§ v1] LANGUAGE AND STYLE. [intropuction.   
   
 portions of the Epistle. These two, both revolving round the one great   
 theme, are also, in their inner construction, closely related to each other.   
 God is light:—then our fellowship with Him depends on our walking in   
 the light: God is rightcous :—then we are only manifested as children   
 of God, abiding in His love and in Himself, if we do righteousness.   
 But for both—our walking in light, and our doing righteousness, there   
 is one common term,—Love: even as God is Love, as Christ walked in   
 Love, out of Love beeame manifest in the flesh, out of Love gave Him-   
 self for us. On the other side,—as the darkness of the world, which   
 can have no fellowship with God, who is Light, denies the Son of God   
 and repudiates Love,—so the unrighteousness of the children of the   
 world manifests itself in that hatred which slays brethren, because love   
 to brethren cannot be where the love of God in Christ is unknown and   
 eternal Life untasted.   
 6. Such a style and character of the Epistle, not bound by strict dialectic   
 rules, not hurrying onward to a logical conclusion, but loving to tarry,   
 and to repeat, and to limit itself in smaller circles of thought, shews us   
 the simple heart of a child, or rather the deep spirit of a man who, in   
 the richest significance of the expression, has entered the kingdom of   
 heaven as a little child, and, being blessed in it himself, yearns ti   
 troduce his brethren further and further into it, that they may rejoice   
 with him. In his Epistle Christian truth, which is not dialcetic only,   
 but essentially moral and living, is made to live and move and feel and   
 act. When he speaks of knowledge and faith, it is of a moral existence   
 and possession : it is of love, peace, joy, confidence, eternal life. Fel-   
 lowship with God and Christ, and fellowship of Christians with one   
 another in faith and love, cach of these is personal, real; so to speak,   
 incarnate and embodied.   
 7. And this is the reason why our Epistle appears on the one hand   
 easily intelligible to the simplest reader, if only his heart has any   
 experience of the truth of Christ’s salvation,—and on the other hand   
 unfathomable even to the deepest Christian thinker: but at the same   
 time equally precious and edifying to both classes of readers. It is the   
 most notable example of the foolishness of God putting to shame all the   
 wisdom of the world.   
 8. Butas the matter of our Epistle is rich and sublime, so is it fitted,   
 by its mildness, and consolatory character, to attract our hearts. Such   
 is the power of that holy love, so humble and so gentle, which John had   
 learned from Him in whom the Father’s love was manifested. He   
 addresses all his readers, young and old, as his little children: he calls   
 them to him, and with him to the Lord: he exhorts them ever as his   
 brothers, as his beloved, to that love which is from God. The Epistle   
 itself is in fact nothing else than an act of this holy love, Hence tho   
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