iNtRopucTION.] THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. \_ [cu. xv.   
   
 that they would equally apply, whoever wrote the Epistle ; and that   
 the name of the Author was, on the view which they imply, equally   
 sure to have been attached to it, But we may well answer, that this,   
 however plausible, is not so in reality. It does not follow, because the   
 name of the great Apostle was sure to be attached to it if he really   
 wrote it, that every other name was equally sure. Many of his disei-   
 ples and companions, eminent as they were, bore no authority to be   
 compared with his. This is true evon of Luke and Barnabas: much   
 more of Titus, Silas, and Clement. And if one of these had been the   
 acknowledged author, there being no notices in the Epistle itself   
 whereby he might be with certainty recognized after the first circum-   
 stances of its sending were forgotten, how probable, that a writing,   
 committed to the keeping of a particular church, should have been re-   
 tained indeed as a sacred deposit by them, but, in the midst of porse-   
 eutions and troubles, have lost the merely traditional designation which   
 never had become inseparable from it. In the one ease, the name of   
 St. Paul would commend the Epistle, and so would take the first, and an   
 inalienable place: in the other, the weight and preciousness of the   
 Epistle would survive the name of its Writer, which would not of itself   
 have been its commendation. The like might have happened to the   
 Gospel, or Acts, of St. Luke, but for the fact, that in this case not   
 one particular church, but the whole Christian world, was the guardian   
 of the deposit, and of the tradition attached to it.   
 187. Another solution has been suggested hy Steudel : that the book   
 has more the character of a treatise than of an Epistle, and therefore was   
 not begun in epistolary form: some letter being probably sent with it, or   
 the enstomary personal messages being orally delivered. But the postu-   
 late may be safely denied. Our Epistle is veritably an Epistle: addressed   
 to readers of whom certain facts were specially true, containing cxhorta-   
 tions founded on those facts, and notices arising out of the relation of the   
 writer to his readers ; which last sufficiently shew, that no other Epistle   
 could have accompanied it, nor indeed any considerable trusting to the   
 oral supplementing of its notices.   
 \*38. Yet another solution has been given by Hug and Spanheim:   
 chat in an oratorical style like that of the opening of this Epistle, it was   
 not probable that a superseription would precede. True: but what,   
 when conceded, does this indicate? Is it not just as good an argument   
 to shew that one who never begins his Epistles thus, is not the Writer,   
 as to account for his beginning thus, supposing him the Writer? The   
 reason for our Epistle beginning as it does is, unquestionably, the character   
 of whole, containing few personal notices of the relation of the Writer   
 to his readers. But granted, as we have sufliciently shewn, that it was   
 not the object of the Author to remain unknown to his readers, [ ask   
 any one capable of forming an unbiassed judgment, is it possible that   
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