INTRODUCTION. ] 1 JOHN. [en xrx.   
   
 was really written to the Parthians. Paulus and Baur made use of the   
 assumption to impugn the apostolicity of the Epistle. Grotius, who was   
 followed by Hammond,and partially by Michaelisand Baumgarten-Crusius,   
 gives a curious reason, in connexion with this idea, for the omission of all   
 address and personal notices ; “‘ The Epistle was anciently called that to   
 the Parthians, i. e. those Jews professing Christianity who lived under   
 the rule not of the Romans, but of the Parthians in the parts beyond the   
 Euphrates, where there was a great multitude of Jews, as at Nearda,   
 Nisibis, and other places. And I imagine this to be the reason why   
 this Epistle contains neither the namo and title of an Apostle in its   
 opening, nor salutations after the apostolic manner at its close, because   
 the Epistle was to be sent by Ephesian merchants into lands hostile to   
 the Romans, and it might have been very damaging to the Christians if   
 this epistolary commerce, though innocent, had been detected.” This is   
 absurd enough, especially as the Epistle is evidently not addressed to   
 Jews at all as such, but mainly to Gentile readers: see below, par. 5.   
 And ecclesiastical tradition knows of no mission of St. John to the   
 Parthians, St. Thomas being supposed to have carried the Gospel to   
 them.   
 3. This being so, it would appear, as hinted before, that the supposed   
 address “to the Parthians” rests upon some mistake. But if so, on   
 what mistake? A conjecture is quoted from Serrarius that in the   
 original text of Augustine it stood “to the Patmians.” Other conjec-   
 tures are enumerated in my Greek Test., among which the most probable   
 is that the Greek word “ parthenos,” a virgin, either as a title of those   
 addressed, or a name of the Apostle himself, has somehow produced the   
 mistake.   
 4, At all events we may fairly assume, that the Epistle was not   
 written to the Parthians. Nor is there more probability in the notion   
 of Benson that it was addressed to the Jewish Christians in Judea and   
 Galilee, who had seen the Lord in the flesh : nor in that of Lightfoot,   
 who sends it to the church at Corinth, supposing the Gaius to whom the   
 third Epistle is addressed, identical with him of Acts xix. 29 and 1 Cor.   
 i, 14, and the fact alluded to in 3 John 9 to refer to this first Epistle.   
 5. Setting aside these, and falling back on the general opinion, we   
 believe the Epistle to have been written not to any one church, but to   
 a cycle of churches, mainly consisting of Gentile converts. This last   
 seems shewn by the warning of ch, v. 21, combined with the circum-   
 stance that so little reference is made to Old Test. sayings or his-   
 tory.   
 6. It evidently also appears, that the Apostle is the spiritual teacher   
 of those to whom he is writing. He knows their circumstances and   
 various advances in the faith : the whole tone is that of their father in   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
   
 the faith. Such a relation, following as we surely must the traces fur-   
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