer,” “a thief,” “an evil doer,”   
 “a busybody in other men’s matters” (iv. 15); which seems to contain   
 in it the seed of that further development of evil among Christians,   
 which we find actual in this Epistle. Again the neglect of the caution   
 there, “gird up the loins of your mind, being sober: hope fervently for   
 the grace that is being brought unto you in the revelation of Jesus   
 Christ” (i, 13), would lead exactly to the dissolute lives here described   
 of those who had ceased to hope for his coming. There is close con-   
 nexion between 1 Pet. ii. 16, “as free, and not as using your liberty for   
   
   
   
 a cloke of your maliciousness” . . . and 2 Pet. ii. 19, “promising them   
 liberty, while they themselves are the slaves of corruption :” between the   
   
 cautions there given against pride (v. 5~7), and the “speaking great   
 swelling words of vanity” of our ch. ii. And the same analogies   
 might be carried yet further, shewing that from the circumstances of the   
 readers which respectively underlie the one and the other Epistle, this   
 may well have been a sequel to, and consequent on, the former.   
   
   
   
 SECTION II.   
 ON THE RELATION BETWEEN THIS EPISTLE AND THAT OF JUDE.   
   
   
 1. It is well known that, besides various scattered resemblances, a   
 Jong passage occurs, included in the limits Jude vy. 8—19, 2 Peter ii.   
 1—19, describing in both cases the heretical enemies of the Gospel,   
 couched in terms so similar as to preclude all idea of entire indepen-   
 dence. If considerations of human probability are here, as every where   
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