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A NEW  
INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.

BY

*Edward*  
E. HARWOOD.

---

Και μοι δοκει μεγαλην θεον τοις ανθρωποις η φυσικη αποδειξαι την ΑΛΗΘΕΙΑΝ, η μεγαλην αυτη προσθειναι δυναμιν παντων γουν αυτην καταγωνιζομενων, ενιοτε δε η πασαν των πιθανοτητων μετα του ψευδους ταπλομενων, ουκ οιδ' οπως αυτη δι' αυτης εις τας ψυχας εισδυεται των ανθρωπων. η ποτε μεν παραχηρημα δεικνυσι την αυτης δυναμιν, ποτε δε πολυν χρονον επισκοτισθαισα, τελθ. αυτη δι' εαυτης επικρατει η καταγωνιζεται το ψευδθ.

*Polybius, p. 973. Edit. Hanov. 1619.*

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A TRANSLATION of the *Motto* from *Polybius*.

THE greatest DIVINITY, in my opinion which NATURE ever discovered to mortals is TRUTH; and she appears to be endowed with the greatest power. For notwithstanding all combine to overwhelm her, and every art and artifice are employed on the side of *error*, to effect this conquest, yet I know not how it is that by her own native force, through all these difficulties, she makes her way into the human mind; and sometimes she *immediately* displays her omnipotence, sometimes after having been enveloped in darkness for a *long time*, she at last, by her essential energy bursts forth, surmounts every opposition, and triumphs over *error*.

T H E

P R E F A C E.

I Deliver this work to the world with a mind deeply penetrated with a conscious sense of human fallibility and imperfection. I can only say, it was sincerely intended to do good, that for *this* the application of *some years* hath been expended upon it, and that I have had nothing for my object, but the promotion of *truth, liberty and righteousness*. The AGE, in which we live, is in a very eminent manner propitious to the study of Religion and Literature. The present BISHOPS and DIGNITARIES of the church of England are the distinguished patrons and ornaments of this sacred CAUSE, and several of them have immortalized their names by learned and elaborate defences of our divine religion. The two UNIVERSITIES of *Oxford* and *Cambridge* are adorned with persons who are not more illustrious for their superior *knowledge and erudition*, than they are for their amiable *candour and moderation*. The several UNIVERSITIES in *Scotland* can boast of gentlemen of the first distinction

in the republic of letters. Learning hath revived, and, probably, in *subsequent* ages will eminently flourish, among the *Protestant Dissenters*, since the institution of those excellent seminaries in *London, Daventry, Warrington, Exeter, and Caermarthen*, superintended and conducted by persons who have made singular attainments in all the branches of polite and useful science. There is only *one* thing, which *can* prevent Religion and Learning from being, in future, cultivated with that generous assiduity, and pushed to that exalted pinnacle of improvement and perfection to which they are *now* advancing; and this is---that prevailing love of pleasure, that abandoned luxury and debauchery, that rage for trifling amusements and diversions, that dissoluteness and dissipation, which have *now* descended even among the lower classes of society, and threaten every thing that is truly *great* and *good* in human life, with fatal and remediless destruction.

I need hardly say, that every *Attempt* to illustrate our common Religion and to exhibit before men a faithful representation of its divine truth and excellence, is entitled to candour. I shall esteem all my time and labour abundantly recompensed, if this  
work

work will prove, in *any* respect, useful to the *rising generation*, and, *particularly*, to *young persons* designed for the *ministry*. The principal happiness of my life is the investigation of truth, and the acquisition of useful knowledge. I have no other *ambition*, but to adorn that station which God hath assigned me, and to do all the good in it, to the cause of Religion, Liberty, and Literature, that his Providence shall enable me to do. Blessed with religious parents, who gave me a liberal education, happy in early life in the instruction of a\* *Clergyman* of distinguished learning and the most amiable character, formed with a strong passion for truth and a fervent thirst after knowledge, I hope I have in *some* measure improved the advantages with which the goodness of my Creator has favoured me. It fills me with regret and shame that I have improved them no better.

Tho' upon *every* subject I speak my *own* private sentiments with liberal and ingenuous freedom, yet I have *charity* for ALL, think every good person as sincere in *his* Religious opinions as I am in *mine*, deem no one a *worse* Christian

\* The Rev. Mr. *Thomas Hunter*, vicar of Weverham in Cheshire.

Christian merely because he differs from *me* in a few speculative points, am disposed to make all generous allowances for the errors and imperfections of frail humanity, and cherish a sincere affection for all my *fellow-Christians* of all parties and denominations.

I take this opportunity of making my grateful acknowledgements to my friends for allowing me free access to their libraries, and generously supplying me with any *anti-ent* or *modern* books I wanted to consult.

After I had finished my *Translation* of the New Testament, some of my learned friends judged that *such* a work as the *present*, might be very proper to introduce it to the world. In pursuance of this repeated solicitation and advice, I digested into a regular series the observations I had made in the course of my studies, and intreat the reader's favourable and candid acceptance of them.

I am under the greatest obligations to my learned and worthy friend Dr. *Lardner*, not only for many kind instances of his *personal* friendship, but for the knowledge and improvement I have derived from his most useful writings. I am thankful to God for raising up a person of such distinguished erudition and worth to plead the cause of  
Chris-

Christianity, and for continuing so valuable a life to such an advanced period. I sustained a great loss by the death of my learned friend the late Rev. Mr. \* *Alexander* of *Birmingham*, who promised to revise my liberal Translation of the New Testament, and this *present* publication---both which would have received signal advantage from his uncommon learning, excellent judgment, and critical sagacity. The death of my father in law, the eminently learned and celebrated Dr. *Candler*, who reviewed part of my *Version* of the sacred writers, and into whose hands I intended to have put these *Preliminary Observations*, hath deprived them of the most considerable part of their *intended* merit. I design *another* Volume which will consist of critical observations, explanatory remarks, parallel passages from *Greek* and *Roman* authors, accounts of *customs* and *usages* mentioned or alluded to in the New Testament, and a *list* of the most eminent *authors*, with the best *editions* of their works, who have illustrated the sacred Classics. I have only to add, that as I have a great deal of ministerial duty

\* Author of an excellent and learned Paraphrase on the Fifteenth of Corinthians, deservedly recommended in both the *Monthly* and *Critical Reviews*.

viii P R E F A C E.

duty in my *present* situation, and have injured my health by an intemperate application to these pleasing literary pursuits, this SECOND Volume, which will be finished in *two* or *three* years, will probably be the *last* publication I shall ever undertake.

E. HARWOOD:

*Bristol, July 1, 1767.*

A N E W




A NEW  
INTRODUCTION  
TO THE  
STUDY AND KNOWLEDGE  
OF THE  
NEW TESTAMENT.



CHAP. I.  
*On the Divine Authority, Credibility, and  
Excellence of the NEW TESTAMENT.*

SECT. I.  
*That there was such a Person as JESUS CHRIST.*

HAT in the *Augustan* age there flourished in *Judea* an extraordinary person called JESUS CHRIST, is a fact better supported and authenticated than that there lived such men as *Cyrus*, *Alexander*, and *Julius Caesar*. For there are *more* historical monuments to attest his exist-

B ence



2      *That there was such a Person* [Chap. I.  
ence and character, and infinitely *more* numerous  
and incontestable vestiges in the *present* day to  
prove that there was such a person as Christ, than  
that there ever lived in past ages such potent Mo-  
narchs and illustrious Conquerors. As certainly  
as Christianity is *now* existing in the world, so cer-  
tainly did its founder and publisher *sometime* exist.  
The public monuments, which the renowned *he-*  
*roes of antiquity* left behind, are long since perished:  
the magnificent palaces they built, the superb  
structures they reared, the grand temples and \*  
mausoleums they erected, the opulent † cities they  
founded, are now no more. Few *remaining* visi-  
ble traces are left of the battles they fought,  
the empires they established, the systems of laws  
they compiled, and the universal devastation they  
once spread around them. The kingdoms, they  
once conquered, have, by the instability of hu-  
man condition, undergone many revolutions, have  
repeatedly lost and repeatedly gained their liber-  
ty, and experienced all those reverses to which  
terrestrial glory is subjected ‡. The curious tra-  
veller

\* Quandoquidem data sunt ipsis quoque fata sepulchris.  
*Juvenal.* Sat. 10. b. 146.

† \_\_\_\_\_ μυσία δ' αἴτη

Νασσατ' ἐποικόμεναι, τὰ μὲν ἢ ποθὶ μεταστάσει

Ἡε καὶ οὐ' πούλις γὰρ ἀπὴν ἐπεννοοῦεν αἰών.

*Apollonii Rhodii Argon.* Lib. 4. v. 275. Edit. 1641.

‡ This is very affectingly described by *Sulpicius* in a con-  
solatory letter to *Cicero*. Ex *Asiâ* rediens, cum ab *Æginâ*  
*Megarum* versus navigarem, coepi regiones circumcirca pro-  
spicere



4      *That there was such a Person* [Chap. I.  
 tient *Nineveh*, *that exceeding great city of three days journey* †. Few are the *present* signatures in *minor Asia* and *India*, of *Alexander's* victorious arms—few are the *standing* memorials in *Gaul* and *Britain* to evince that there was such a person as *Julius Cæsar*, who subdued the *one*, and invaded the *other*. But that there was such a person as **JESUS CHRIST**, who lived, died, and rose again, and founded a *spiritual* empire of religion, the *present* state of all the republics and kingdoms in *Europe* demonstrates. The *customs* and *usages*, that obtain in every nation, necessarily imply a *cause* and *reason*, to which they owe their *origin*, and suppose a *date*, from which they *commenced*. Religious institutions universally regarded, religious solemnities universally celebrated, lead the enquiring mind through *past* ages to the period at which they *began*—to the person or persons who established them—and to the sources from which they flowed. All *national* usages are public monuments of *facts*—and are *standing* proofs, through all successive times, that the persons, whose memory they thus embalm, and the events, whose importance they thus record, once actually existed. We see great numbers of vast  
 and

† The situation of *Nineveh* was sought for in *Lucian's* time. Ζητηθησομεν, ωσαυτη η Νινω. *Lucian*. Επεικ. *Nineveh*, says he, is now totally demolished. There are now no vestiges of it remaining. It is impossible to say where it stood. Η Νινωσ απολωλεν ηδη, και ουδεις εχρος επι λειπων αυτης, ουδ' αν ησθης ζωσ ποτ' ην. *Lucian*, *ibid*.

and populous kingdoms around us, all unanimously agreed in baptizing their offspring in the name of the *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*—in commemorating the *author and finisher of their faith* by the memorials of bread and wine—in worshipping the *Deity* through a *mediator*—in appropriating the *first day* of the week to religious worship—and in solemnizing the *nativity, death, resurrection, and ascension* of the author of their religion. How shall we account for institutions and usages universally received in *Europe*, and universally practised by all the various *churches, sects, and denominations* every where existing? They were not instituted in the *present* age—they did not commence in the times of our *immediate* ancestors—we find we can follow the sacred stream even *beyond* its source into ages, when no such customs prevailed, when there was no such religion as *christianity*, and when *pagan* idolatry and *judaism* universally reigned. As certainly, therefore, as the *present* state of the *Jews*, their tenets, their ceremonious observances, their peculiar customs, their dispersion into all the nations of the world, yet remaining a distinct separate body through all the infinite changes and revolutions that affect kingdoms and communities, is an incontestible proof, that there was such a legislator as *Moses*: so certain is the conclusion from the stated solemn rites, that now universally obtain among all *christian* countries, that there once flourished

6        *That the* EVANGELISTS *have* [Chap. I.  
rished such a law-giver as JESUS CHRIST, who  
founded that *Religion* so many nations have  
espoused, and who instituted those *solemnities* and  
*customs* we see universally observed by all who  
profess his gospel.

## S E C T. II.

*That the Evangelists have written a true history.*

WE have the same reason to believe that  
the Evangelists have given us a true his-  
tory of the life and transactions of JESUS, as we  
have to believe that *Xenophon* and *Plato* have  
given us a faithful and just narrative of the cha-  
racter and doctrines of the excellent *Socrates*.  
The sacred writers were, in every respect, qua-  
lified for giving a real circumstantial detail of  
the life and religion of the person whose memoirs  
they have transmitted down to us. They were  
the select companions and familiar friends of the  
hero of their story. They had free and liberal  
access to him at all times. They attended his  
*public* discourses, and in his moments of *retirement*  
he unboomed his whole soul to them without  
disguise. They were *daily* witnesses of his sincer-  
ity and goodness of heart. They were specta-  
tors of the amazing operations he performed, and  
of the silent unostentatious manner in which he  
performed them. In private he explained to  
them the doctrines of his religion in the most fa-  
miliar endearing converse, and gradually initi-  
ated

ated them into the principles of his gospel, as their *Jewish* prejudices admitted. Some of these writers were his inseparable *attendants*, from the commencement of his public ministry to his death, and could give the world as true and faithful a narrative of his character and instructions, as *Xenophon* was enabled to publish of the life and philosophy of *Socrates*. If *Plato* hath been deemed in every respect qualified to compose an historical account of the behaviour of his divine master in his imprisonment, of the philosophic discourses he addressed to his friends, before he drank the poisonous bowl, as he constantly attended him in those unhappy scenes, was present at those mournful interviews \*—In like manner was the apostle *John* equally fitted for compiling a just and genuine narration of the last consolatory discourses our *Lord* delivered to his dejected followers, a little before his last sufferings, and of the unhappy exit he made, with its attendant circumstances, of which he was a *personal* spectator. The foundation of these things cannot be invalidated without invalidating the *faith of history*. No writers have enjoyed more propitious, few have ever enjoyed *such* favourable opportunities for publishing *just* accounts of per-

B 4

sons

\* Quid dicam de *Socrate*, says *Cicero*, cujus morti illachrymari soleo, *Platonem* legens. *De natura Deorum*, p. 329. Edit. Davies, 1723. See also *Plato's Phædo*, passim. particularly page 311, 312. Edit. Forster. Oxon. 1752. and *Xenophon's Apology*, p. 345. Edit. Oxon. 1741.

sons and things as the *evangelists*. Most of the *Greek* and *Roman* historians lived *long after* the persons they immortalize, and the events they record. The sacred writers commemorate actions they *saw*, discourses they *heard*, persecutions they *supported*, describe characters with which they were familiarly *conversant*, and transactions and scenes in which † *they themselves* were intimately interested. The pages of their history are impressed with every feature of credibility. An artless simplicity characterizes all their writings. Nothing can be farther from vain ostentation and popular applause. No studied arts to dress up a *cunningly devised fable*. No vain declamation *after* any miracle of our *Saviour* they relate. They record these astonishing operations with the same dispassionate coolness, as if they had been common transactions, without that ostentatiousrodomontade, which *impostors* and *enthusiasts* universally employ. They give us a plain unadorned narration of these amazing feats of supernatural power—saying nothing *previously* to raise our expectation, or *after* their performance breaking forth into any exclamation—but leaving the reader to draw the conclusion. The writers of these books are distinguished above all the authors who ever wrote accounts of persons and things, for their sincerity and integrity. *Enthusiasts* and *impostors* never proclaim to the world the *weakness* of their under-

† ——— Quæque *ipse* miserrima vidi,  
Et quorum pars magna fui. *Virg. Æneid. Lib. ii. v. 5.*

understanding, and the *defects* of their character. The *Evangelists* honestly acquaint the reader with the *lowness* of their station, the *indigence* of their circumstances, the *inveteracy* of their national prejudices, their *dulness* of apprehension, their *weakness* of faith, their *ambitious* views, and the warm *contentions* they agitated among themselves. They even tell us how they basely *deserted* their master, by a shameful precipitate flight, when he was seized by his enemies—and that, *after* his crucifixion, they had all again returned to their former secular employments—for ever resigning all the hopes they had once fondly cherished, and abandoning the cause in which they had so long been engaged, notwithstanding all the proofs that had been exhibited, and the conviction they had *before* entertained that JESUS was the *Messiah*, and that his religion was from God. A faithful picture this, held up to the reader, for him to contemplate the true features of the writer's mind. Such men as these were as far from being deceived themselves, as they were incapable of imposing a falsehood upon others. The sacred regard they had for *truth* appears in every thing they relate. They mention, with many affecting circumstances, the obstinate unreasonable incredulity of *one* of their associates—not convinced but by *ocular* and *sensible* demonstration. They might have *concealed* from the world their own faults and follies—or if they had chosen to mention them, might have alledged plausible reasons

to



10 *That the EVANGELISTS have, &c.* [Chap. I.  
to *soften* and *extenuate* them. But they related, without disguise, events and facts just as they happened, and left them to speak their own language. So that to reject a history thus circumstanced, and impeach the veracity of writers furnished with these qualifications for giving the justest accounts of personal characters and transactions, which they enjoyed the best opportunities for accurately observing and knowing, is an affront offered to the reason and understanding of mankind, a solecism against the laws of truth and history; would, with equal reason, lead men to disbelieve every thing related in *Herodotus*, *Thucydides*, *Diodorus Siculus*, *Livy*, and *Tacitus*, to confound all history with fable and fiction, truth with falsehood, and veracity with imposture, and not to credit any thing how well forever attested; that there were such kings as the *Stuarts*, or such places as *Paris* and *Rome*, because we are not indulged with *ocular* conviction of them. The truth of the gospel history rests upon the same basis with the truth of other antient books, and its *pretensions* are to be impartially examined by the same *rules*, by which we judge of the credibility of all other historical monuments. And if we compare the merit of the sacred writers, as *historians*, with that of other writers, we shall be convinced, that they are inferior to none who ever wrote, either with regard to *knowledge of persons*, *acquaintance with facts*, *candour of mind*, and *reverence for truth*.

S E C T.

S E C T. III.

*At the time of CHRIST's appearance the expectation of an illustrious person was general.*

ABOUT the time of our Saviour's appearance, there was an universal expectation of the illustrious advent of a great prince. The attestation of *Suetonius* is very exprefs. "There prevailed over all the *East* an old and constantly received opinion, that it was decreed by the fates, that somebody, about that time, should proceed from *Judæa*, and obtain universal empire. This prediction, says the *historian*, was accomplished in *Vespasian*, but the *Jews* applying it to themselves, excited a rebellion.\*" In almost the very same words *Tacitus*, when mentioning the destruction of *Jerusalem*, cites this prophecy†. "Most of the *Jews* were firmly persuaded that there was an exprefs declaration in the antient books of their priests, that at that very time the *East* should gain the ascendancy, and

\* *Percrebuerat Oriente toto vetus et constans opinis: esse in fatis ut eo tempore Judæâ profecti rerum potirentur. Id de Imperatore Romano, quantum eventu postea patuit, prædictum Judæi ad se trahentes, rebellarunt. Suetonius in Vespas. p. 735. Ed. Var. 8vo.*

† *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum litteris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret Oriens, profectique Judæâ rerum potirentur. Quæ ambages Vespasianum ac Titum prædixerant. Taciti histor. Lib. 5. p. 401. Vol. 3. Dublin, 1730.*

and somebody from *Judæa* acquire universal dominion. And he observes, that this illustrious prediction had taken such warm possession of the common people among the *Jews*, that they were not compelled to resign their dependence on this prophesy but by a series of calamities \*.” The *antient books of the priests*, which this *historian* mentions, were undoubtedly the sacred writings of the Old Testament, which contain these express predictions, which *at that time* excited universal attention. A clear proof this, from the attestation of *pagan* writers, how general and how ardent the expectation was of the speedy advent of the *Messiah*. *Josephus* bears his testimony to the prevalence of this universal persuasion. “What principally excited them, says he, to this war, was an ambiguous oracle found in their sacred writings to this purport.—That *about that time* a certain person should arise from their country and rule over the universe. This prediction they embraced as solely regarding themselves, and many of their wise men were deceived in their application of it—this oracle being accomplished in *Vespasian*, who in *Judæa* was created emperor †.” It appears from the *New Testament*

\* Vulgus, more humanæ cupidinis, sibi tantam factorum magnitudinem interpretati, ne adversis quidem ad vera mutabantur. *Tacitus*, *ibid*.

† Το δε εωραει αυτες μαλιστα πρὸς τον πολεμον, ην χρησημος αμφιβολοις ομοιωσ ει τοις ιεροις ευρημενοι γραμματισιν, ως παρα τον καιρον εκει-

*Testament* how prevalent the expectation at † that time was, that there would very speedily rise an illustrious prince to sway the sceptre of universal monarchy. This was what they expected, who waited for the consolation of Israel, and for redemption in Jerusalem. This was what incited the Jews to flock, with such eager and impatient steps, to John's Baptism, in such prodigious crowds, from all parts of *Judea*. This was what engaged the Clergy to interrogate him with such ardent hopes and vehement earnestness, whether he was the great *Messiah*, the *Christ of God*, whose appearance they so passionately expected. We fondly imagined, said the disciples who were going to *Emmaus*, sunk in dejection and despair, that this was the person that should have redeemed Israel, that is, have redeemed *Judea* from its subjection to the *Romans*, and made *Jerusalem* the seat and center of universal empire. This national persuasion had taken such inveterate possession of their minds, that after his resurrection they were transported to think that now he would certainly

νον, απο της χωρας τις αυται αρχει της οικουμενης. Ταυτο οι μιν ως οικτιον εξελαβον, και πολλοι των σοφων εωλατηθησαν επι της χριστιν. εδηλε δ' αρα επι της Ορισπασιας το λογιον ηγικμονιαν, αποδιχθεισας Ιουδαιας αυτουματοφ. *Josephus de Bello Jud.* p. 1283. Hudson.

† Says *St. Paul*: Now I stand, and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. *Acts* xxvi. 6, 7. For the hope of *Israel* am I bound with this chain. *Ch.* xxviii. 20.

certainly vindicate his country from its servitude to Rome, assume the regal title, and erect a grand and glorious kingdom. *Lord! wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?* These big hopes in the Jewish nation were all kindled, and this general expectation at this period was excited by the predictions of the antient prophets—some of whom had accurately marked the precise time in which this illustrious person would make his appearance. Particularly the period of *Daniel's seventy weeks*, or 490 years, was now complete—which, reckoning from the *seventh* year of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*, who issued the decree to rebuild the temple, to the birth of CHRIST, \* exactly makes the period of years mentioned. No wonder, therefore, that from the calculation of these weeks, in particular, the Jews at that very time should find their expectation of this great event, and wait the appearance of their *Messiah* with all the ardour of the fondest national hopes, indulging their imaginations with the warmest desires of his person and government, and antedating the bliss and felicity of that magnificent empire they should see so soon erected and established.

## S E C T.

\* The character which *Josephus* gives *Daniel*, as a prophet, is just. “He did not merely deliver future predictions, as other prophets, but *exactly* marked the *precise* time in which they would be accomplished.” Ου γαρ τα μελλοντα μονον προφητιων διτελει, καθαρως και δι αλλοι παραφηται, αλλα και καμιν ωριζειν, εις ον ταυτα αποθησεται. *Joseph. ant. Lib. x. ch. xi. § 7. p. 465. Hudson.*

S E C T. IV.

*Many antient prophecies received their accomplishment  
in CHRIST.*

**M**ANY express prophecies clearly prefig-  
nified the coming of **CHRIST**, and re-  
ceived their accomplishment in him. These pre-  
dictions were delivered at *various* times, and in  
*divers* manners, as seemed best to the divine un-  
derstanding, to animate the faith and hopes of  
his distinguished people, and to cheer their minds  
with the happy prospect of that glorious æra.  
A clearer and clearer intimation is given of this  
illustrious period, the most illustrious in the an-  
nals of the world, through all the *intermediate*  
ages from the *creation* to the *redemption* of man-  
kind. “God hath an immensely large progres-  
“ sive scheme, arranged in a regular beautiful  
“ series, by his all-comprehensive mind, consist-  
“ ing of many intermediate parts, before the plot  
“ unravels, and finally winds up into one great  
“ and consistent whole.” *Adam* is not expelled  
from *Paradise*, without the assurance, not obscure-  
ly hinted, of a *Descendant* from him, who in fu-  
ture time should rescue the human race from the  
now incurred penalty of death. The illustrious  
*Patriarchs*, in *successive* time, were divinely as-  
sured, that in *their seed all the nations of the earth*  
*should be blessed*. In *following* ages, *Moses*, under  
a divine afflatus, declared to *Israel*, that God  
would

would raise up for them a prophet like unto him, and solemnly adjured them to embrace and obey him—denouncing the heaviest calamities that would involve their nation, if they rejected this divine messenger. In subsequent times the prophets were authorized and sent, one after another, proclaiming to the Jewish people the glad tidings of this approaching event. Language they exhaust in sublime descriptions of the blessedness of those happy future days—in celebrating the exalted dignity of the *Messiah's* person, the felicity of those who should see him, the empire of righteousness he should establish, and the triumphs his gospel would spread in all the regions of the world. No historical records that could be drawn up forty or fifty years after the crucifixion of CHRIST, could give a more accurate and just account of the person and character of CHRIST, the nature of his religion, the sublimity of his doctrine, the ignominy of his death, the propagation of his gospel, and the destruction of *Jerusalem*, than these prophecies, though delivered five hundred years before the events happened to which they referred. None of the apostles and companions of CHRIST could have composed a more faithful compendious abridgement of the life and death and resurrection of JESUS, and the subsequent promulgation of his gospel, than what is contained in the fifty third chapter of *Isaiab*. No sooner did Philip give the true explication of this very prophecy to the Eunuch,  
who

Sect. V.] *their Accomplishment in CHRIST.* 17

who was reading it, and interrogated him concerning its meaning—and show its exact and sole accomplishment in the life and character of the late JESUS, but he was convinced of the truth of Christianity, and was baptized into the profession of it. The predictions of *Daniel* are so far from being wrapped up in the ambiguity of prophecy, that they seem to be plain historical narrative, and *Porphyry* was sure they were written *after* the event \*. All these *various* prophecies, delivered in *various* revolving periods, concentered in JESUS CHRIST—and the *encreasing* light of them, from age to age, was *like that of the just man*, which shone with *greater and greater* lustre, until the *perfect day* of the Christian dispensation, at last, burst in all its heavenly splendors upon a benighted world.

\* Vid. *Hieron.* Comment. in *Daniel.* passim. *Grotius* de veritate Rel. Christ, Lib. I. § 17. *Scheme of literal prophecy*, p. 149, 150. Dr. *Chandler's* Vindication of *Daniel*, p. 29. See also some excellent remarks on this hypothesis of *Porphyry*, and the *Schematist* in the Bishop of *Lichfield* and *Caventry's* Vindication of his Defence of Christianity, Vol. 1. p. 72.



## S E C T. V.

*The Theology and Morals of the NEW TESTAMENT  
are worthy of GOD.*

THE *Theology and Morals* taught in these books are infinitely worthy of *God*, and perfective of the virtue and happiness of a rational creature. The notions we are taught to form of the *Divinity* are such as are agreeable to the first dictates and principles of natural religion, and which the mind approves as just and rational. The gospel leads us to cherish the most exalted ideas of the peerless majesty of the ONE supreme God, the great creator and governor of the universe, from whom all beings ultimately proceeded, and to whose glory all things ultimately conspire. It represents this Being under the most amiable character, to engage our affection, and attract our love to him.—That we and ours are perpetually under the superintendency of his paternal guardianship and care—that he is ever disposed to direct our enquiries, secure us from error, illuminate our minds, and supply our wants, and that he watches over our best interests and happiness, with all the anxiety and affection that distinguish parental tenderness.—That all rational creatures are the offspring of this good *Being*, who makes the wisest and best provision for their happiness, both in time and eternity—That the providence  
of

of God is *universal*, and extends to every individual in the whole system of beings—That *not a sparrow falls to the ground, or an hair from our head, without the cognizance of the Almighty*—That if God regularly supplies the returning wants of the brute creation, and cloaths a transient flower with such inimitable beauty, much more are rational creatures the objects of his providential care. It leads us to conceive how infinitely dear the human race is to *God*, whose recovery and happiness was the object of his concern, and whose redemption and salvation, a principle of love and compassion for them induced him, by a gracious interposition, to effectuate and secure. It represents him as a *pure spirit*, not to be worshipped with superstitious foppery, splendid decorations, magnificent fabrics, and the pomp and pageantry of proud external shew—but that the worship he requireth, consists in the devotion of the mind, and in the oblation of pure and holy affections. It teaches us, that we are not to conceive of *God* as a Being whom we can prevail with to act contrary to his all-wise intentions, by the dint of teizing and importunity, and by such noisy and clamorous repetitions and extravagancies as the *heathens* used in their worship. The *love of God* it enjoins upon us as the *first and great commandment*—that this great principle should fill and possess all our *powers*, and influence the whole of our conduct—that we should aspire after the nearest conformity to

the *Deity* our imperfection can attain, and imitate him in doing good. It represents him as continually present with us, the spectator of our conduct, and the intimate witness of the principles that actuate us. It teaches us the great duty of resignation to him from every argument and motive that can affect an ingenuous dependent creature, by informing us, that all the dispensations of *God* to us are founded in infinite wisdom and goodness, that the corrections of his rod are salutary, that all afflictions are his messengers, that he knows what allotments are best for us, and will finally prove most perfective of our virtue and happiness. So that piety to *God*, as taught in the *gospel*, is a most amiable, engaging, rational, venerable principle, worthy such a being as man to pay to the *Divinity*—the worship here prescribed hath a noble simplicity in it worthy the *Deity*, who is pure and perfect mind and intelligence, and the adoration, love, and imitation of him here enjoined, are such as greatly exalt the human character, and ennoble and dignify the heart of the rational worshipper.

The *relative* and *social* duties the *gospel* inculcates are such as necessarily result from our natural and civil connections, and such as reason tells us any system of morality, established by the sanction of a divine authority, must contain. Man is a social being, and his happiness is dependent on the virtuous exercise and discharge of the social duties. To give us the complete  
fruition

fruition of this happiness the gospel lays us under the strongest obligations to be good parents, good children, good neighbours, good masters, good servants, good subjects and members of society. It teaches us to consider ourselves as intimately allied to all our *fellow-men* by the endearing bonds of *one common* nature. That in the *love of God and our neighbour* is virtually comprized the *whole* moral law. That we are not to confine our benevolent regards to the narrow circle of our friends, relations, and acquaintance, or solely to that party and community to which we belong, but to diffuse them to the utmost verge of *God's* rational creation. In the *parable* of the *Samaritan* we are taught to look upon every one as our neighbour who is in distress, however he may differ from us in religious sentiments, and whatever unhappy prejudices, on account of nation, party, or opinion, we may have entertained against him. It enjoins strict justice in our dealings with others, to do to others as we ourselves should expect were *we* in *their* circumstances, and *they* in *ours*; to make restitution when we have injured them, and generously to forgive those who have offered us injurious and contumelious usage. It recommends benevolence and charity as the perfection of virtue, the glory of human nature, and the distinguishing badge of its professors. Its tendency is to extirpate from the human bosom envy, pride, malice, revenge, malevolence, and every principle and

passion destructive of the harmony and happiness of human life, and subversive of the noble satisfactions of true self-enjoyment. To such a pitch of perfection does it tend to exalt our nature, and carry human virtue, that it commands us to *love even our enemies*, and instead of revenging an injury, to forgive the authors, and pray that *God* would forgive them. So that the *morality* of the gospel is, in *every* instance, so pure and sublime, so perfective of the harmony and happiness of domestic, social, and civil life, so worthy the great and good parent of all rational beings, that our ideas cannot form any revelation from *God* to contain a more excellent and perfect system of conjugal, parental, filial, relative, social duties, than what the *New Testament* comprizes, and enjoins as the great rule of life, and the standard of our moral behaviour and conduct.

Christianity tends also to improve and exalt human nature, with regard to the exercise of *self-government* and *personal* virtue. Its grand object and aim is to possess us with real goodness of heart, and to give us all the fruition flowing from this invaluable possession. It is the study and ambition of its great author to purify the human heart from every corrupt and corrupting affection, and to make us assert the superiority of the rational and intellectual over the animal and sensual part of our nature; to make reason preside and the inferior appetites obey; to purge the mental eye from the films of vicious prejudices  
and

and passions; and to possess all its powers with the sacred love of holiness and virtue. Temperance, chastity, self-government, moderation in our desires, contentment in our situations, submission to *God* in our afflictions, an unruffled tranquility and mildness of disposition, an unaffected humility, a mutual condescension, an amiable probity and candour of mind, a simplicity of manners, and a conscientious rectitude and integrity of principle, are the great duties it enforces and recommends by every motive and argument, by every insinuating form of address, and by every consideration that can excite us to cultivate and improve what is truly excellent and amiable, to adorn our minds with the noblest attainments, and to pursue and secure the ultimate dignity and perfection of the rational character. Thus is the *morality* of the *gospel* worthy of *God* to publish, and, when shining in a living character, evinces itself to be the supreme glory and felicity of human nature.

The *pagan* systems of *morality* were defective in many capital and essential articles. They wanted, moreover, many arguments and motives to enforce the practice of their duty. The duties taught in these deficient erroneous *systems* had not the explicit sanction of a *divine authority* to seal and ratify them—were not urged from considerations of the omnipresence, fear, and love of *God*, or pressed upon the conscience by arguments derived from the awful solemnities of future retributions.

tributions. The *gospel* is the *only* scheme that hath given *Morality* its final perfection by the additional sanctions which it hath annexed to it, and by all its cogent motives and powerful incentives, which must be irresistible by every serious, ingenuous, and well-disposed mind. What constitutes the supreme excellence and glory of the *gospel* is its pure and perfect morality, tending to make human nature what *God* designed it should be, leading us to the imitation of *God* in his rectitude and holiness, and fitting us for the eternal fruition of him in those sacred mansions, *into which nothing that is impure and defiled* will be admitted. And it is observable, that in order to convey these useful lessons of moral instruction to the human heart through the properest vehicle, and to make the *remembrance* and *impression* of them most durable and permanent, they are not arranged in a methodical systematic form, and detailed in a dry uninteresting series of didactic dulness. These great rules of life are interspersed and interwoven, not without design, into the body of this divine system, sometimes are delivered as short sententious maxims, sometimes are inserted in the *beginning*, *middle*, or *end* of a discourse, sometimes form the *moral* of a parable, sometimes are taught by a familiar example. There is great wisdom in *this* method of conveying instruction to men; for, a short moral *story*, or *fable*, is never forgotten, and virtue, exemplified in *real* life, hath the most powerful attrac-

attractions, and seldom fails to make indelible impressions. The *gospel* hath, therefore every thing in it, with regard to its scheme of *religion* and *morality* to demonstrate it to be the *wisdom of God and the power of God*, to be an explicit revelation from the eternal SOURCE of light and truth, and to have every signature, as to its moral injunctions and the method of communicating and enforcing these instructions, which we can suppose a *divine* hand to impress upon *any* system of duties.

## S E C T. VI.

*The doctrines of the NEW TESTAMENT are presumptive arguments of its being a divine revelation.*

THE *assurances* and *discoveries* this volume comprizes are presumptive evidences of its being a divine revelation. What system of *human* philosophy ever taught so clearly the doctrine of an *universal* and *particular* providence, comprehending at once the boundless *immensity* of the universe, yet superintending every *distinct* separate being in the whole scope of the creation. A generous mind cannot but detest the *impiety*, and lament the *ignorance*, of the *heathens* when they talk on this subject. The *Epicureans* made the greatest banter and ridicule of the notion of *God's* governing the world. They thought the little  
affairs



affairs of mortals were a great deal too mean and despicable for the notice and inspection of the immortal *Gods*. The vast fabric of the world, it seems, was formed by a fortuitous concurrence of atoms, and is governed and preserved by an original establishment of cause and effect. They taught that the *Gods* were perpetually reclining on the clouds in supine inactive ease, and that their tranquillity was not discomposed by the government of the world, business, which they thought altogether unworthy of a *God*. The *Stoics*, who were the most zealous assertors of the doctrine of a divine providence, made it only extend to some *detached* parts, not to the whole *community* of nature. Their *wise man* had its protection, but the untaught *vulgar* neither enjoyed, nor deserved to enjoy, its interpositions. Some taught that there was a general providence, that governed the several species and orders of being, and maintained them in their beauty and harmony, but that it did not extend to the individuals of those orders. They thought the *Gods* superintended matters of the *greatest* importance, such as placing a governor over a nation, and conserving the order of a whole *collective body* of men, but that they did not stoop to the low concerns of *private families* and *particular persons*. Alas! how far are such principles as these from administering consolation! How dark and gloomy is such a scheme of religion which is thus defective in one of the most capital articles! If I am  
not

not an object of *God's* providence, as these Philosophers cannot assure me I am, what principles can I have to support me in an hour of adversity and pain! Or of what avail is it to me that God governs the *whole* universe, if I am exempted from his *particular* protection! How uncomfortable are these tenets when they are compared with that scheme of providence so clearly taught in the divine pages of our blessed religion, which assures us that we and all our interests are under the perpetual cognisance and direction of infinite wisdom, power, and goodness.

The assurance of the divine *placability*, and his *remission* of atrocious guilt upon repentance is another grateful doctrine in favour of the divinity of our religion. By consulting the books which are written by those who only enjoyed the *light of reason* we find how perplexed and embarrassed they were in their reasonings on this article, how far *repentance* would avail to reinstate persons in the divine favour! An *heathen* prince is introduced in the prophet *Micah*, overwhelmed with a penetrating sense of his atrocious crimes, distracted with the dire thought that the divine judgments were deservedly impending o'er his devoted head, anxious to avert *God's* anger, dubious in what way he can appease it, at last breaking forth into this passionate exclamation, the language of conscious guilt and gloomy despair—*Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before*  
*him*

*him with burnt offerings, with calves of an year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my Soul?* This is the language of uninstructed, uncultivated reason under these unhappy circumstances. These are the sentiments of a guilty gloomy mind, ominously foreboding the wretchedness of its future destiny—a stranger to that transporting assurance in which we *Christians* are so happy, the total *absolution* of all past guilt upon genuine repentance and reformation of life. *How far* the divine forgiveness would, or would not, extend, was a question in the satisfactory decision of which the *beatbens* were greatly embarrassed. Some asserted that great enormities often repeated and persisted in for the major part of human life, left a total inaptitude and inability upon the mind for virtuous practice and virtuous pleasure, and consequently would never be forgiven. Others, as *Plato* and *Virgil*, declared, that though men repented of their vices in this life, yet it was necessary they should undergo a\* severe discipline on account of them in

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\* Non tamen omne malum miseris, nec funditus omnes  
 Corporeæ excedunt pestes: penitusque necesse est  
 Multa diu concreta modis inolescere miris.  
 Ergo exercentur pænis, veterumque malorum  
 Supplicia expendant. Aliæ panduntur inanes  
 Suspensæ ad ventos: aliis sub gurgite vasto  
 Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni.

*Æneid. Lib. vi. v. 736.*

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an intermediate state of correction—be hung up to the *winds* to take out the moral stains their souls had contracted, or disciplined in the *fire* to purge and purify all the remaining blemishes, and when, after these wholesome *temporary* severities, they came forth, from this *windy* and *fiery* trial, pure and *immaculate*, they were then admitted to the complete blessedness of the *Elysian* fields. They were led to infer these inflictions in this intermediate state, because they saw true *penitents* in *this* life, suffer for their *former* vices long after they had renounced and abandoned them. How far the divine clemency would extend—whether the *whole* collective sum of vice would all at once be expunged, or only *part* of it—whether, in particular, those vices would be totally forgiven which had prematurely impaired and destroyed the noble fabric of God the human *body*, or had totally debilitated the *mind* for virtue, were subjects which human reason found great difficulty to determine. It is, therefore, a favourable presumption that the christian religion hath the infinitely good and merciful *God* for its author, which publishes to every sincere penitent the absolute entire remission of his former transgressions, how heinous, atrocious and aggravated soever; and assures him, upon his deliberate amendment and reformation, of the clemency, favour and acceptance of *God*. My *reader* will have a full conception of the happiness of such a grateful assurance as this, and consequently  
how

how worthy it is of the compassionate father of the universe to proclaim to the world in *any* revelation he is pleased to give to mankind, if for one moment he consider what a scene of melancholy distress and gloom the present life would be, without a full persuasion of the divine forgiveness of our numerous crimes, and how dismal and ominous our prospects must be into futurity. To be placed in a state where by the frailty of our nature, the imperfection of our virtue, and the weakness of our best resolutions, we often contract guilt, wound our consciences, and incur the divine displeasure, and yet be deprived of the full assurance of the divine placability, not have one cheerful ray of light satisfactorily to console the mind, and dispel its cruel doubts concerning its extent! But under the *gospel* scheme all these perplexing difficulties vanish. *Ten thousand talents*, the greatest sum of guilt supposable, are at once generously forgiven, and the immense debt for ever cancelled.

With every rational intelligent person it must also greatly recommend this religion, when claiming its original from *God*, to consider the *divine assistance* it offers to human virtue. One of the greatest encouragements that any scheme of religion can offer to its votaries with regard to the successful practice of morality, is the full persuasion that if we study to cultivate and improve our rational intellectual powers, and to acquire the pleasures and habits of virtue, we shall certainly

tainly enjoy the *divine* concurrence. That *God* will not suffer my imperfect virtue to struggle, *alone*, through the dangerous paths of life, that he will not abandon me in an hour of adversity and sorrow to derive all my consolation from myself, and suffer me to enjoy no ray of light and hope but what my labouring mind can give me, is an assurance that infuses into the human heart the noblest conscious satisfactions. In this fundamental article the system of *heathen* morals was greatly defective. Some of their *wise* men taught the world to expect no *divine* assistances in the practice of virtue. The virtuous man, it seems, had \* no occasion for them, and the low illiterate vulgar were infinitely unworthy the expence of divine interpositions. Man must derive virtue from *himself*. Man was self-sufficient to his *own* felicity. Their *wise* and *perfect* man, for they talk as extravagantly of *perfection* as some *modern* enthusiasts have done, had no such things as wants and defects about him—he was equal to *Jupiter* himself in the all-sufficiency and consummate happiness of his nature. The religion of

*Jesus*

\* Det vitam, det opes ; æquum mihi animum ipse parabo. *Horat. Lib. 1. Epist. 18. v. 112.* Virtutem nemo unquam acceptam Deo retulit. Nimirum rectè: propter virtutem enim jure laudamur ; quod non contingeret, si id donum à Deo, non à nobis haberemus.—Num quis, quòd bonus vir esset, gratias Deo egit unquam?—Judicium hoc omnium mortalium est fortunam à Deo petendam, à se ipso fundendam esse virtutem. *Cicero de Nat. Deor. Lib. 3. §. 36.*  
p. 335, 336. *Edit. Davis, 1723.*

*Jesus* teaches us to form more *modest* and *diffident*, and consequently more *rational* and *just*, notions of human nature, and shows us our intimate dependence on the Deity for all the functions and enjoyments of *natural* and *moral* life. This divine *philosophy* teaches us, what the first principles and dictates of *reason* teach us, that we are not self-sufficient to our own virtue and to our own happiness, that we are frail and indigent, surrounded with temptations, and exposed to sorrows and sufferings innumerable, that in these exigencies *God* will not desert a sincere mind to the weak efforts of its own imperfect virtue, but will, by his gracious concurrence, guard it from vice and error, illuminate it with heavenly light, kindle devout affections, invigorate its powers, suggest holy resolutions, and by his divine agency and co-operation confirm and establish it in the principles and practice of virtue. Such a doctrine is worthy of *God*, and worthy to form a necessary article in any religion which claims a divine original. Such an assurance as this is a most powerful incentive to the resolution of amendment and to the practice of all virtue, and must have all its weight upon the ingenuity of every rational being. For if in the undertaking of any work of considerable labour and difficulty we esteem it a great happiness to be assured that we shall be assisted in the execution of it by wise and benevolent persons, whose aid and endeavours concurring with our own  
will

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will ensure success, how much more must it incite and encourage us to engage and persevere in a religious life, to be assured, that *God* will co-operate with our virtuous resolutions, enable us to surmount every impediment, carry us through the difficulties and dangers that infest our path, confirm us in the habits of piety and holiness, and finally crown us with eternal life and blessedness. Such is the strength of *christian* principles, and the perfection of *christian* doctrine.

The clear revelation of a *future state* is a very strong argument in favour of the *divine* authority and credibility of the *christian* religion. Concerning a *future state* we find a great variety of *opinions* among those who had only the light of reason to aid their enquiries. The most learned and eminent *philosophers* the *heathen* world ever produced, express themselves, in general, with great hesitation and diffidence on this momentous subject\*.

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\* The concluding words of the *Apology of Socrates* are affectingly expressive of this *Great* man's uncertainty. *And now it is time to depart—I to death, you to life—but whether I or you are returning to greater happiness, God only knows!* Αλλα γαρ ήδη ώρα απειναι, εμοι μιν, απθανουμινω, υμιν δε, ζωσσομενοις. οσοτεροι δε ημων ερχονται εως αμεινον παγαγμα, αδηλον παντι πλην η τω θεω. *Platon. Apol. Edit. 2. Forster Oxon. p. 122.* *Cicero* tells us that while he was perusing *Plato's* discourse on the immortality of the soul his arguments convinced him, but no sooner did he lay aside the book and carefully revolve those arguments in his mind, but all his former conviction



A great part of them thought the grave terminated all our existence †. Others made a future state consist in pleasures altogether unworthy of a rational and immortal soul. Some of the most distinguished among them believed that such imperfect beings as we are would not be admitted immediately after death into the regions of purity and happiness, but first previously go through a necessary process of ‡ rigorous correction and discipline, before they could be worthily introduced into the pure and holy seats of *Elysium*. They were likewise in great uncertainty with regard to the nature of this state, and the happiness men would enjoy in it. Heroes and conquerors, some imagined, would there amuse themselves in marshalling and arranging visionary armies—Kings and

viction vanished. Nescio quomodo, dum lego, assentior: cum posui librum, & mecum ipse de immortalitate animorum coepi cogitare, assensio illa omnis elabitur. *Cicero. Tuscul. quæst. p. 22. Lib. 1. §. 11. Edit. Davis Cantab. 1723.*

† Mortem ærumnarum requiem, non cruciatum, esse; eam cuncta mortalium mala dissolvere; ultra neque curæ neque gaudii locum esse. These are *Cæsar's* words in *Sallust. p. 120*. In answer to them *Cato* says: Bene et compositè C. *Cæsar* paulo ante in hoc ordine de vitâ et morte differuit, credo falsa existimans ea quæ de inferis memorantur. *Sallust. p. 128. Edit. Var. Amst. 1690.*

‡ Supplicia expendant. Aliæ panduntur inanes  
 Suspensæ ad ventos: aliis sub gurgite vasto  
 Infectum eluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni:  
 Quisque suos patimur manes. Exinde per amplum  
 Mittimur *Elysium*, et pauci læta arva tenemus.

*Virgil En. vi, 736.*

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 and *Princes* in governing and regulating ideal  
 states—*lawgivers* and *philosophers* in compiling  
 systems of laws for imaginary republics—*poets,*  
*painters, musicians,* in cultivating their respective  
 arts—and *all* orders and classes of mortals, in those  
 happy mansions amuse and recreate themselves  
 in following the *same* occupations and studies, in  
 which they once delighted\*. Others imagined  
 this happiness would not be strictly *eternal,* but  
 that these spirits, after a flight of many ages,  
 would be brought down to *Lethe's* stream—drink  
 its oblivious waters—animate a mortal body—  
 and for ever lose all remembrance of what they  
 once were†. What ideal, visionary, fantastic,

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- \* Pars in gramineis exercent membra palæstris,  
 Contendunt ludo, et fulvâ lætantur arenâ:  
 Pars pedibus plaudunt choreas et carmina dicunt.  
 Necnon Tereicius longâ cum veste sacerdos  
 Obloquitur numeris septem discrimina vocum:  
 Jamque eadem digitis, jam pectine pulsat eburno.  
 Hic genus antiquum Teucrici, pulcherrima proles,  
 Magnanimi herôes, nati melioribus annis:  
 Ilus Assaracusque, et Trojæ Dardanus auctor.  
 Arma procul, currusque virum miratur inanes.  
 Stant terrâ defixæ hastæ, passimque soluti  
 Per campos pascuntur equi: quæ gratia currum  
 Armorumque fuit vivis, quæ cura nitentes  
 Pascere equos, eadem sequitur tellure repostos.

*Virgil Æn.* vi. 642.

- † Has omnes, ubi mille rotam volvere per annos  
 Lethæum ad flumen Deus evocat agmine magno,  
 Scilicet *immemores* supera ut convexa revifant.

*Æn.* vi, 748,

— Animæ

contemptible reveries are these—yet indulged by the *wisest and best* men that pagan ages ever produced. O how different is *that state* of immortality after which the *gospel* teaches its professors to aspire! With what clearness and certainty doth it exhibit it before us in all its grand and striking importance! The vail, that *once* interposed, is now drawn aside, and the glories of a blessed futurity spread before us in one vast, various, and boundless prospect. What *beatben* virtue always wanted to give it its just weight and efficacy with mankind, our Saviour hath given it. Every system of religious and moral truths must be defective in a very essential point, that either makes *no* mention of a future state, or mentions it in *obscure, dubious, and ambiguous* terms. *Christianity* is the perfection of all religion, for by *bringing immortality to light* it hath completely given all those additional sanctions to the practice of virtue, which all *former* systems of philosophy wanted.

————— Animæ quibus altera fato  
Corpora debentur, Lethæi ad fluminis undam  
Securos latices et longa oblivia potant.

*Virgil Æn. vi. 714.*

S E C T.

## S E C T. VII.

*The positive institutions of the NEW TESTAMENT an  
argument of its divine truth.*

**I**T is also much to the honour of *Christianity* that its *positive rites* are so few, and so obvious to the meanest capacities. Christianity is not a religion that is loaded with superstitious ornaments and ostentatious decorations. It is not like the *pagan* superstition, or like the *mosaic* institution, full of external parade and pageantry, displaying a pompous glitter and glare of embellishment and show—gilded superb temples fuming with steams of incense, and filled with odoriferous gales wafted from lofty altars smoking with aromatic spices. The *church*, which *Christ* erected, is not like the spacious magnificent domes in *antient* times, filled with pompous sacrifices, with hecatombs of victims—hundreds of priests employed, some in dedicating the animal, some in slaying it according to the forms prescribed, others in \* inspecting the entrails, and prognosticating happy or unhappy events to the votary, others in burning parts of the victim upon the sacred altar, and placating the resentment of their offended *Deities* by a thousand wild and en-

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thusiastic

\* ————— Pecudumque reclusis  
Pectoribus inhians, spirantia consulit exta.

*Virg. Æn. iv. v. 63.*

thufiaftic extravagancies †. A beautiful elegant fimplicity of worfhip characterizes the *gofpel*. It is a religion that is divested of all vain pomp and pageantry, requiring from its votaries no facrifice but that of a good heart and a good life. The *gofpel* is like its *founder*, plain and unaffected—hath, like its *author*, nothing *external* to dazzle and astonish—it recommends itfelf, as he did, by its internal native goodnefs, excellence and worth. The christian's *God* is a *ſpirit*, and his true accepted worfhippers are thoſe who worfhip him with the devotion of the *mind*. The christian's *God* requires not to be placated by coſtly oblations, expenſive offerings and clouds of fragrant perfume, as the *Gods* the antient *beatbens* worfhipped, and the *Gods* which are now worfhipped in the populous countries of *India*, *Tartary*, and *Cbina*, or which are now worfhipped in the immense regions of *Africa* and the extenſive tracts of *America*, require from their votaries.

The

† Thus we read that the priefts of *Baal* cried aloud, and cut themſelves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them. 1 *Kings*, chap. 18, 28. The ſame extravagancies were aſted in the rites of *Cybele*, of *Bellona*, and of *Iſis*. Non minoris infaniæ judicanda ſunt publica illa ſacra; quorum alia ſunt matris Deûm, in quibus homines ſuis ipſi virilibus litant: amputato enim ſexu, nec viros ſe nec fæminas faciunt: Alia Virtutis; quam eandem Bellonam vocant: in quibus ipſi ſacerdotes non alieno, ſed ſuo cruore ſacrificant. Sæctis namque humeris, et utraque manu diſtriçtos gladios exerentes, currunt, efferantur, infaniunt—Sacerdotes ejus [Iſidos] deglabrato corpore ſua peçtora tundunt. *Lactantius*, *Edit. Sparke Oxon.* 94, 95.

The religion of *Jesus* is stripped of all this fantastical ornament. *The yoke* of this mild institution is easy, and its burden is light. The positive rites it ordains are only four, *Baptism, the Lord's supper, the institution of the sabbath, and worshipping God through a mediator.* The first is a simple initiation into the society of its professors by the expressive emblem of water, which denotes purity. The second is a plain symbolical commemoration of the death of its founder, on the basis of which event its whole fabric is supported. The third institution is every way fitted to keep alive in our minds a constant animating sense of our obligations to God and Christ, and of our duty to ourselves and others, by calling our minds from the distraction of secular cares, and possessing them with an affecting sense of their everlasting interests. The fourth appointment tends to inspire us with the most venerable ideas of the majesty and goodness of God, and of the benevolence and love of that exalted being, through whom we are permitted this free and liberal access to the *Deity.* These instituted rites and appointments conspire to add a suitable dignity and glory to the christian religion, recommend it to our acceptance as a most mild and merciful dispensation, easy in its performance, worthy the spiritual nature and perfections of the Divinity, and containing the best moral means for accomplishing the wisest and noblest ends.

## S E C T. VIII.

*Miracles a proof of the divine authority of the* NEW  
T E S T A M E N T.

**T**HE *miracles* related in this *Book* are so circum-  
 stanced as to preclude all reasonable doubt  
 of their reality, and add the strongest confirma-  
 tion to its divine authority. They are such opera-  
 tions as transcend all *human* power to effect them,  
 or any supposed art of *magic* and *imposture* to per-  
 form. Curing the most inveterate disorders by  
 a single *touch*, or a single *word*, and *instantaneously*  
 restoring those whose maladies had baffled all the  
 power of medicine, to perfect health in a *mo-*  
*ment*. Giving *sight* to the *born blind*—expelling  
 obstinate *leprosy*—making those who \* *wanted* a  
 limb, *perfect*—those who were *bowed double*,  
 straight—those who shook with the *palsy*, ro-  
 bust—nerving the *withered* arm with strength—  
 restoring the *insane* to *reason*, and the *dead* to *life*.  
 These supernatural *operations* were not wrought  
 in a *few* instances—with *hesitation* and *diffidence*—  
 but *every* week and *every* day were witnesses to  
 numerous instances of them, for a successive se-  
 ries

\* So *κωλους* signifies. It is a different word from *χωλους*,  
 and has a different signification. Both these words occur,  
 Matth. xv. 31. *κωλους υγιεις, χωλους περιπατητας*. He made  
 those who *wanted* a limb, perfect, and the lame to walk.  
 What an amazing instance of divine power was this! How  
 astonishing to the spectators! That this is the meaning of  
*κωλλο*, see Matth. xviii. 8. Mark ix. 43.

*ries* of years † — so that all suspicion of human management, compact and juggle, was for ever precluded. Nor were these astonishing actions performed in *sequestered* cells and solitudes, cautiously shunning the light of truth, and the scrutiny of officious enquirers. They were exhibited in the face of *day*—before infinite *multitudes*— and submitted, without any parade and ostentation, to their calm and deliberate examination. The scene of them was laid in the *villages, towns,* and *metropolis* of *Judæa*—they were wrought on the most *public* theatre, before immense numbers that crowded from all parts—*friends* and *enemies* indiscriminately. Thousands attended who would have rejoiced to have detected the imposture of them, and scrutinized them, and the persons on whom they were wrought, with the nicest subtilty and strictest accuracy, to explore the falsehood and fallacy of them. The *persons* who had experienced these miraculous effects, and had been cured of blindness, of the leprosy, of the palsy, or raised from the dead, lived *many years afterwards* the *public* monuments of them—carrying about

† On the subject of *miracles* I refer my reader with pleasure to the ingenious Mr. *Adams*' answer to *David Hume's Essay on Miracles*, to the *Criterion*, printed by *Millar*, 1754, and to a late masterly performance written by the learned and judicious *Dr. Campbell* of *Aberdeen*, entitled, *A Dissertation on Miracles*, containing an examination of the principles advanced by *David Hume*, Esq; of which excellent work a *second* Edition is just published.



42 *Miracles a proof of the authority of* [Chap. I.  
about with them, in their *own* persons, the full conviction of these amazing operations. They were, moreover, wrought in professed attestation to the *divine* mission and character of those by whom they were performed, and in confirmation of the doctrine they delivered. They were not *vainly* and *ostentatiously* lavished to satisfy an *idle* curiosity, and to catch the vain breath of popular applause. The *power* with which they were endowed was not employed in performing useless tricks and dexterous feats of idle skill, to amuse and astonish a gazing populace. They were all exerted in works of *humanity* and *beneficence*—in freeing the diseased from long and incurable distempers, and restoring them to ease and enjoyment. Neither were they wrought in confirmation of the *popular religion*—to exalt a *national establishment*, and aggrandize the country that professed it—but in direct *opposition* to it, and *contrary* to all the inveterate prejudices and warm prepossessions of the *Illustrious* and *Great*, as well as the whole body of the *people*. The *adversaries*, also, of this religion, who lived *in*, or *near* these times, never once attempted to *invalidate* or *disprove* them—they allowed, they were *forced* to allow their *reality*. The *facts* they did not deny, they laboured to account for them from the art of *magic*, and a pretended confederacy and compact with *Beelzebub* the prince of the *demons*. Another circumstance too, which confirms the truth and validity of these miracles is,  
that

that great numbers of persons, who were spectators of them, were convinced by them, notwithstanding the strongest prejudices they had formed against the religion these attested — and in consequence of their conviction, embraced the gospel from the most indubitable persuasion of its truth, inviolably adhered to the profession of it, and sealed their belief of it with their blood. The persons, moreover, who deliver to us the accounts of these miracles, who were eye-witnesses of them, who were endowed with a power of effecting them, and were enabled to communicate this power to *others*, were men of the greatest *probity* and *integrity*, gave all the proofs and evidences that rational beings can do, of their conscientious sincerity, persisted in their testimony to the divine authority and truth of the gospel with inflexible constancy, and met persecution and death itself, in all the horrors with which *bigotry* and superstition could cloath them, with a heroism and greatness of soul that human philosophy never equalled.

## S E C T. IX.

*The prophecies of CHRIST a confirmation of the truth of the NEW TESTAMENT.*

**T**HE *predictions* of JESUS CHRIST add the strongest confirmation to the *divinity* of his mission, and the *truth* of his religion. It is evident to every one who reads the life of CHRIST  
in

in the four Evangelists, with what circumstantial exactness he *predicted* his own sufferings and death, his being treacherously delivered up into the hands of those who thirsted for his blood, by *one* of those he had selected to be his familiar friends and companions, by an act of the basest perfidy; his being apprehended, abused with every wanton insult, mangled with scourges, spit upon, nailed to a \* cross, and the *third* day after this ignominious, tragical exit, *raised* to life. He mentioned, by name, the *person* who would perpetrate this atrocious deed, long before *he himself* had formed his infernal purpose. He *predicted* the most † *improbable* thing in the world, at *that* time, That a number of illiterate *Galileans* and obscure *fishermen* should be brought before *kings* and *princes*, and deliver apologies in defence of *their religion* before the most *illustrious* and *dignified* personages. Upon *Peter's* openly declaring his full persuasion that he was the *Messiah*, he declared, that upon him, as a firm and immoveable  
*rock*

\* Ad doctrinam vero ejus quia revincebantur magistri primoresque Judæorum, ita exasperabantur, maximè quod ad eum ingens multitudo defleceret, ut postremo oblatum Pontio Pilato Syriam tunc ex parte Romanâ procuranti violentiâ suffragiorum in crucem dedi sibi extorserint. *Predixerat* et ipse *ita facturos*. Tertullian, p. 22. Rigalt. Paris, 1641.

† This is well represented by *Origen*. Και τις γε ουκ αν θαυμασαι το προειρημενον, το, Εστι ηγουμενος δε και βασιλις αρχησι δε ικειν ημω εις μαρτυριον αυτοις και τοις εθνεσι. *Origen contra Celsum*, p. 68. Cantab. 1677.

rock, he would erect the Christian church, and *the gates of hell should not prevail against it*. He *predicted* what we have seen fully verified, though at the *time* it was spoken, it would almost have exceeded all the power of credulity to have believed such an event *possible*, That a religion taught by a *poor* and *despised* Jew, attended by a *poor* and *despised* company of illiterate peasants, and formed in the bosom of one of the most *poor* and *despised* countries in the world, should overturn the *two* greatest religious *establishments* the sun ever beheld, and spread its triumphs to the utmost boundaries of the world. His disciples, to whom he disclosed his heart, who were the companions of his private retirements, whose affections were knit to him by the firmest ties, and who made the strongest protestations, that though they should be devoted to certain death with him, they would never abandon him—notwithstanding all their repeated asseverations, dictated at *that* time by the greatest sincerity and love, yet he plainly told them he *knew* they would *all* desert him by a precipitate flight. He expressly predicted his own resurrection after lying in the grave *three* days—his going into *Galilee* after that event—his ascension into heaven—and the subsequent effusion of the holy spirit upon them, to endow them with miraculous gifts and spiritual powers, and to enable them to propagate his religion in the world. He foretold the *exit* which *Peter* would make, and that *John* would *survive* the destruction of *Jerusalem*. But the most illustrious

lustrious of our Saviour's prophecies, and which will remain an everlasting *monument*, through all *future* ages, of the *truth* of the Christian religion, is his minute and circumstantial prediction of the *destruction of Jerusalem*, the total subversion of their civil and ecclesiastical polity, and their *consequent* dispersion into all nations. In all the annals of history there is not a more remarkable passage than *this prophecy* of our Saviour, concerning the miserable fate of *Jerusalem*, and the tragical catastrophe of his country. Though delivered *forty* years before the dire event, yet it presents the reader with a minute historical detail of the future invasion of *Judæa* by the *Romans*—the *rapidity* with which this was done, described by lightning darting from one extremity of heaven to the other, at one vast sweep, in a moment—the providential *escape* of the *Christians* from these overwhelming calamities—their besieging *Jerusalem*, casting up a trench, drawing lines of circumvallation around it—the dreadful *famine* that raged in the city, the mutual massacres and assassinations of the citizens—the total *demolition* of the temple—the dreadful *ruin* of *Jerusalem*—and the miserable captivity of the *Jews*. Declaring at the same time he spoke this prediction—a declaration the most improbable to be verified in so *short* a time, as the *Jews* were *then* happy in the friendship and protection of *Rome*—that that *very generation* would live to see his words fully verified. And he who carefully reads this most distinguished prophecy of our Lord  
and

and afterwards diligently compares it with the account which the *Jewish historian* hath left us of the siege and destruction of *Jerusalem*, would be disposed to believe that *Josephus* was a *Christian*, and, as he was a *spectator* of these tragical events, that he published a faithful historical *commentary* on our *Lord's prophecy*, for the confirmation of all ages in the truth of the *Christian religion* \*.

## S E C T. X.

*Other historical facts collateral evidences of the truth of the gospel history.*

THE public theatre on which these scenes were transacted, and the public historical facts that are mentioned and appealed to in these writings, are a very great confirmation of the credibility and truth of the gospel history. The *public transactions* which the authors of these books record, and which might easily have been refuted and disproved, had they been *false*, are the following. *Herod the Great* was the sovereign of *Judea*, when this illustrious person was ushered into the world. A number of *eastern Philosophers* came to *Jerusalem*, desiring to be informed of the place

\* Well might *Justin Martyr* say, Ως και εκ τωτων ημεις, ως εφη, τον Ιησυν και των μετ' αυτον γενησομενων προγνωστην επισταμειθα, και εξ αλλων δε πολλων ων προειπαι γενησισθαι τοις πιστευουσ και ομολογουσιν αυτου Χριστον. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 103. Edit. Jebb. Again, p. 100. Α γαρ προλαβων μελλεν γενεσθαι εν ονοματι αυτου εφη, ταυτα οφει και ενεργεια οραματ τελευμηνα. See also page 249 of the same Edition.

place that would be honoured with his birth. Herod, upon this, convened the *Sanhedrim*, where, in public council, its learned members deliberated upon this question; the bloody *massacre* of all the infants in *Bethlehem*. *Archelaus*, Herod's successor, is mentioned. *Augustus* then filled the imperial throne. *Quirinius* was governor of *Syria*. *Judæa* a province of *Rome*. An *edit* was issued by the emperor, that all *Judæa* should be enrolled. *Simeon* taking the infant in his arms, publicly in the temple, and in a flood of transport, before all the people, passionately wishing for his own immediate dissolution, now his eyes had seen the salvation of *Israel*, and the light of the world. His public conversation with the *Rabbies* in the temple, when he was twelve years old. The commencement of *John's* public ministry is fixed in the fifteenth year of *Tiberius*, *Pontius Pilate* being then governor of *Judæa*, *Herod*, tetrarch of *Galilee*, his brother *Philip*, of *Ituræa* and *Trachonitis*, *Lysanias* of *Abilenè*, and *Annas* and *Caiphas*, high priests. The incestuous marriage of *Herod* with *Herodias*, his brother *Philip's* wife; the imprisonment of *John* for his remonstrances against this adulterous commerce; the decollation of the Baptist, and the circumstances of it are specified. The trial, condemnation, and crucifixion of CHRIST, facts of the most public nature, are recorded. The darkness at mid-day, from twelve to three in the afternoon, which enveloped the whole land of *Judæa*, and an historical account of which, published in the very age in which it happened,

happened, would have been an insult upon the world if it had been false, is a *public appeal* to all mankind, which was never contradicted\*. The written accounts of these princes, who were contemporaries with *Christ*, and of these † public transactions which happened in his time, are an incontestable proof of the historical truth of these records, and an uncontrovertible monument of the veracity and faith of this history. It was a *public theatre* on which our Lord's actions were displayed. In the face of day — at the most frequented festivals — in the capital — in the temple — *before Herod and Pontius Pilate witnessing a good confession.* Add to this that the ac-

E count

\* Eodem momento dies medium orbem signante sole subducta est; deliquium utique putaverunt, qui id quoque super Christo prædicatum non scierunt: ratione non deprehensa, negaverunt: et tamen eum mundi casum *relatum in arcanis vestris* habetis. *Tertullian.* Edit. Rigaltii Paris 1641, p. 22. B. *Irenæus* lays great stress upon this public phenomenon. Eum occasum solis, qui crucifixo eo fuit ab horâ sextâ, p. 363. Again, p. 366. Argumenta autem quæ prædicta sunt dominicæ passionis, in *nullo alio* facta sunt. Neque enim Sol medio die occidit aliquo de veteribus mortuo. *Irenæus*, Edit. Grabe.

† The primitive Christians in their *Apologies* frequently appeal to the *acts* of *Quirinius* and of *Pilate*. Κομη δὲ τις ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ χωρᾷ Ἰουδαίων, ἀπερχοῦσα τῆς τριακόντακαιντῆς Ἰεροσολυμῶν, ἐν ἣ ἑγενήθη Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὡς καὶ μαθεῖν δυνασθε ἐκ τῶν ἀπογραφῶν τῶν γενομένων ἐπι Κυρηναίῃ τε ὑμῶν τε ἐν Ἰουδαίᾳ πρώτῃ γενομένη ἐπι-γραφή. *Justin Martyr*, p. 75. Καὶ ταῦτα ὅτι γέγονε δυνασθε μαθεῖν ἐκ τῶν ἐπι Ποπίου Πιλάτου γενομένων ἀκτῶν. p. 76. Edit. Paris, 1636. And again, p. 84. Ὅτι τε ταῦτα ἐγράφησαν, ἐκ τῶν ἐπι Ποπίου Πιλάτου γενομένων αὐτῶ μαθεῖν δυνασθε.



counts of these *transactions* were published very near the times in which they *happened*, but were never shown to be inaccurate and false.

I have confined myself to the national *acts* and illustrious *persons*, that in the writings of the *four evangelists only*, appear on the public stage—but if we include the *external* evidences of this kind to the truth of the gospel history, recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*, they form such a *cloud of witnesses* to the truth of our religion as must one would think be irresistible to every attentive and intelligent mind.

#### S E C T. XI.

*The age in which Christianity made its appearance was learned and inquisitive.*

**I**T was a providential circumstance for the honour and credit of the Christian religion, that the *age*, in which it was promulgated, was not barbarous and uncivilized. Had *Christianity* been nursed in times when the god of dulness and darkness held universal empire—when *Gothic* and *Vandalian* ignorance reigned triumphant—when erudition and learning, and a taste for knowledge and enquiry were held in universal disrepute and contempt—in *future more enlightened* ages, it might have been decried as a cunningly devised fable and fiction, that owed its origin and establishment to nothing but the fabulous times in which it first made its appearance, and to the credulity of an ignorant group of kings, and

and priests, and people. But the *Augustan*, was the most learned and polite age the world ever saw. The love of arts and sciences, and literature, was the universal passion. The many celebrated poets, historians, and philosophers, who then flourished, had diffused an ambition for mental improvement, and circulated a taste for literature among all orders and classes of men in all the provinces of that vast empire. They vied with each other, who could produce the most perfect piece, who could carry philosophy and morals to their highest perfection, and cultivate the powers of the human mind with most success. Another happy circumstance was, that † *peace* had now extended her olive o'er the world—on which account, in the *long reign* of *Augustus*, a literary intercommunity was established through all the provinces of his immense dominions, and the most favourable opportunity afforded for the successful study of philosophy and the investigation of truth. This happy distinguished æra of universal concord and peace, so favourable to the *musæ*, saw genius produce all its stores, the human mind display all her ample powers, and the noblest monument of fame begun and finished, that ever adorned the republic of letters. And it is to the everlasting honour of *Christianity* that

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it

† Quando pax lætior ? Diffusa in Orientis Occidentisque tractus, et quicquid meridiano aut septentrione finitur, pax Augusta per omnes terrarum orbis angulos a latrociniorum metu servat immunes. *Vell. Paterculus*, Lib. ii. Cap. 126.

it rose, flourished, and established itself in this learned, inquisitive, and discerning age, amidst that universal passion, which *then* prevailed, for philosophy and knowledge, and made a most rapid and amazing progress through that immense empire to its remotest limits, at a *time* when the world was in its most *civilized* state, and in an *age* that was more *universally* distinguished for science and erudition than any one *prior* or *subsequent* period the world ever saw.\*

## S E C T. XII.

*The testimony of adversaries and hearers to the principal facts in the NEW TESTAMENT.*

THE truth of the principal *facts* recorded in *this history* is corroborated by the testimony of *adversaries* and *hearers*. To the innocence of our *Saviour's* character we have an illustrious attestation in Judas—and it is not without its just *intended* significance, that the *evangelists* have related this remarkable circumstance—who, when he saw his master *capitally* condemned, an event he never expected, rushed like one distracted into the temple, threw down the wages of corruption before the priests and rulers, and with great emotion, *publicly* told them, he had betrayed INNOCENT blood. This is the testimony of

\* See some excellent remarks in the very learned Dr. Law's Theory of Religion, p. 126. 4th Edit. 1759.

of an enemy, and ought much to be regarded. It hath great moment also with regard to his irreproachable character, that his judge when sitting on the tribunal, *took water* and publicly *washed his hands* before all the multitude, solemnly declaring, *I am innocent of the blood of this just person.* *Suetonius* mentions him by † name, and says that *Claudius* expelled from Rome those who adhered to his cause. *Tacitus* records the *progress* the *Christian* religion had made—the violent death its founder had suffered—that he flourished under the reign of *Tiberius*—that *Pilate* was then procurator of *Judea*—and that the original author of this profession was *Christ*.\* The excellent *Pliny*, who lived in *Trejan's* reign and attained some of the highest honours in the state, in one of his *letters* to the emperor, *written* not above *forty* years after the death of *St. Paul*, exhibits before us an amiable picture of the doctrine of the *Christians*, and the purity and sanctity of their manners. “It was their custom, says he, to meet before light, on a stated day, and mutually to recite an hymn to Christ as a God, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purpose of any thing wicked, but on the contrary, never to be guilty of any fraud, of any theft, or of

† Judæos impulsore *Christo* assidue tumultuantes Romæ expulit. *Suetonius* Var. p. 544. 8<sup>o</sup>.

\* Auctor nominis ejus *Christus*, qui *Tiberio* imperitante, per procuratorem *Pontium Pilatum* supplicio affectus erat. *Taciti* *Annal.* Lib. xv. § 44. p. 286, Vol. 2. Edit. *Dublin*.

54 *Testimony of heathens to the principal* [Chap. I.]  
 any debauchery, never to falsify their word, never to deny a trust when they were called upon to deliver it up. After which it was their custom to separate, and then meet again to eat in common an harmless meal."† The same honourable testimony *Celsus* gives of the *Christians*, and acknowledges, *that there were modest, temperate, intelligent persons among them.*\* The same celebrated deist, who lived in the *second* century, speaks of the author of the Christian religion as having lived but a ‡ *very few* years before *bis* time, and mentions the principal facts in the gospel history relative to the birth, life, doctrine, miracles, death and resurrection of *Christ* — declaring he had copied  
 the

† *Essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire, carmen- que Christo quasi Deo dicere secum invicem : seque sacra- mento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent : quibus peractis morem sibi discedendi fuisse, rursusque coeundi ad capiendum cibum, promiscuum tamen et innoxium. Plinii Epist. Lib. x. Epist. 97, p. 724. Edit. Var. 1669. Compare Tertulliani Apol. p. 2, 3. Edit. Rigalt. There is a curious book, which I wish it was in my power to rescue from oblivion, containing an illustration of this celebrated passage of Pliny and that referred to in Tertullian, entitled, Justi Henningi Böhmeri Dissertationes juris ecclesiastici antiqui ad Plinium Secundum et Tertullianum. Lipsiæ 1711. 8°.*

\* *Καιτοι εδ' αυτοις ιδιωτας μοις φησιν υπο τη λογη προσηχθαι τη κατω Ιουδ. θεοσιβειζ. ομολογει γαρ και ματρις και πατρικαις και συνετας τυαις — ειαι εν αυτοις. Origen contra Celsum, Lib. i. p. 22. Edit. Cantab. 1677.*

‡ *Αυτον [Χριστον] προ πα.υ ολιγων ετων της διδασκαλιας ταυτης καθιγχεσθαι, p. 21.*

the account from the writings of the evangelists. He quotes these books, and makes extracts from them, as being composed by the disciples and companions of Jesus, and under the *names* they now bear. He acknowledges the *miracles* which Jesus wrought, by which he engaged great multitudes to adhere to him as the Messiah—that they were *really* performed he never disputes—he attributes them to our *Saviour's* profound skill in the *magic art*, which he learned in *Egypt*.\* What testimony, says † *Eusebius*, would you deem more valid and credible than the attestation of an *enemy*—? but *such* an attestation you have on record in these words, in the third book of *Porphyry's* treatise entitled, *Of the Philosophy from Oracles*—‡ “The greatness of that divine power he possessed is clearly seen, by every lover of truth, from its own energy. *Oracles concerning Christ*. What I am going to relate, says he, may by some perhaps be deemed a prediction. The *gods* openly avowed

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*Christ*

\* Απεπλάσε δε τι ἕτερον, συγκατατιθεμένων μὲν πως ταῖς παραδοξοῖς δυνάμεσιν, ὡς Ἰησοῦς ἐποίησεν, ἐν αἷς τῆς πολλῆς ἐπίστασιν ἀκολουθεῖν αὐτῷ ὡς Χριστῷ. διαβαλλεῖν δ' αὐτὰς ἑλομένων ὡς ἀπὸ μαγικῆς, καὶ οὐ θεῖα δυνάμει γεννημένης· φησὶ γὰρ “αὐτοὶ σκοτιοὶ τραφέντα μισθαρῆσαντα, εἰς Αἴγυπτον, δυνάμεων τιῶν πειραθέντα, ἐκίβησαν ἐλθεῖν, Θεοὶ δὲ ἐκείνας τὰς δυνάμεις ταύτας ἀπαργευσόμεθα.” p. 30.

† Τις δ' αὖ γενεῖτο σοὶ τῶν ἀξιοπιστῶν ὁμολογῶν μᾶλλον τῆς τῆ καθ' ἡμῶν πολεμικῆς γραφῆς κ. τ. λ. *Eusebius Demonstrat. Evang. Lib. iii. p. 86.* Edit. Rob. Stephan. Paris 1545.

‡ These are *Porphyry's* words.

— 56 *Testimony of heathens to the principal* [Chap. I.  
*Christ* to be a most pious person, and an immortal  
being, and make honourable mention of his me-  
mory. And concerning those, who proposed to  
the oracle this question, *Whether Christ was a God*  
—the answer it returned, he says, was the follow-  
ing — \* That the soul, after the dissolution of  
the body, is immortal, every one, who is distin-  
guished for wisdom knows; but the soul of *that*  
*man*, meaning *Christ*, is most eminently adorned  
with piety. You see, therefore, continues *Por-*  
*phyry*, that the oracles acknowledge *Christ* to be  
a very pious person, and that *his* soul, equally  
with those of other good persons, obtained an  
happy immortality after death—*which soul* the  
injudicious *Christians* worship. To those, who en-  
quired of the oracle, Why *Christ* suffered such a  
violent death—It returned this response—† The  
*body* of the pious is always exposed to trivial in-  
juries, but their *souls* repose in the celestial man-  
sions. After citing these oracles, *Porphyry* adds  
—*Christ*, therefore, was a pious person, and was  
conveyed into the heavens, as other pious men,  
wherefore thou oughtest not to cast any aspersions  
on his character, but generously to commiserate  
the folly of men. These, says *Eusebius*, are the  
words

\* Οτι μη θανατη ψυχη μετα σωμα προβαινει,  
Γιγνωσκει σοφην τετιμημενη. αλλα γε ψυχη  
Απερ ευσεβη προσφερις ατη εστιν εκεινη. *ibid.*

† Σωμα μη αδρανησιν βασαισι αιει προσεβληται.  
ψυχη δ ευσεβων εις ουρανοιον πεδονιζει. p. 87. *Ejusdem Editi-*  
*onis R. Stephan.*

words of *Porphyry*. Was *Christ* therefore a deceiver?—Let even the favourable expressions of one of *your own* writers disgust you: for you have, in this passage, the *public testimony* of one of *your own party*, that our Saviour Jesus Christ was no impostor, no forcerer, but a devout, a most virtuous, and wise man, and an inhabitant of the heavenly seats.” *Julian*, who flourished about the middle of the *fourth* century, produces no *counter evidence* in refutation of the truth of the gospel history, tho’ he mentions the names of all the *four evangelists*—never attempts to disprove the *authenticity* of their writings—or to deny the reality of our Saviour’s miracles. *Jesus* did nothing, says he, worthy fame, unless any can imagine that curing the lame and blind, and exorcising dæmons in the villages of *Bethsaida* and *Bethany* are some of the greatest works\*—and the *greatest works* they certainly are, infinitely surpassing all human power and abilities, and demonstrating the person who performs such supernatural operations, to be *divine*. He acknowledges that *Jesus* had a sovereign power over impure spirits—that he walked on the surface of the deep—and expelled dæmons.† That the power of working miracles and effecting su-  
per-

\* Ο δὲ Ἰησοῦς—οὐδὲν ἀκοῆς ἀξίον, εἰ μὴ τὶς οὐταί τας κούλλας καὶ τυφλὰς ἰασασθαι, καὶ δαιμονῶν τὰς ἐφορῆζειν ἐν Βηθσαιδᾷ καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ τῆς Κωμῆς, τῶν μεγίστων ἔργων εἶναι. Vid. Cyrill. contra Julian. Lib. vi. p. 191. Edit. Spanheim.

† Ἰησοῦς δὲ ὁ τοῖς πνεύμασιν ἐπιτατῶν, καὶ ἐὰδίζω, ἐπὶ τῆς θαλάσσης, καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια ἐξέλαντων. Lib. vi. p. 213. Lipsæ 1696.



58 *Testimony of heathens to the principal* [Chap. I.  
 pernatural cures was enjoyed by *Jesus Christ*, the  
*Jews* never deny — but ridiculously attribute the  
 possession of this secret to the *right pronunciation of*  
*the ineffable name*, which, they say, he clandestinely  
 stole out of the temple † — or, they impute it to  
 the *magic art*, which he learned in \* *Egypt*, and  
 exercised with greater dexterity than any other  
 impostor ever did. *Lampridius* informs us that  
*Alexander Severus* would have erected a temple in  
 honour of *Jesus Christ*, had not some of the *Senators*  
 remonstrated against it. † In *Nero's* time,  
 which

‡ The story is in *Toledoth Jesu*, and is as follows. “ In  
 that time there was *Shemmaphoreth* (the ineffable name of  
 God) engraved in the holy house (temple) upon the founda-  
 tion-stone. For as king *David* dug the foundation, he  
 found there a stone over the mouth of the abyss, and upon  
 it was engraved the name; and he took it up and deposited  
 it in the holy of holies — And he [*Jesus*] entered the tem-  
 ple, and learned the name of the holy letters, and writ the  
 name upon paper, and pronounced the name that it should  
 not hurt him, and he cut open his flesh, and hid the paper  
 with the name. See *Dr. Sharpe's* first Argument, p. 33, 34.

\* The son of *Satda* [*Jesus Christ*] brought with him  
 magic arts from *Egypt*, inserting them in his flesh. *Dr.*  
*Sharpe's* first Argument p. 41. not.

† *August. Histor. Tom. i. Cap. 29. 43. Edit. Var.*  
*Tertullian* informs us that *Pilate* transmitted accounts of  
 these transactions to the emperor *Tiberius*. He and *Justin*  
*Martyr* appeal to these accounts. *Ea omnia super Christo*  
*Pilato, et ipse jam pro sua conscientia Christianus, Cæ-*  
*sari tunc Tiberio nunciavit. Tertullian Edit. Rigalt. 1641.*  
*p. 22. Tertullian* also acquaints us, that *Tiberius*, upon re-  
 ceiving from *Judæa*, *Pilate's* account of this divine person,  
 moved

which was a little more than *thirty* years after our *Saviour's* crucifixion, *Tacitus* says there was a † great multitude of *Christians* in Rome—and he gives a circumstantial and shocking account of the ingenious torments, and excruciating deaths, to which they were \* subjected. Even *Lucian* bears his testimony to the influence the gospel principles had in making its professors despise death, and says that *Christ*, an illustrious person, who was crucified in Palestine, was the original publisher of this new religion. ‡ Thus all the inveterate enemies of *Christianity* unite in giving an honourable suffrage to the character of *Christ*,

to

moved the senate for enrolling him among the gods. *Tiberius* ergo, cujus tempore nomen Christianum in seculum intravit, annunciata sibi ex Syriâ Palestinâ, quæ illic veritatem illius divinitatis revelârant, detulit ad senatum cum prærogativâ suffragii sui. *ibid.* p. 6. This proposal of the emperor the senate rejected, *ibid.* And *Suetonius* informs us that some decrees were passed in the senate that were contrary to his private sentiments. Quædam adversus sententiam suam decerni ne questus quidem est. *Suetonius* in *Tib.* p. 364. Edit. Var. 8°. L. Bat. 1662.

† Multitudo ingens. *Taciti Annal.* 15. 2 Vol. p. 286. Dublin.

\* Pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contesti, laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammati, atque ubi defecisset dies in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. *ibid.*

‡ Καταφρονεσι τε θανάτου—Τον μεγαλ εκεινον επι σθένει ανθρωπων, τον εν Παλαιστινη απασκαλεσαντες δεντα, ότι καινη ταυτην τιλετην εισηγαγεν εις τον οισον. *Lucian. Mors Peregrini.*

to the reality of his miracles, the authenticity of the writings of the evangelists, and to the rapid progress of the Christian religion.

## S E C T. XIII.

*The gospel is enforced by the most venerable authority.*

THE *authority* also, by which this system of religion and morals is enforced, is the most venerable, and was absolutely necessary to give its injunctions their proper weight and moment with mankind. When our *Saviour* had ended his sermon on the mount, it is observed, *that the multitude was astonished at his doctrine*; and the reason of *this effect* is alledged—because he *taught* them as one having *authority*, cloathed with a divine commission, and solemnly addressing them in the name and authority of the great God. It is not enough to crowd together in a volume a number of detached maxims and moral sentiments, to be the rule and guide of life, and from various authors to compile a number of sayings and reflections into a *body of theology and morals*—all this is useless and insignificant, if this system, at last, is not recommended by an *authority* proper to give it its due weight and validity as the standard of human conduct. For does the saying of such a philosopher stamp it with any authority? Is it enough to enforce it, as an universal principle of conduct, that such an eminent Sage said so  
and

and so, when others, as wise, said and did the very *contrary*? All the didactic precepts and lessons of useful instruction the wise ancients ever delivered, in a great measure lose their efficacy, in the reformation of mankind; by their having no other *authority* to seal and sanctify them but what was merely *human*.\* *Socrates* was so convinced of this, that he passionately wishes for a future messenger from heaven, authorized with proper credentials, to teach men morality with greater efficacy than he had done.† A well attested divine authority was greatly wanting to give the dogmata of human philosophy their proper seal and sanction. The *Platonic*, the *Peripatetic*, the *Stoic*, the *Epicurean* philosophy widely differed. Where must the *common* people in *heathen* countries go for instruction? Their wise and eminent Sages were divided—their assertions and names did

\* See this argument most excellently represented and largely discussed by the great *Mr. Locke*, in his *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion* Vol. 2d of his works p. 575—579. fourth edition.

† *Αναγκασιον ουν εστι περιμνησθαι εως αν τις μαθη ως δεσποσει θεος και επου ανθρωπων διακτισθαι. ΑΛΚ. ποτε ουν παρηγαγε ο χροσος ουτος, ω Σωκρατες; και τις ο παιδευσαν; ηδιστα γαρ αν μοι δοκα ειδειν τι τον ανθρωπον τις εστι. ΣΩΚ. Ουτος εστι ω μεγαλι περι σου. Platonis Alcib. ii. p. 150. Vol 2. Edit. Serrani. A declaration similar to this, concerning the reasonableness of believing that the gods would descend from heaven to instruct mankind, *Aristotle* is reported to have made a little before his death. Vid. Fabricij, Bibl. Gr. Tom. ii. Lib. 3. p. 166. Bayle's Dict. Art. Aristotle, and Stanley. Vit. Phil.*

did not give their respective systems any proper validity. Some of their systems were atheistical and detestable: some, visionary and romantic. What power had these philosophers to reclaim and reform the world? † What authority could they plead, except the authority of their speculative dreams and ideal reveries, to enforce their doctrines, and gain them a *general* reception among men? What good effects did the philosophy of *Socrates, Plato, Cicero, and Antoninus* produce in the lives and morals of the *bulk* of mankind? \* Did they ever make converts of a *single* country, or a *single* village. We find that most of the *philosophers* and *lawgivers* of antiquity were obliged to have recourse to *pious frauds*, and to *falsify*

† This is well represented by *Theophilus Antiocenus*. Τὸ δὲ ωφελήσει ἢ κατ' αὐτὸ, παιδεία; τί τοὺς λοιπὸν φιλοσόφους τὰ δόγματα κενῶν; ἵνα μὴ τὸν ἀριθμὸν αὐτῶν καταλείψω πολλῶν οὕτων. ταῦτα δὲ φαίμεν εἰς τὸ παιδεῖξαι τὴν ἀναφελὴ καὶ ἀθιοὺς διανοίας αὐτῶν. δοξῆς γὰρ κενῆς καὶ ματαίῃς πάντες αὐτοὶ ἐκασθῆντες, οὐτὲ αὐτὸ τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐγνώσαν, οὐτὲ μὲν ἄλλῃς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀληθειᾶν παρετρέψαντο. καὶ γὰρ ἂν εἴπωσαν αὐτὰ ἐλεγχοί αὐτῆς, ἢ ἀσυμφωνὰ εἰρηκασί· καὶ τὰ ἰδίᾳ δόγματα οἱ πολλοὺς αὐτῶν κατέλυσαν. οὐ γὰρ ἀλλήλους μόνον ἀνέτρεψαν ἀλλ' ἤδη τῆς καὶ τὰ ἑαυτῶν δόγματα ἀκυρὰ ἐποίησαν. ἦγε ἢ δοξᾶ αὐτῶν εἰς ἀτιμίαν καὶ μωρίαν ἐχώρησεν. *Theophilus ad Autolyicum Lib. iii. p. 118. Paris 1636.*

\* The *different* effects which the doctrine of *Socrates* and *Jesus* produced in the world are excellently remarked by *Justin Martyr*. Εὐκρίεται μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲς ἐπιστεῦθη ὑπὲρ τούτου τοῦ δόγματός· ἀσθησκέν· Χριστῷ δὲ — οὐ φιλοσοφοὶ οὐδὲ φιλολογοὶ μόνον ἐπιστήσαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ χειρότεχνοι, καὶ πάντεως ἰδιώται, καὶ δοξῆς καὶ φόβου καὶ θάνατου κατήφισθησαντες. p. 125. *Edits Thirlby.*

*fifty and counterfeit the authority of some of their deities, in order to give their laws and injunctions a proper moment and weight with the people.\**

How

\* The following is a very distinguished passage in *Diodorus Siculus*. "The first person, the *Egyptians* say, who persuaded them to use written laws, and to regulate their lives by them, was *Mneves*, a man of an exalted soul, and eminently distinguished for his public spirit. He pretended that *Mercury* delivered these laws to him, as what would prove of the greatest advantage to them. In the same manner, among the Greeks, they say *Minos* acted in *Crete*, and *Lycurgus* among the *Lacedemonians*: the former said he received his laws from *Jupiter*, the latter from *Apollo*. In several other countries also it is said this same stratagem was devised, and was the source of the greatest utility to those who believed it. For, among the *Arimaspi*, they relate that *Zathraustes* pretended that a good demon communicated to him his laws: and in like manner *Zamolxis*, among the *Getæ*, who believed the immortality of the soul, feigned the authority of *Vesta*; and, among the *Jews*, *Moses* pretended that their God, who is called *Iao*, delivered to him his body of laws. Whether it was that they thought a scheme which would strike the common people with wonder and divine awe, would be most likely to benefit them; or, that they believed the multitude would be more obedient, when they regarded the majesty and omnipotence of those Powers who were said to have dictated their laws." Πιστοι φασι πρωτων εγγυηστωις νομοις χηρσασθι. κ. τ. λ. *Diodorus Siculus*, vol. i. p. 105. Edit. Wesseling. Amsl. 1746. In like manner the Roman lawgiver *Numa Pompilius*, to secure to his regulations, the greater authority and reverence among his subjects, pretended he received them from the *Nymph Egeria*, in those various interviews with which the goddess honoured him. Πιστωσθαι φασιν εγω τε *Νουμε* τον περι της *Ηγερας* λογον, ινα ρησι αυτω περιεχων

64 *The life of Christ a recommendation* [Chap. II]

How infinitely, therefore, hath the *Christian religion* the advantage of these motley heterogeneous bodies of *human* Philosophy, which is sealed with the signet of the great God, and ratified and confirmed by the most venerable and sacred authority of him who came from heaven invested with a *divine commission* to reform and instruct the world.

S E C T. XIV.

*The life of Christ a great recommendation of the Christian religion.*

**A** Great recommendation of *Christianity* is, the *life* and *character* of its *author*. The very best instructions that ever were delivered, and the noblest system of religious and moral duty that ever was compiled, must necessarily fall into contempt, if the *life* of the author be a satire upon his own *precepts*. If a public teacher do not exemplify, in his own practice, the virtues he enjoins upon others, both his person and his system will universally and most deservedly be despised. Of what avail is ingenious speculation, and a judicious

ἵνα τα θεῖα δεδοτες, καὶ προσκυμῶς δεχόμενοι τοὺς ἰσ' αὐτῶν τιθεμένους νόμους, ὡς παρὰ θεῶν κομιζόμενοι, λάβειν δὲ αὐτοὶ τούτων μίσησιν ἀποφαινοσιν ἐκ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν παραδειγμάτων, ζήλωτην γεομεῖοι τῆς τῆ Μιῶ τῆ Κρήτῃ, καὶ τῆς Λυκεργε τοῦ Λακεδαιμονίου σοφίας· ὃν ἰμὲν ἠλλήτης εἶπε γε εἶσθαι τὴ Διῷ—ὃ δὲ Λυκεργῷ εἰς Δελφούς ἀφικνεμένη ἔπει τῆ Απολλωνῷ εἶπε διδασκίσθαι τῆ ἰσομοθῆσι. *Dion. Halicarn.* Antiq. Rom. Vol. I. p. 118. Edit. Oxon Hudson. 1704.

ous body of didactic rules, if they do not shine in the life and conversation of the moralist. *Cicero's* complaint is well known. "Who is there of all the philosophers, says he, whose practical principles, temper, and conduct, were conformable to right reason? Who ever regarded his philosophy as a law and rule of life, and not rather as an ostentation of his ability and learning? Who ever obeyed his own instructions, and made his precepts the model of his own daily practice. So far from this, that many of them were slaves to lust, many to pride, many to avarice." \* And if

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the

\* Quotus enim quisque philosophorum invenitur, qui sit ita moratus, ita animo ac vitâ constitutus, ut ratio postulat? qui disciplinam suam non ostentationem scientiæ, sed legem vitæ putet? qui obtemperet sibi ipsi, et decretis suis pareat? Videre licet—alios pecuniæ cupidos, gloriæ nonnullos, multos libidinum servos. *Tusculan. Quæst. Lib. ii. p. 116* Edit. Davis, Cantab. 1723. Of the *immoral lives of the philosophers*, we have the same affecting complaints in *other* writers. The excellent *Quintilian* says of them. Non enim virtute ac studiis, ut haberentur philosophi, laborabant, sed vultum et tristitiam et dissentientem à cæteris habitum pessimis moribus prætendebant. *Instit. Orat. Proem. p. 5.* Edit. Var. 1665. Ex omnibus, qui nunc se philosophos vocant vix unum aut alterum invenies tantâ sinceritate, tantâ veritate. *Plinii Epist. Lib. iii. Ep. 11. p. 189* Edit. Var. 1669. Τῶν καθ' ἡμᾶς φιλοσοφῶν τὰς πλείους ἰδεῖν ἐστὶ λεγόντας μὲν τὰ καλλίστα, πρᾶττοντας δὲ τὰ χεῖριστα. *Diodorus Siculus, Vol. ii. p. 552.* Edit. Wesseling. Amst. 1746. Τί δ' οὐχὶ καὶ περὶ συμποτητικῶν πειρομένοι γραφεῖν, ἀσελγείας καὶ πορνείας, καὶ μοιχείας ἐδίδαξαν ἐπιτελεῖσθαι, ἐπὶ μὴν καὶ τὰς συγγενῆς ἀρετνοκοιτίας ἐισηγήσαντο. *Theoph. ad Autolyicum, Lib. iii. p. 118.* Edit. Paris. Leno et

phi-



the lives of these professed instructors were thus immoral and profligate, their rules and directions, however solemnly delivered, or pleasingly written, must necessarily lose all their influence. It is to the glory of the *Christian religion* that the *life* of its author was a faithful commentary upon his own *instructions*. His temper and disposition were the brightest illustration of his own precepts. He exhibited to the world, in his *own character*, what an amiable and divine scheme *Christianity* is, when it hath taken full possession of the heart, the source of action, and actuates all the principles and affections of the human mind. It was said of the excellent *Socrates*, that his whole life was but one uniform series of devotion to God.† With much greater justice our *Saviour* deserves this honourable eulogy. The sun, in his daily course, saw him indefatigably employed in working beneficent miracles and delivering divine instructions, and the stars, in the silent watches, beheld him spend the whole night in \* prayer to God!

Often

philosophus et censor. *Tertulliani* Apol. p. 35, Rigalt.—  
De virtute locuti Clunem agitant. — *Juvenal.* Satyr. xi. 20.  
— Castigas turpia, cum sis Inter Socraticos notissima fof-  
fa Cinados. v. 9. Philosophorum supercilia contemnimus,  
ques corruptores et adulteros novimus et tyrannos, et semper  
adversus sua vitia facundos: says the eloquent *Minucius Fe-  
lix*, p. 185. Edit. Davis, Cantab. 1712.

† See *Maximus Tyrius* Dissert. xxx. p. 390. Edit. Davis.

\* Many learned men think that this passage, *Luke* vi. 12. should be understood, not of the *act*, but of the *place* of prayer.

Often he would, in his daily benevolent offices, and amidst his pious labours, pour forth a fervent ejaculation to God. *Father, I thank thee, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes: even so, Father, it seemed good in thy sight!* His philanthropy and love of mankind was without bounds. Studying their best interests, dispelling their errors, freeing their bodies from painful maladies, administering consolation, and communicating useful and saving instruction, was the supreme ambition and sole felicity of his life. It was his divine character—it is comprized in a few words—*he went about doing good.* The lives of many of the *Jewish* prophets and the *Pagan* philosophers, are, through the common imperfection of frail humanity, chequered with many unhappy defects. But the life of *Christ* is a perfect copy of the great Divine original, sullied with no blemish, stained with no fault and foible, pure and sacred as heaven, spotless and immaculate as innocence, breathing nothing but devotion to God, and benevolence to man. He was actuated by no *ambition*, but the

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god-

prayer, and that the Evangelist only intended to inform us that our Saviour spent the whole night in an *Oratory*. Such places of worship the Jews had both in their *own* and *other* countries. *Τας προσηυχας ποιισαντες προς τη θαλασση κατα το πατριον εθνος.* *Jesephi Antiq.* Lib. xiv. c. 10. §. 24. *Hudson.* *Τας προσηυχας αφηνεντο.* They had destroyed the *Oratories.* *Philo.* 2 Vol. p. 535. *Mangey.* So also *Juvenal.* *Ede ubi confitas, in qua te quaero profuecuba.* *Satyr.* iii.

godlike *ambition* of doing good: he aspired after no *distinction*, but the *distinction* of being useful: he desired to establish no *empire*, but the *empire* of truth and righteousness. Humble in his deportment, meek and modest in his converse, entering the poorest cottage to free a poor *parent, child, or servant*, from an incurable distemper. Infinitely above the meanness of pride, and the low groveling passions of worldly glory and ostentation. Destitute of the comforts and elegancies of life, and content to be so. Never murmuring and repining at the dispensations of providence, but cheerfully acquiescing in the divine allotments. Calm and serene under the most abusive and contumelious treatment, when he was reviled, not reviling again, when he suffered, not threatening, but committing himself to HIM who judgeth righteously. Ever expressing the tenderest pity and the most generous commiseration for the frailties and imperfections of our nature, pouring out his sympathetic sorrow for the hardness of men's hearts, their aversion to truth, and their indisposedness to consult and secure their everlasting welfare. Tearing off the hypocrite's mask with holy rage and indignation, and exhibiting to the world, in his own person, a sincerity, candour, and greatness of soul, illustrious beyond all example. Thus our *Saviour* lived—illustriously distinguished for his dutiful subjection to his earthly parents—distinguished for his love and affection

tion to his native \* country, which he strove to reclaim and convert, and expressed his generous grief, in a flood of tears, that their obstinacy had defeated all his designs—distinguished for private friendship, having selected one from among the rest of his companions, of a temper and disposition, one may suppose, most similar to his own, whom he honoured with a peculiar affection—distinguished for his heavenly mindedness, for his love of mankind, for his contempt of glory and grandeur, for his ambition to do good, for self-government, moderation, affability, meekness, patience, and every virtue that can adorn human nature and form a perfect character—Nor did this consummate perfection of character merely shine forth in the *common* scenes of public and private life, but in his last sufferings and death they appear most conspicuous. View him in the garden † of Gethsemane, with the full immediate prospect of the impending storm—human nature overwhelmed at the approaching scenes, and feeling all the horrors of mental agony and dejection—sweating, ‡ as it were, great drops of blood—yet

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in

\* Διδασκων των Ισραηλ, κη τηλικαυτα τερατα κη σημεια ποιων, εκρηυξε, κη υπωρηγαωθησιν αυτος. *Barnabæ Epistola*, p. 22. Edit. Oxon. 1685.

† For the *Causes* which probably conspired to produce our Saviour's *Agony*, I refer my reader to the late Dr. *Benson's* life of Christ, and to Mr. *Moore's* pamphlet on this subject.

‡ Observe, this is only a *simile* or *comparison* of the Evangelist to *illustrate* the *profuseness* of our Saviour's sweat.

in this dire distress reposing a perfect submission in God, and expressing this submission in terms, which no heart can read without great emotion. *Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done!* Patiently submitting to be apprehended by a band of ruffians, to be dragged before an unjust tribunal, to be abused with every cruel insult, to be hoodwinked, spit upon, arrayed in robes of mock royalty, torn with scourges, confined in a prison, nailed to a\* cross between two thieves. Amidst all this scene  
not

Ἐγένετο δὲ ἰδρῶς αὐτοῦ ὩΣΕΙ θρομβοὶ αἱμαῖ. Luke. xxii. 44. Just as all the *four* Evangelists, intending to give their reader a just idea of the *rapid descent* of the holy Spirit upon Christ, after his baptism, *compares* it to the *velocity* of a dove ὩΣΕΙ περιστερῶν — not that the holy Spirit assumed the *shape* of a dove, but descended and alighted upon our Lord with the *rapidity* with which a dove darts from the sky to the earth, *Probably* there was *now* the *same* appearance as at the day of Pentecost. The word θρομβοὶ is very beautiful and expressive. It does not occur in the New Testament, but only in *this* passage. It signifies *large globules*, thick and clammy clots of gore or sweat, pitch, milk, &c. *Hesychius* explains θρομβῶ by αἷμα παχύ, πικρῶν ὡς βουνοί. Πόλιμι αἷμα τῷ ὑδατὶ θρομβοὺς ἀσφῶλι ἀναδίδοι πολλοὺς. Mixed with the water the river sendeth up many large clots of bitumen. *Herodotus*. Clio. p. 386 Vol. i. Edit. Glasg. Ὡς γαλακτὶ θρομβὸν αἱμαῖ σπασαί. *Aeschylus* Chœph 531. Θρομβῶ δ' ἐμξεν αἱμαῖ. φίλον γαλα, *ibid*, 544. Αἱμαῖ θρομβοὺς μελανὰς: large black globules of blood. *Hippocrates*, Lib. iii. §. 19, Edit. Linden.

\* Remarkable are the words of the divine *Plato*. One can hardly forbear calling them *prophetic*. Οὐλο δισκαίμῳ ὁ δμκαῖ μωστρησῖαι, γρεβλωσῖαι, δεδησῖαι, μακαυθησῖαι τῷ φθαλμῷ

not uttering one repining thought, sustaining all the ignominy, insult, and torture, that the malice of his persecutors could inflict, with serene unmoved composure, perfectly resigned to God, and voluntarily surrendering his his life a victim in the cause of truth, and sealing his religion with his blood. Cheerfully embracing *such* a death with all its horrors, if by *such* a death he could give a public witness to the truth, and by spontaneously sacrificing his life in the cause of his religion, thereby give a public sanction to its veracity, and stamp that divine system, he had been authorized to teach men, with its complete and ultimate confirmation. Such an amiable, consistent, and absolutely perfect character, conjoined with such a fair and faultless model of *Theology* and *Ethics*, mutually illustrate each other, and reflect the greatest splendour and dignity upon each other, with which we can suppose any rules of human duty to come recommended and enforced †.

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S E C T.

μω' τελειων, παρ' α κακα παθων, αναγκηδιελευθισται. A good man with these dispositions will be mangled with scourges, will be put to the torture, be imprisoned, have his eyes burnt out, and, after supporting all these sufferings, will at last be crucified. *Plato de Repub. Lib. ii. Tom. ii. p. 361, Edit. Serrani. Tom. 1. p. 96, Edit. Massey, Cantab. 1713.*

† The following testimony to the character of Christ is the testimony of a *Deist*. "In Christ we have an example of a quiet and peaceable spirit, of a becoming modesty and sobriety; just and honest, upright and sincere, and, above all,

## S E C T. XV.

*The character of the Apostles a strong presumptive argument of the truth of Christianity.*

THE *character* of the Apostles and first publishers of the gospel is a strong presumptive argument of the truth of the Christian revelation. If the writings of an author be the faithful picture of his heart, these books have all the features of veracity that truth can impress. If one may judge from their history, the Apostles, of all men, seem least to have been actuated by a secular spirit, the love of pleasure, of riches, and worldly distinction. Avarice and interest could not sway them, for they voluntarily abandoned all their *temporal* connections, and embarked in a cause, which the world regarded as to the last degree wretched and deplorable. They exiled themselves from the protection and bosom of their native soil, *left all the charities of father, sister, brother,* and openly espoused a religion that was

all, of a most gracious and benevolent temper and behaviour. One who did no wrong, no injury to any man, in whose mouth was no guilt, who went about doing good, not only by his preaching and ministry, but also in curing all manner of diseases among the people. His life was a beautiful picture of human nature when in its native purity and simplicity; and shewed at once what excellent creatures men would be, when under the influence and power of that gospel he preached unto them," *Chubb's True Gospel*, §. vii. P. 55, 56.

was every where spoken against, to crush which in its infancy all the principalities and powers of the world stood armed, the magistrate in every region unsheathed his sword popular prejudice and superstition collected all its fury, and the whole *Pagan* and *Jewish* hierarchy stood ready to overwhelm it with the whole accumulated weight of their authority and vengeance. They might have lived happy in their humble retreat, of all the world unknowing and unknown, in a sequestered and obscure recess, following the occupation of their ancestors, far from the malice and persecution of the world—but the force of truth and the power of conviction impelled them to bid an everlasting farewell to the world, to dissolve all the bonds of the tenderest union, and tearing themselves at once from the embraces of their nearest and dearest relatives. and from all the endearments of home, consanguinity and country, to proclaim to mankind the evidences and doctrines of the Christian religion; though bonds imprisonments and death in every region awaited them. How can these things be accounted for, but from the force of truth, and the fullest mental persuasion, that the cause, in which they were engaged, was the cause of God, and that they were acting under a divine authority and commission. \* What encomiums do we find  
in

\* This argument is well expressed by one of our best *Poets*.

*Whence, but from heaven, should men unskilled in arts,*

*In different nations born, in different parts*

*We came*



in their writings upon simplicity and godly sincerity—what solemn appeals to God for their integrity and veracity—and what denunciations of divine vengeance pronounced against insincerity and dissimulation, against those who are swayed by filthy lucre, who *adulterate and corrupt truth*, and handle the word of God *deceitfully*. And could all these pathetic exhortations to sincerity and probity, all these protestations of a sacred and inviolable love for truth, all this vehemence against hypocrisy, flow from an heart, whose whole study it was to palm a pious fraud upon mankind, and who only assumed this specious disguise the better to deceive and dupe the world? Was there ever such an amiable, uniform, virtuous consistency in the character of *impostors*? Did ever an *impostor* expose his person to such imminent dangers, exchange worldly reputation, competence and ease for disgrace, contempt and death, and solely acted by the love of God and truth traverse such an immense tract of country, reviled, abused, insulted, in every town and village, in which he delivered his credentials?—*Imposture* is ever upon the reserve, courts gloomy retirement, cautiously shuns the rays of truth and enquiry, deals in little tricks, and

*Weave such agreeing truths? or how? or why?  
Should all conspire to cheat us with a lie?  
Unask'd their pains, ungrateful their advice,  
Starving their gains, and martyrdom their price.*

DRYDEN.

and is ever an inconsistent, multiform, motley, discordant, dissimilar thing. Whereas *Truth* openly invites the inspection of the world, comes forth into the light that its nature and deeds may be made manifest, and publickly exhibits herself in the face of day in an artless undisguised manner. The blessed Apostles, with liberal and undaunted fortitude, delivered their testimony before kings and princes, priest and magistrate, before the most illustrious and dignified personages, not ashamed of the cause they had espoused, but openly submitting its evidences to a free and impartial examination. Their minds were so penetrated with a conviction of the truth of the gospel, that they esteemed it their distinguished honour and privilege to seal their attestation to it by their sufferings, and blessed God that they were accounted worthy to suffer reproach and shame for their profession. *Passing through honour and dishonour, through evil report and good report, as deceivers and yet true.* Never dejected, never intimidated by any sorrows and sufferings they supported, but when stoned, imprisoned, and persecuted in one city flying to another, and there preaching the gospel with intrepid boldness and heaven-inspired zeal. Patient in tribulation, fervent in spirit, rejoicing under persecution, calm and composed under calumny and reproach, praying for their enemies, when in dungeons chearing the silent hours of night with hymns of praise to God. Meeting death itself in the most dread-

dreadful forms with which persecuting rage could dress it, with a serenity and exultation the *Stoic* philosophy never knew. In all these public scenes showing to the world an heart infinitely above what men vulgarly style great and happy, infinitely remote from ambition, the lust of gold, and a passion for popular applause, working with their own hands to raise a scanty subsistence for themselves that they might not be burdensome to the societies they had formed, holding up to all, with whom they conversed, in the bright faithful mirror of their own behaviour, the amiableness and excellency of the religion they taught, and in every scene and circumstance of life distinguished for their devotion to God, their unconquered love of mankind, their sacred regard for truth, their self-government, moderation, humility, sincerity, and every divine, social and moral virtue that can adorn and exalt a character—Nor are there any features and characters of *enthusiasm* in the writings they have left us. We meet with no frantic fervours indulged, no monkish abstraction from the world recommended, no maceration of the body countenanced, no unnatural institutions established, no vain flights of fancy cherished, no absurd and irrational doctrines taught, no disobedience to any forms of human government encouraged, but all civil establishments and social connections suffered to remain in the *same* state they were before Christianity. So far do they appear from  
being

being actuated by a blind, undistinguishing, mechanical impulse of enthusiastic heat and rapture, that their writings have all the marks of a mind that was under the influence of sound reason, solid understanding, and cool deliberate judgment, and are eminently distinguished for that which enthusiasts universally lay so little stress upon, and generally affect so much to despise, the necessity of good works, the improvement of the mind, the use of reason, the investigation of truth, the careful examination of the evidences of religion, and the absolute connection between our *present* moral conduct and our *future* reward. So far were the *Apostles* from being *enthusiasts*, and instigated by a wild undiscerning religious phrenzy to rush into the jaws of death, when they might have honourably and lawfully escaped it, that we find them, when they could, without wounding their consciences, legally extricate themselves from persecution and death, taking advantage of adventitious circumstances, as St. *Paul* ingeniously did at *Athens*\*, pleading their pri-

\* There was at *Athens* a law, which made it capital to introduce or teach any new gods in their state. Therefore when *Paul* was preaching *Jesus and the Resurrection* to the *Athenians*, some of them carried him before the court of *Areopagus*, the ordinary judges of criminal matters, and in a particular manner entrusted with the care of religion, as having broken this law, and being a setter forth of strange gods. Now in this case an impostor would have retracted his doctrine to save his life, and an *enthusiast* would have  
 left

priviledges as \* *Roman* citizens, diverting the rage of their enemies from them by artfully throwing a bone of contention among them †, and appealing to *Cæsar's* supreme jurisdiction. Thus *lived*, *wrote*, and *died* the Apostles—propagating what they were convinced upon the fullest evidence was truth, with indefatigable industry, exemplifying the principles and tendency of the gospel by all the charms of a *personal* conduct, and by their illustrious piety, their disinterestedness, and their contempt of death, showing that the *Christian* religion was from *God*, and publicly seal-

ing

lost his *life* without trying to save it by innocent means. *St. Paul* did neither the one nor the other; he availed himself of an altar which he had found in the city, inscribed *To the unknown God*, and pleaded that he did not propose to them the worship of any new God, but only explained to them one whom their government had already received; *Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you*. By this he avoided the law, and escaped being condemned by the *Arcopagus*, without departing in the least from the truth of the gospel or violating the honour of God. An admirable proof, in my opinion, of the good sense with which he acted, and one that shews there was no mixture of fanaticism in his religion. *Lyttleton* on the conversion of *St. Paul*, p. 73, 74. 5th. Edit.

\* As *St. Paul* did, Acts xvi. 37. Ch. 22, 25.

† *When Paul perceived that one part were SADDUCEES, and the other PHARISEES, he cried out in the council, Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee*—This diverted their fury from himself; for upon this there instantly arose a dissension between the *Pharisees* and the *Sadducees*, and the multitude was divided. Acts xxiii. 6, 7.

ing its sacred truth and divinity with their blood †.

† The character of the Apostles is thus beautifully exhibited by Dr. Foster. "It appears from all accounts, that they were persons of strict and exemplary virtue, against the integrity of whose conduct upon the whole, nothing of moment was ever urged by the most malicious enemies of Christianity, which certainly gives great strength to their testimony. And the force of this argument is very much increased by observing, that they could have no *worldly interest* to promote by publishing such false accounts. They had no prospect of honour to allure their *ambition*, nor of riches to gratify their *covetousness*, nor of ease and pleasure to suit a taste for *indolence* and *luxury*; but on the contrary, were obliged to practise *humility*, *mortification*, and *self-denial*, and the appearance of every virtue, which could not but be a very uneasy restraint to men of *corrupt* and *vicious* minds; and as their doctrine overturned the forms of religion that were established in *all nations*, and contradicted the general *prejudices* and *vices* of the world, they were sure of reproaches and sufferings; (not only as the *probable consequences* of their persisting to declare the Christian doctrine, but consequences of which their master had *expressly* forewarned them) all which they unanimously, courageously, and cheerfully endured, and gave the *highest proof* of an *inflexible honesty*, by dying to vindicate the truth of their testimony. Foster's Answer to Tindal. p. 108. 3d Edit."

## S E C T. XVI.

*The rapid progress of the gospel at its publication an argument of its divine authority.*

**T**HE rapid and astonishing *progress* which *Christianity* made in the world in a very few years after its publication is an irrefragable argument of its divine authority and truth. According to the *common* course of things how infinitely incredible was it, that the religion taught by an *obscure* person, in an *obscure* station, in an *obscure* country, should, in so *little* a time, have so universal a diffusion, and penetrate to the utmost boundaries of the *Roman* empire! According to all *present* appearances, how romantic and visionary would the assertion of a *private* Jew seem to a *philosopher*, who should declare, That the principles of the sect he had founded *should be preached to every creature under heaven!* That a miserable company of fishermen, from a country that was despicable to a proverb, without learning, and without interest, should penetrate into the heart of so many various nations, should establish their tenets in the bosom of the largest cities, and gain converts to their principles in the courts of sovereigns and princes, is a truth not to be accounted for on any principle but that of a signal *divine* interposition in their favour. Many illustrious miracles, undoubtedly, they performed, but the amazing propagation of religion by  
*such*

*such instruments, was the greatest of miracles that ever was effected. Jewish and Pagan superstition stood confederated to crush their cause in its birth; the ax of the civil magistrate, abetted by the Hierarchy, was every where uplifted against them; the populace, inviolably attached to the national worship, by nature fond of religious pomp, and by custom the dupes of priestcraft, stood armed with all their collected force and fury to extirpate this heresy from the world—yet, notwithstanding all this opposition from priest and people, though it was every where spoken against, and the world regarded it as the most miserable cause that ever was promulgated, yet hundreds and thousands were converted by a \* sermon, and this despised religion, propagated by such despised instruments, flew from one country to another, throughout the whole extent of the Roman dominions, with the rapidity, with which lightning darts, at one immense sweep, through all the intervening space, from one extremity of heaven to another. † They wrestled not merely against flesh and blood, the common prejudices of mankind, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. How few and inconsiderable*

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\* Ολίγης μὲν ὤνησεν ἡ περικαλλῆς καὶ ἐπιτετηδευμένη Πλατωνῶ-  
λεξίς, πλείους δὲ ἢ τῶν εὐτελέστερον ἅμα καὶ πραγματικῶς καὶ ἐσο-  
χασμένως τῶν πολλῶν διδασκῶν καὶ γραφῶντων. ἐστὶ γὰρ ἰδίῳ τοῦ  
μὲν Πλατωνῶα ἐν χερσὶ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι φιλολογῶν μόνον. Origen  
contra Celsum, Lib. vi. p. 275. Edit. Spencer Cantab. 1677.

† Matt. xxiv. 27.



were the number of converts which *Socrates*, or *Plato*, or *Cicero*, or *Seneca* made. Their tenets were circumscribed within the † *narrow* circle of their disciples, their select friends, and a few distinguished geniuses of refined taste, of great leisure, and possessed of a turn of mind congenial to philosophic enquiry, and metaphysical speculation. What influence had the tenets of these eminent sages upon the *bulk* of mankind? A single city, a town, a village, they never brought over to their distinguishing principles, nor engaged them to live conformably to *their* doctrine. Notwithstanding the shining treasures of knowledge and erudition they possessed, notwithstanding all the powers of eloquence with which they adorned and enforced their principles, and notwithstanding all the interest and influence they enjoyed, both from the superiority of their own personal authority and dignity in the state, and from the countenance of the most illustrious and powerful men who lived in the age in which they flourished, yet what *slight* and *partial* effects did all their united learning and eloquence produce among men! How far were they from promoting

† There were added that day about 3000 souls! *Acts* ii. 41. The previous *causes* which contributed to bring into the church this immense harvest of converts in *one* day, see excellently represented by Dr. Leland in his *Remarks on Christianity not founded on Argument*. Letter ii. p. 28.

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 moting any *general* reformation in the world †! How far from deriving any considerable benefit upon the minds, tempers, and morals of the *multitude*! How *slow* also were these several *species* of philosophy in their *progress*—far from meeting any *considerable* reception in the *age*, in which they were *published*, and migrating from country to country with slow and tardy steps, gaining only admirers among the philosophic *Few*\*. But the religion of *Jesus*, like the city *Rome*, from the *lowest* beginning very soon encreased to an immense *magnitude*, and the *same age*, which saw it confined in the *narrow* limits of the *smallest* province, saw it fill the whole amplitude of the *Roman* territories †. The *Apostles*, and their fellow

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labour-

† *Zeno, Plato, Socrates*, and many others, endeavoured to introduce a new course of life, but in vain: whereas *Jesus Christ* not only taught, but settled a new polity, or way of living all over the world. Dr. *Lardner* ex *Chrysoft.* Vol. x. *Credibility Gospel History*, p. 367.

\* *Summus ille noster Platonis imitator existimavit philosophiam non esse vulgarem; quod eam non nisi docti homines assequi possent. Est, inquit, philosophia paucis contenti iudicibus, multitudinem consulto ipsa fugiens. Lactantius de falsâ sapientiâ. Lib. 3. p. 290. Edit. Sparke Oxon. 1684.*

† This is finely represented by *Eusebius*. Οὕτω δὴ τὰ οὐρανοῦ δυνάμει καὶ συνεργίᾳ, ἀθροῦς οὐκ τις ἤλιθ Ἑλλή, τὴν συμπάσαν οὐκέρμητιν ὁ σωτήριος κατήγαγε λόγος, αὐτῆκα ταῖς θειαῖς ἱστορικῶς γραφαῖς, ἐπὶ πάσαν κερσηὶ τὴν γῆν ὁ φθόγγος τῶν δι-σπιστῶν ἐναγγέλιζων αὐτὴ καὶ ἀποστόλων, καὶ εἰς τὰ ἀπέρατα τῆς οὐκέρμητις τὰ σημάτια αὐτῶν. καὶ δὴ τὰ ἀνα πάσας πόλεις τε καὶ κωμαῖς, πηληθυστῆς ἄλλωτος διὰ, μυριανδρῶν καὶ παμπληθεῖς ἀθροῦς ἐκκλησιαίαι σκροπικεσαν. *Eusebii Eccl. Hist. Lib. ii. Cap. iii. p. 12. ad fin. Ed. R. Stephan. 1544.*

84      *The rapid progress of the gospel* [Chap. I.  
 labourers, *before their decease*—and it ought to be remembered, in order to have a proper idea of the astonishing velocity with which Christianity advanced, that *few* of its first publishers died a *natural death*—established societies of *Christians* in *Judæa, Samaria, Crete, Cyprus, Italy, Greece, Macedonia, Minor Asia, Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia*—in the cities *Cæsarea, Rome, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, Antioch, Ephesus*, and in many other regions, towns, and cities †. In all this immense tract of country, which they travelled, every where declaring, that the *person*, whose *religion* they taught, had been despised by his own *country-men*, and crucified by the *Romans*! And what

† The following passage in *Tertullian* is a very noted one. *Hesterni sumus et vestra omnia implevimus, urbes, insulas, castella, municipia, conciliabula, castra ipsa, tribus, decurias, palatium, senatum, forum, sola vobis relinquimus templa.* *Tertulliani Apol.* p. 33. *Ed. Rigalt.* Again, p. 1. this *Apologist* says, *Obsessam vociferantur civitatem: in agris, in castellis, in insulis, Christianos: omnem sexum, ætatem, conditionem, et jam dignitatem transgredi ad hoc nomen.* For the rapid and amazing *progress* of the Christian religion in the world almost *immediately* after its publication, the following passages, which I have collected on this subject, may be consulted. *Justin Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryph. Edit. Jebb.* p. 341, 353. *Opera Paris* 1636, p. 88. *Irenæus,* p. 45, 198, 307, 324, 366, 392. *Edit. Grabe Oxon.* 1702. *Jerom ad Læt. Ep.* 57. *Dr. Benson's reasonableness of the Christian Religion,* Vol. 1. p. 98. *Edit. 3d.* *Dr. Lardner's Credibility,* Vol. 10. p. 182, 366. Where the reader will find many striking passages collected by this most learned and worthy writer. See also *Addison* on the Christian Religion, p. 321.

what is *more* even than this—preaching a *religion*, and meeting with wonderful *success* in preaching it, that was contrary to the *pleasures* and *passions* of mankind, that laid an embargo upon all sensual indulgences, that indispensably required from its professors, temperance, self-denial, an inviolable purity and sanctity of manners, and was diametrically *repugnant* to the *prevailing* principles and maxims of those times. It is wonderful, beyond all example, that a few illiterate *Galileans*, issuing from an obscure corner of a distant *Roman* province, unlearned and unsupported, should, in no long time, overturn the two greatest establishments that ever were erected in the world, and triumph over all the confederated power of every nation, that universally associated to oppose them. Such an astonishing and sudden *revolution* in the religious and moral state of the world, produced by *such* agents, could be effected by nothing less than a most signal interposition of God, endowing these his messengers with supernatural powers, and visibly supporting them in the cause in which they were engaged.

## S E C T. XVII.

*Great numbers of illustrious and learned men embraced the Gospel.*

**T**HAT in the first ages, in which *Christianity* was published, such numbers of *eminent* and *learned* persons embraced it, is a strong collateral evidence of its credibility and truth. *Greece* and *Italy* were then the seats of learning and science, and a love of literature and philosophy was become *generally* fashionable. Yet notwithstanding this *reigning* passion, *Christianity* made an amazing progress in these learned and civilized countries, and in a few years established itself in all the capital cities and towns so celebrated for the study of wisdom and the improvement of the polite arts. *Antioch*, *Thessalonica*, *Corinth*, *Athens*, saw *Christianity* flourish amongst all the *sects* and *systems* of their renowned philosophy. Nor could imperial *Rome*, the seat and center of universal monarchy and universal learning, exclude it. It formed itself in her bosom, and penetrated itself into the very \* palace of the *emperor*. Nor can it be said that

\* All the fairs salute you, chiefly they that are of Cæsar's household, or, the emperor's domestics. οἱ ἐκ τῆς Καισαρικῆς οἰκίας. In the second century there were Christians in the emperor's palace. *Irenæus*, who flourished about the year of Christ 178, mentions this. Hi, qui in Regali aulâ sunt fideles. Opera, p. 354, Oxon. Grabe. And *Tertullian*, among other

that, it was only the untaught vulgar, and the credulous superstitious multitude that caught and spread the contagion, for some of the most *eminent* persons, distinguished for their *rank* both in the *state* and in the *republic of letters*, were convinced by its evidences, and publickly embraced it, though by embracing it they were conscious they should incur the censures and reproaches of the world, be deemed to have fixed an indelible stain upon the lustre of their birth, and the splendour of their families and stations, and forfeit many worldly privileges and emoluments. No doubt persons of their sagacity, penetration and discernment, would explore the evidences of this novel religion with the greatest acuteness and precision, prejudiced in its disfavour, as it had all *external* appearances, from the ignominious exit of its author, and the poverty and wretchedness of its preachers, to rivet their prejudices. But *great* is the force of *truth* in whatever garb it attires itself. Upon every virtuous and well disposed mind it hath a power irresistible. It is to the everlasting honour and credit of the gospel, that it can name among the list of its early converts, such men as *Sergius Paulus*, *proconsul* of *Cyprus*, *Dionysius* a member of the *senate* of *Areopagus*, *Erasmus*, *treasurer* of *Corinth*, and even the *emperor's* domesticks

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ticks

other places, where he tells us the Christian religion had penetrated, reckons the *Palace*. PALATIUM, senatum, forum. *Tertullian* Rigalt. Paris, p. 33.

88      *Great numbers of learned men* [Chap. I. ticks.\* And in *Judæa*, the sacred historians inform us, that great numbers of the most eminent and illustrious of that nation, believed *Jesus* to be a divine messenger, though they did not choose *publickly* to avow their belief, that an illustrious member of the Jewish *Sanhedrim* was not only convinced himself, but endeavoured to convince others, † and that many of the *clergy* assented to the truth of Christianity. The conduct of these illustrious persons, who by their eminent station and learned education were in the best manner qualified to judge of its evidences, and who professed their full conviction of its truth, when it had not the sanction of any civil authority to establish it, or any allurements of riches and power to recommend it, nor any thing to offer them, but public dishonour and disgrace, reflects an eternal lustre both upon their *characters* who espoused it, and upon the *credentials* that supported it. In *process of time* great numbers of the most distinguished rank and eminence for their dignity and abilities, notwithstanding they had been educated in *other* religions, notwithstanding the inveterate prejudices they had *once* conceived against the Christian religion, notwithstanding the sacrifice they were obliged to make at its altar, of all their *former* sensual gratifications and indulgences, and

\* *Liberti quidam, ut credibile est, says Grotius ad loc.*

† *Ἐπαθῆντες, made disciples.* Matth. ch. xxvii, 57. Thus it signifies, Matth. xxviii. 19. John iv. 1. Acts xiv, 21. See *Macknight* in loc.

and notwithstanding the immediate forfeiture of the affections of their friends and families, and the infamy and reproach they incurred, yet, to their everlasting honour, being open to conviction, and overcome by the power of truth, relinquished their former erroneous systems, deserted the national superstition, dispelled their former prejudices, tore themselves from the pleasures and profits of the world, and in every country embraced Christianity, and were *afterwards*, both in respect of learning and virtue, its distinguished ornament and glory. Many of the ancient *Apologists* were persons of good learning, and well acquainted with the *heathen* writers, and the *heathen* philosophy. The account they give of themselves is—\* That they were brought up in the belief of that religion which was transmitted down to them  
by

\* *Justin Martyr* was once a *Platonic* Philosopher. Και γαρ αὐτος ἐγὼ τοῖς Πλάτωνος· Χαιρων διδασκαλίᾳ Apologia ii. p. 30. Edit. Oxon. 1703. Vid. etiam Dialogum Tryph. Edit. Jebb. p. 9. *Tatian* in his address to the *Greeks* tells them, “That he had travelled through many countries—had been an admirer of the Greek philosophy—had studied the arts and sciences—and lived in *Rome*; but that now he had bidden an everlasting farewell to the ostentation of the *Romans*, and to the frigid and visionary reveries of the *Athenians*, and embraced that form of philosophy they affected so much to despise.” Πολλῆν ἐπιφοίτησας γῆν, &c. *Tatiani* Oratio ad Græcos, p. 123. Edit. Oxon. 1700, and at p. 142, he says, That he was *first* instructed in the *Pagan* Religion, but *afterwards* in that doctrine he now publicly professed. πᾶσι δὲ πρῶτον μὲν ταυμίσηρα, δεῖρον δὲ ἅ τινά τιν κηρυττιῶν ἐπαγγελλομαι, ad fin.



by their ancestors—that they had entertained the strongest prejudices in favour of paganism and the principles on which this system was erected—that being trained up in the schools of philosophy and in early life imbued with the love of truth and enquiry, being habituated to this exercise, they had carefully canvassed and examined the nature, doctrine, and tendency of the gospel—and upon such deliberate and impartial examination were firmly persuaded it was a divine revelation. *Justin Martyr*, whose passion for truth was boundless, and who had carefully examined all the various opinions and principles of all the sects of philosophy, upon a diligent investigation of the evidences and excellence of the gospel, received the fullest conviction of its divine authority, and in a flood of transport exclaims: *This, have I found to be the only true and useful philosophy!* *Athenagoras*, an *Athenian* philosopher, had entertained so unfavourable an opinion of the Christian religion, that he was determined to write against it—but upon an intimate enquiry into the *facts* on which it was supported, in the course of his collecting materials for his *intended* publication, he was convinced by the blaze of evidence in its favour, and turned his designed *invective* into an elaborate apology. † *Arnobius*, a man of great learning and excel-

† Ταύτην μόνην εὐρισκον φιλοσοφίαν ασφαλή τε καὶ συμφερον, p. 225. Edit. Paris 1696.

‡ See Dr. *Lardner's* *Credibility of the Gospel History*, Part 2d, Vol. i. p. 401. Article *Athenagoras*.

excellent judgment, who embraced Christianity in the reign of *Diocletian*, speaking of the amazing rapidity with which the Christian religion spread its triumphs in the world, observes, That “persons of the first abilities and learning, orators, professors of the belles lettres, rhetoricians, lawyers, physicians, who had penetrated all the secret recesses of philosophy, despising the principles in which they had once confided, took up their rest in the philosophy of *Jesus*.”\* Undoubtedly persons of their erudition and discernment would have been able to have detected and exposed any flaws in its original facts and evidences, were it possible any such could have been discovered; and persons of their integrity and probity would have discarded it with horror and contempt, if upon bringing its credentials to the test of truth and history, it should have appeared to them to have been supported on nothing better than *credulity* and *enthusiasm*, and upon scrutinizing and sifting its nature and story, it should have evinced itself to be nothing but a cunningly *devised fable*, invented by an artful impostor in the wilds of *Judea*,

\* Magnis ingenii præditi Oratores, Grammatici, Rhetores, Consulti-juris ac Medici, Philosophiæ etiam secreta rimantes, magisteria hæc expetunt, spretis quibus paulo ante fidebant. *Arnobius* adversus Gentes. Lib. ii. p. 44. Edit. Lug. Bat. 1651. Ου φιλοσοφοι ουδε φιλολογοι μοσον επισθησαν, *Justin Martyr*, p. 125. Edit. Thirlby. It is also to the honour of Christianity that so fine a genius as *Minucius Felix* professed and defended it.

92 *The effects which the gospel produced* [Chap. I. *Judea*, and propagated in the world by a wretched company of deluded enthusiasts. But Christianity approving itself to these eminent philosophers in those *ancient* times, as it hath done, in *our days*, to the *Bacons*, the *Boyles*, the *Lockes*, the *Addisons*, and the *Newtons*, to be the cause of God, and the wisdom of God, is a public monument. to *all ages*, That *Christianity* will bear the *severest* scrutiny, that it is founded on truth, and the more accurately it is viewed in every light, in which learning and genius can view it, the more strong and striking will the heavenly flame of all its united evidences appear.

#### S E C T. XVIII.

*The effects, which the gospel produced on the minds of men a proof of its divine truth.*

**T**HE effect this religion produced upon the minds and morals of mankind is a public and signal testimony of its divine veracity and excellence. Every one knows that at the time when Christianity was published, the world was sunk in deplorable and almost universal idolatry, superstition and immorality. *The whole world*, as the sacred writers metaphorically express it, *lay in wickedness, was become guilty before God, and were dead in trespasses and sins.* This religion, rising in all its divine splendour upon a benighted world, and shining with all its heavenly radiance amidst  
this

this baleful gloom of general profligacy and depravity, did soon, in a very considerable degree, dispel the mists of error and vice in which mankind were involved, and represent their duty and happiness in the strongest point of view. It awakened men's attention to it by its solemn proclamations, which it sounded in the ears of all, To repent and reform, for a day was approaching in which God would summon all the human race before his dread tribunal. It uttered the most pathetic exhortations to all, enforced by the most affecting arguments, *immediately* to relinquish their former abandoned pursuits, to forsake the sensual and immoral practices and habits in which they had hitherto lived, and to let the *present* moment be the happy date of an entire renovation of heart and life. To deter the world from that unbounded dissoluteness and licentiousness, in which they shamelessly indulged themselves, they strongly represented to them the denunciations of the Almighty against such atrocious crimes, and the dreadful punishment that God would assuredly inflict upon all impenitent and incorrigible sinners. This awakening doctrine, corroborated by miracles, confirmed by such indubitable evidences of its truth, and enforced by the example of those who delivered it, had all its effect. It opened the mental eye which superstition had blinded, it turned men from *darkness* to *light*, from *Satan* to *God*, and *transformed them, by the renewing of their minds, to approve and obey the good and acceptable*  
and

94 *The effects which the gospel produced* [Chap. I. and perfect will of God. What a wonderful reformation Christianity produced in the world, and what an amazing effect it had upon the lives and morals of men, we have a faithful portrait held up by the apostle for us to contemplate, that we and all future ages may see what power the gospel, at its first publication, had to reclaim and reform a depraved world. *Corinth* was the seat of effeminacy and softness. The morals of that polite and celebrated city were to the last degree corrupt. It was here *Comus* held his court, and the goddesses of pleasure swayed her sceptre. *Corinth* was the region of debauchery and profligacy,\* and its inhabitants trod an eternal round of amusement, diversion, voluptuousness and universal dissipation. The apostle, at his coming, found the city dissolved in these abandoned pursuits—but in a little time Christianity produced a different face

\* How dissolute and abandoned *Corinth* was, see *Strabo*, Lib. viii. p. 378, 379. Edit. Casaubon, 1620. *Plato* in his Republic condemns four things—a *Syracusan* table, *Sicilian* luxury, *Attic* deserts, and *Corinthian* courtezans. *Plato* *Repub.* Lib. iii. p. 404. Vol. ii. *Serrani*. Vol. i. p. 211. *Maffey* *Cantab.* From the high price of these *Corinthian* courtezans, *Strabo* and *A. Gellius* tell us arose the proverb: Ου πάλος ἄνδρος εἰς Κορινθὸν εἶθ' ὁ πλοῦτος. Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum. See *Strabo*, p. 378. Edit. Paris, and *A. Gellius*, Lib. i. Cap. viii. p. 36. Edit. Var. 1666. The state of *Corinth*, says *Ælian*, after it had attained very considerable eminence was totally ruined by its abandoned voluptuousness. Εἰ Κορινθὸς ἀρχῆ, ἐστὶ μὲν οὐ δυναμῶς προσελθούσα, ὅμως διὰ τὴν τρυφὴν τὴν ἐξω τῷ μίθρῳ, καὶ εὐθὺς κατήλυθη. *Æliani* *Var. Hist.* Vol. i. p. 32. Edit. *Grenou*.

face of things. Hear how he describes the *state* in which he found *Corinth* at his first arrival in that place, and the *state* in which he left it. Neither *fornicators*, nor *idolaters*, nor *adulterers*, nor *effeminate*, nor *abusers of themselves with mankind*, nor *thieves*, nor *covetous*, nor *drunkards*, nor *extortioners*, shall inherit the kingdom of God—and such were some of you *formerly*—but now you are *washed*, but now you are *sanctified*, now you are *justified* in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God. What less than a religion supported by God and confirmed by miracles could effect such an amazing change in so profligate and depraved a city? The *Christian* religion, wherever it spread its triumphs, diffused also the triumphs of piety and holiness. The *primitive* Christians were not less famous for the *persecutions* they sustained than the irreproachable *characters* they supported. Many are the testimonies to their harmless inoffensive lives, to their fervent devotion, their inviolable probity and integrity, and to their purity and sanctity of manners. *Heathens* bear an honourable \* testimony to their innocence, and the first apologists are full of solemn and public appeals to the *Roman emperor* and *senate*, to whom they publicly addressed their defences of Christianity, for the strict morals and unblameable conversation

\* To the distinguished purity and holiness of the primitive Christians, see *Pliny's* noted testimony. Lib. x. Epist. 97.

96 *The effects which the gospel produced* [Chap. I.  
 tion of the professors of the gospel—even publicly resting the *truth* of their religion upon the *holiness* of their lives who embraced it, and calling upon them to produce any thing *scandalous* and *immoral* in the *public* or *private* conduct of those who called themselves *Christians*†——What *influence* the *gospel* had upon the minds of men, appears from that heroic fortitude and that magnanimity, great beyond all example, with which they supported the most ingenious tortures that the wit and rage of their persecutors could inflict, and the most cruel and lingering ‡ deaths which  
 their

† See *Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Theophilus Antiochenus, Tertullian, Minucius Felix. passim.*

‡ This is finely represented by the eloquent *Minucius Felix. Quam pulchrum spectaculum Deo, cum Christianus cum dolore congredditur, cum adversus minas et supplicia et tormenta componitur? cum strepitum mortis et horrorem carnificis irripiens inculcat? cum libertatem suam adversus reges et principes erigit? soli Deo, cujus est, cedit? cum triumphator et victor, ipsi, qui adversum se sententiam dixit, insultat? vicit enim, qui quod contendit, obtinuit. Quis non miles sub oculis imperatoris audacius periculum provocet? nemo enim præmium percipit ante experimentum: et imperator tamen, quod non habet, non dat: non potest propagare vitam, protest honestare militiam. At enim Dei miles nec in dolore deseritur, nec morte finitur. Sic Christianus miser videri potest, non potest inveniri. Vosipfi calamitosos viros fertis ad cælum, Mucium Scævola, qui cum errasset in regem, perisset in hostibus, nisi dextram perdidisset. Et quot ex nostris non dextram solum, sed totum corpus uri, cremari, sine ullis ejaculatus pertulerunt, cum dimitti præsertim haberent in suâ potestate? Viros cum  
 Mucio*

their enemies could make them die. Such a firm persuasion and full conviction possessed their minds that their religion was *divine*, that the immortality it offered was no fable, and the blessedness it promised was a great and glorious reality, that they went to the stake, to the racks, and wheels, and engines of their persecutors, with a fortitude and intrepidity *human* philosophy never boasted, supported the trial with a calm and serene composure, and appeared in the midst of *such* a death, with joy and exultation impressed on their countenance. The bravery and greatness of soul with which the martyrs suffered and died, had all its effects upon the spectators, excited great numbers to enquire into the principles of a religion, which had such power and force in causing its professors thus to triumph over the greatest of human evils—and the *result* of such an enquiry, excited by such an event was, *conviction*. *Justin Martyr* tells us, that what first \* engaged him to enquire into the grounds and principles of the Christian religion was, The seeing its professors support their suffer-

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Mucio, vel cum Aquilio aut Regulo comparo? Pueri et mulierculæ nostræ cruces et tormenta, feras et omnes suppliciorum terriculas inspiratâ patientiâ doloris illudunt. *Minucius Felix*, p. 178, 179. Edit. Cantab. 1712. The same thing is attested by *Lactantius*. Nostri autem (ut de viris taceam) pueri et mulierculæ tortores suos taciti vincunt, et exprimere illis gemitum nec ignis potest. *Lactantii*, Lib. v. Cap. xiii. p. 457. Edit. Oxon.

\* See *Justin Martyr*, p. 30, 31. Edit. Oxon. 1703. aliisque locis ejus operum quamplurimis.



98 *The effects which the gospel produced* [Chap. I. ings with that invincible firmness and constancy, which all the various sects of philosophy had never been able to inspire. Whence, but from God, could a religion have its origin, which could make men persist and glory in the profession of it, though every human evil menaced them; to disavow and openly abjure their belief of which, no sufferings could ever impel them; and who, instead of renouncing it, when by renouncing it they might have escaped all this ignominy, suffering and torture, and lived in ease, credit, and affluence, chose rather to endure *a great fight of affliction, to be made a gazing stock to angels and men,* both by public reproaches and afflictions, *taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods,* and resigning every domestic endearment, every secular advantage, and life itself, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance—*Christianity* hath, moreover, *produced* the happiest *effects* upon the mind in softening its ferocity and humanizing the heart. The very genius and tendency of this blessed religion is to inspire its professors with mercy, love, compassion, benevolence, and the most kind and generous affections. This its selectest influence it hath shed upon \* whole societies, communities, and nations,

\* See this beautifully represented in a late excellent *sermon*, by that most polite and elegant writer the Rev. Dr. *William Robertson*, author of the *History of Scotland*, and by the great and good Dr. *Leechman* in a judicious and comprehensive *Discourse*, or rather *Treatise*, entitled, *The Wisdom of God in the Revelation of the Gospel*.

nations, of those who have embraced it. From the *Christian* world, that barbarous and detestable practice, so prevalent in *heathen* countries, of *exposing infants* on mountains and in woods, most miserably to perish, is for ever banished. To treat with politeness and humanity unhappy *captives* in war, who, in *pagan* times, were *sometimes* butchered in cold blood, *sometimes* put into mines to drudge for life, but *generally* sold for slaves, is an established custom among all *Christian* nations. *Human* sacrifices slain to placate the divinity, so common in *heathen* countries, are now for ever ceased. The *gospel* hath refined the morals, sweetened the dispositions, and harmonized the minds, of large collective bodies and vast populous nations, and by the cement of its benevolent conciliating principles hath united them to each other in the bonds of a generous and endearing philanthropy, and engaged them to interweave humanity and mercy even in crowns of laurel that are dipped in blood. How superior *Christians* are in point of morals to all *pagan* countries, however civilized by arts and sciences, an impartial comparison will evince. The best *modern* accounts of the morality of *China* prove the assertion of *Leibnitz* to be false and groundless, who declared that instead of *our* sending missionaries over to *China* to teach them *religion*, they ought rather to send missionaries over to *us* to teach the *Europeans* morality. The *gospel* hath done signal and distinguished service in forming the *manners*

100 *The effects which the gospel produced* [Chap. I.  
both of *individuals* and of *nations*, in having extirpated many cruel and abominable usages, which always reigned, and *now* reign, in *beaten* nations, in having civilized a very large extent of the globe, and inspiring men every where with humane and social affections. These happy fruits and effects, as they are the fairest harvest any religion coming from God can raise, so they obtain *more generally*, I am convinced, than the suggestions of uncharitableness, and the voice of infidelity, would persuade us. For great numbers in every Christian nation, I believe, though lost in silence and oblivion among the busy scenes of this world, make conscience of discharging their Christian duties, tread, through this transitory life, a regular path of Christian virtue, tho' of all the world unknowing and unknown, and in acts of fervent devotion, in benevolent affections, in well-governed passions, in an amiable uniform tenor of temperance, moderation and contentment, and in the joyful expectation of an happy immortality, exemplify the power, force, and divinity of the Christian principles.

S E C T.

## S E C T. XIX.

*The present state of the Jews an argument in favour  
of the truth of Christianity.*

**T**HE *present state* of the *Jews* is a wonderful \* confirmation of the *truth* of the Christian religion. This is a standing permanent miracle, perpetuated through a series of many suc-

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\* The very learned and ingenious Dr. *Newton*, bishop of *Bristol*, thus expresses himself. “ The preservation of the *Jews* is really one of the most signal and illustrious acts of divine providence. They are dispersed among all nations, and yet they are not confounded with any. The drops of rain which fall, nay the great rivers which flow into the ocean, are soon mingled and lost in that immense body of waters: and the same in all human probability would have been the fate of the *Jews*, they would have been mingled and lost in the common mass of mankind; but on the contrary they flow into all parts of the world, mix with all nations, and yet keep separate from all. They still live as a distinct people, and yet they nowhere live according to their own laws, nowhere elect their own magistrates, nowhere enjoy the full exercise of their religion. Their solemn feasts and sacrifices are limited to one certain place, and that hath been now for many ages in the hands of strangers and aliens, who will not suffer them to come thither. No people have continued unmixed so long as they have done, not only of those who have sent forth colonies into foreign countries, but even of those who have abided in their own country. The northern nations have come in swarms into the more southern parts of *Europe*; but where are they now to be discerned and distinguished? The  
Gauls

cessive ages, to our times. The *Assyrians*, *Babylonians*, *Carthaginians*, *Macedonians*, are now no more. Their names have long since been swallowed up and confounded with those of their conquerors. But in *this* distinguished instance we see the *vanquished* for many ages survive the *victors*, and remain a *distinct separate* community and body among all the various nations into which they

*Gauls* went forth in great bodies to seek their fortune in foreign parts; but what traces or footsteps of them are now remaining any where? In *France* who can separate the race of the ancient *Gauls* from the various other people, who from time to time have settled there? In *Spain* who can distinguish exactly between the first possessors the *Spaniards*, and the *Goths*, and the *Moors*, who conquered and kept possession of the country for some ages? In *England*, who can pretend to say with certainty which families are derived from the ancient *Britons*, and which from the *Romans*, or *Saxons*, or *Danes*, or *Normans*? The most ancient and honourable pedigrees can be traced up only to a certain period, and beyond that there is nothing but conjecture and uncertainty; obscurity and ignorance: but the *Jews* can go up higher than any nation, they can even deduce their pedigree from the beginning of the world. They may not know from what particular tribe or family they are descended, but they know certainly that they all sprang from the stock of *Abraham*. And yet the contempt with which they have been treated, and the hardships which they have undergone in almost all countries, should, one would think, have made them desirous to forget, or renounce their original; but they profess it, they glory in it: and after so many wars, massacres, and persecutions, they still subsist, they still are very numerous: and what but a supernatural power could have preserved them in such a manner as none other nation upon earth hath been preserved.—*Dr. Newton's Dissertations upon the Prophecies*, Vol. i, p. 216, 3d Edit,

they are scattered. We know this people to subsist in very considerable numbers, in almost all the nations of the world, and though the universal banter, derision and contempt of every nation, though fleeced, plundered, persecuted by every nation in which they sojourn, yet *every where* existing as a large, opulent, and flourishing body. We see them retain the same veneration for their ancient *lawgiver* and his *laws*, they ever retained, and practising the peculiar rites and ceremonies of their religion with the same punctilious and scrupulous exactness they ever observed. The author of our religion expressly declared that *Jerusalem* should be trodden under foot of the *Gentiles*, and both *antient* and *modern* history sets its seal to the truth of this account, and assures us it hath lain in this deplorable condition for above seventeen hundred years. The author of our religion predicted, that, after the destruction of *Jerusalem* by the *Romans*, the *Jews* should be dispersed into all nations—we see the *dispersion*\* of this people, *otherwise* unaccountable, and cannot but acknowledge, that the *evidence* of a religion which contains such a prophecy, made at a time when there were no appearances of such a disper-

H 4 sion,

\* *Quanta deliquerint [Judæi] fiduciâ patrum inflati, deviantes ab disciplinâ in profanum modum, etsi ipsi non confiterentur, probaret exitus hodiernus ipsorum, dispersi, palabundi, et cæli et soli sui extorres vagantur per orbem sine homine, sine Deo rege. Tertullian Apol. p. 20. Rigalt. 1641.*

sion, much less of its subsisting for such a long series of ages, is continually *encreasing*, and receiving *accession* to its credentials from the accumulation of every *additional* period of revolving years. How can we account for this melancholy state of the once favourite and distinguished people of God? They have now experienced, not *seventy*, but *seventeen hundred* years of captivity! They have *now* no divine messenger, as *formerly*, to console their sorrows, no prophet to give them an happy prospect of their return, no deliverer to vindicate them into liberty, and reconduct them to the land of their ancestors; they continue unsettled vagabonds, the jest and proverb of the world. There must be *some* signal event, from which one must date these remarkable calamities, *some* horrid national crime, some time or other perpetrated, which pursues them and their children, and some *future* catastrophe to which this remarkable preservation of them as a *distinct* people in all the *nations* of the world, must refer, and which providence designed should unravel this perplexed and intricate plot. And he, who considers how exactly the predictions of Jesus were fulfilled in the *destruction* of *Jerusalem*, and the extermination of the *Jews*—who sees his prophecies now fulfilling in the world, with regard to the present state of this remarkable people—who also reflects that there will come a time when *all Israel will be saved*, and, according to the prophecies, return to their country, and that  
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Sect. XIX.] *an argument in favour of Christianity.* 105

whenever this event shall happen, there is nothing to detain them, no possessions to retard them a moment, no civil and social connections with other nations to fix them in any country; must collect from what is *already* accomplished, and is *now* accomplishing, the strongest external *proof* in favour of the *truth* of the Christian religion, and with *equal* assurance persuade himself, from the predictions already verified, that the other parts of them will, in due time, receive their accomplishment.

## S E C T. XX.

*The subsequent corruptions of the Christian religion an argument of its truth.*

**A** Great argument in favour of the *truth* of Christianity arises from those *corruptions* which it predicts that men would in *subsequent ages* introduce into its doctrine and worship. Who that had lived in those days, when Christianity was forming and struggling under all the incumbent weight of *Jewish* bigotry and *Pagan* persecution, could, from the state of things, possibly have conjectured, that in *future* times such a monster as *popery* would ever have been nursed and fostered in its bosom? That a rising sect, every where vilified and outraged, would ever give birth to a *Tyrant*, who would sit and swell in the \* temple of God, claim the title of God, and

\* See 2 Theſſalon. 2, 4.



106 *The corruption of the Christian religion* [Chap. I.  
and wave a sceptre of universal spiritual empire. Who, that beheld the *low* estate of the Christian church in those wretched times, could ever have divined, that a *remarkable character*, would one day arise out of it, who should establish a vast monarchy, whose appearance would be after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all the deceivableness of unrighteousness; that this person would oppose and exalt himself above all that is called God; and that when a *certain* † impediment and obstacle was removed, he would ostentatiously reveal himself to the world in all the pomp and grandeur of his impiously assumed authority. How picturesque and striking a representation is this of the *pope*, and of those false miracles and that delusive juggle and artifice, with which the *popish* religion supports itself. What human mind, however sagacious and acute in discernment, could ever have conceived that the pure religion of Jesus should so far have been vitiated and depraved as to sanctify the most superstitious practices—that men, in *future* time, who believed and embraced it, should yet so far depart from its simplicity as to give heed to seducing spirits, and the doctrine of *demons*, forbidding to marry, commanding abstinence from certain kinds of food, tho' God created it to be received with thanksgiving. The existence of *popery*, that most daring and monstrous corruption of the  
purity

† The Roman emperor.

Sect. XX.] *an argument of its truth.* 107

purity and simplicity of the gospel, which no human penetration could have foreseen, and which is portrayed with such an accuracy and exactness that no one can fail of recognising the fact, is a great confirmation and standing monument of the truth of the *gospel*, and demonstrates those persons to have been *divinely* inspired who wrote these books, and circumstantially predicted future events and future *corruptions* of religion, infinitely beyond the reach of all conception and discernment merely *human*.

CHAP.

## C H A P. II.

*On the State of the World at CHRIST'S  
Appearance.*

**P**ROFANE as well as *sacred* history informs us that the *age* in which Christianity made its appearance, was enormously impious, profligate and corrupt. The *Jews*, at *that* time, were a race of hypocrites. All orders, distinctions, and degrees among them, had, as it were, unanimously agreed that religion was a farce, and that its essence consisted in nothing but grimace and foppery, pomp and ostentation. They were lost so far to all sense of public decency as to convert even their temple into a market, and suffer its sacred courts to serve the convenient purposes of the most fordid and despicable traffic. Such was the unexampled ostentation and hypocrisy of their *doctors* and *rabbies*, that they made public proclamation, by the sound of a trumpet, when they distributed charity, and would kneel down at the corners of crowded streets, and there pour out their devotion, with no other view but to draw upon them the eyes of the superstitious multitude, and make themselves admired and applauded as patterns of heavenly-mindedness. Their *ultimate* object, in all the acts of religion they performed, was to be seen of men, and secure the vain breath of popular applause. For this

this purpose their great men lengthened the fringes of their garments to an enormous size, wore their phylacteries most ostentatiously broad, paraded in the market and in all places of public concourse in long flowing robes, regaling on the fumes of incense which servile adulation offered, and swelling with the pompous titles with which they were addressed. The whole nation seems to have been infected with *spiritual pride*, the most odious and detestable *species* of pride. They sacrificed every thing to show and pageantry. They would devour widow's houses, deprive the friendless widow and the destitute orphan of their just property, and yet all the while assume the most mortified appearance, disfigure their faces that they might appear to men to fast, use affectedly long prayers, and, tho' they would not hesitate a moment to infringe the strongest moral obligations, justice, judgment, mercy, and truth, would yet, at the same time, observe, with the most scrupulous and punctilious exactness, all the little ceremonious tricks about the *tithe of mint, anise and cummin*, and the ridiculous traditionary maxims of their rabbinical ancestors. Every thing was venal. The high-priesthood was set to sale. Nothing but hypocrisy and self-interest swayed them. They were torn into several religious factions, and split into sects and parties, which, agreeably to the *national* acrimony and the innate complexional virulence and choler of this people,

omnipotence and revenge, to be instigated by fury which nothing could placate, and by libidinous desires which nothing could satiate.\* *Riot* and *revel* in honour of *Bacchus* was publickly countenanced. † *Prostitutions* in honour of *Venus* had the sanction of the state. How many lovely *infants* did the *Carthaginians* ‡ sacrifice to their

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\* Αυτος τε ο Ζευς, επι πασιν ημεται, ο πατηρ καθ' εμας ανθρωπων τε Θεων τε· ος τοςτος περι τα αφροδισια εξεχιθη, ως επιθεμισ· μετ πασων, εκκληρουν δε εις πασας την επιθυμια. επιμιμωλατο γαρ γυναικων οχ ητρον η αιγων ο Θμουτων τραγοσθ Clem: Alex. p. 30. Paris. Ζευς—ο αδικος, ο αβισμος, ο ανομος, ο αφρισος, ο απαθραπος, ο βιαιος, ο φθορευς, ο μοιχος, ο ερωτικος. p. 23. Και πρωτη γε τε Διαι· οι ποιηται ευφαινητερον αδασι τας χαλκωτας παραξεις. Χρυσιστω· δε· ο πολλα φλυαρησας πως ουχι ευρισκεται σημαιων την Ηραν γοματ· κ· μισρω συγγιμισθαι τω Διι. Theoph. ad Autol: p. 214. Oxon.

† Ubi autem magis à sacerdotibus, quam inter aras et delubra concuntur supra, tractantur lenocinia, adulteria meditantur? frequentius denique in ædituorum cellulis, quam in ipfis lupanaribus flagrans libido defungitur. Minucij Felicis Octavius, p. 261, 262. Edit. Var. Lug. Bat. 1709. In templis adulteria componi, inter aras lenocinia tractari, in ipfis plerumque ædituorum et sacerdotum tabernaculis, sub iisdem vittis, et apicibus, et purpuris, ture flagrantibus libidinem expungi. Tertullian. p. 16. Rigalt. *Strabo* tells us that above a thousand prostitutes were publickly maintained at *Corinth* in honour of *Venus*. Vid. *Strabonis Opera* Lib. 8. p. 378. Edit. Paris 1620. See also a dreadful scene of publick debauchery in honour of *Venus* in *Euseb's* life of *Constantine*. Book 3. Chap. lv. Edit. Valefii Paris 1659.

‡ Καρχηδονιοι δε θυουσι, ως οσιοι οι και νομιμον αυτοις· κατα ταυτα, επι αυτων υιους τω Κρονω. *Plato*. Politicus. Vol. 2. p. 345. *Serrani*. Parents themselves offered their children at this bloody shrine and used to soothe their infants by blandishments and kisses to prevent their crying, that the victim might

implacable god *Molok*. How many human victims in times of § public danger, did they immolate to appease the resentment of the offended gods! And what was the most deplorable consequence with regard to *morals*, mankind, as is natural, imitated the objects of their worship in

## I

what

might not be offered weeping. Saturnus filios suos non exposuit, sed voravit. Merito ei in nonnullis Africæ partibus à parentibus infantes immolabantur, blanditiis et osculo comprimente vagitum nè flebilis hostia immoletur. *Minucius Felix*, p. 311. Lug. Bat. 1709. Quos ipsi parentes sui offerebant, et infantibus blandiebantur ne lachrymantes immolarentur. *Tertullian*. Cap. 9, p. 10. and he moreover informs us that this cruel custom publickly continued among them to the proconsulship of *Tiberius*: Infantes penes Africam Saturno immolabantur palam usque ad proconsulatum *Tiberii*, p. 9. Edit. Rigalt 1641. This horrid custom the *Carthaginians* derived from their ancestors the *Phœnicians*, of whom we read that they made their children pass through the fire to *Molock*. See Levit. xviii. 21. Deut. xviii. 10. Jerem. vii. 31. Κροτω μὲν γὰρ Φοινίκης καθ' ἑκάστον ἐτὸς ἰθὺς τὰ ἀγαπῶντα καὶ μένοντες τῶν τεκνῶν. *Eusebii* Oratio de laudibus Constantini p. 646. *Valesii* 1659.

§ *Pescenius Festus* in libris historiarum per satyram refert Carthaginenses Saturno humanas hostias solitos immolare: et cum victi essent ab *Agathocle* rege Siculorum, iratum sibi Deum putavisse; itaque ut diligentius piaculum solverent DUCENTOS nobilium filios immolasse. *LaFontius*, Lib. i. p. 94. Edit. *Sparke*, Oxon. 1684. Φοινίκης ἐν ταῖς μεγάλαις συμφοραῖς, ἢ πολεμῶν, ἢ αὐχμῶν, ἢ λοιμῶν εἴθεοντο τῶν φιλοτάων τῆς ἐπιβηφίζοντες Κροτω, καὶ πλήρης δὲ ἡ Φοινικὴ ἰστορία τῶν θεοσάντων. *Porphyrus* de abstinentiâ, Lib. ii. p. 94. Edit. Cantab. 1655. See many affecting instances of human sacrifices collected by *Clem. Alexandrinus*, p. 27. Paris 1629, and by *Minucius Felix*, p. 312. 313. 314. et not. Gronov. Lug. Bat. 1709.

what they esteemed their excellencies! They justified the most criminal and atrocious excesses by the \* *example of their gods*, and vindicated the practice

\* The reasoning of *Chærea* in *Terence* is well known. Deum sese in hominem convertisse, atque per alienas tegulas venisse clanculum per impluvium, fucum factum mulieri. At quem Deum? qui templa cœli summa sonitu concutit. Ego homuncio hoc non facerem. *Eunuchus*, Act. iii. §. v. v. 39. Διος δε η̄ των άλλων Θεω̄ μιμηται γενομενοι εν τῷ ανδρω̄σεται η̄ γυναιξιν αδως μιμουσθι. *Justin. Martyr*, Apol. ii. p. 52 Edit. Oxon. 1703. Τι αγαπακτικς, Ελληνη̄ων, προς το̄τεκνος σου, ει τοῡ Διὸς μιμημενος, επιβουλευει σοι, η̄ σου τον̄ γαμον̄ στυληκει — τι δε̄ μιμηθη̄ σου την̄ γυναικᾱ ακολασως̄ ξωσκει την̄ δε̄ Αφροδιτη̄ ιακως̄ μιμηκας; p. 144. Again, he says, “These principles and actions of the gods conduce to corrupt the heart of those who read them: for all men think it a fine thing to imitate the gods.” Εις διαφθοραν η̄ προτροπην των̄ εκπαιδουμενων̄ ταυτᾱ γεγραπταῑ μιμητας̄ γαρ̄ Θεων̄ καλος̄ ειναῑ παντες̄ η̄γουνται. *Justin. Martyr*, Apol. i. p. 42, 43. *Grabe* 1700. Quid loquar Martis et Veneris adulterium deprehensum? et in Ganymedem Jovis stuprum coelo consecratum? Quæ omnia in hoc prodita ut vitii hominum quædam auctoritas pararetur. His atque hujus modi figmentis et mendaciis dulcioribus *corrumpuntur ingenia* puerorum. *Minucius Felix*, p. 228, 1709. For the *pernicious* effects which the *examples* of their gods produced on the morals of the *Pagans*, see also *Justin Martyr*, p. 67, 69. Edit. Paris. *Theoph. ad Autol.* 86. Eiusdem Edit. *Athenagoras*, p. 154. Edit. Oxon. 1682. Vultis vestri juvenes sciant, audiant, discant, Jupiter ipse qualis in unam extiterit atque alteram matrem? Vultis aulæ virginis, robus tique adhuc patres, idem iste in filiam quâ luserit arte cognoscant? — Ita ergo non protinus ab hujus modi fugiendum Diis longe, ac ne irrepat in animum tam impuræ religionis obscœnitas, audientia tota claudenda est. *Arnobius* adv. Gentes. p. 178. Ed. 1651.

practice of debauchery, luxury, fraud, and intemperance, by the lives and actions of the established objects of their adoration. They believed in the existence of many co-ordinate deities. *Tertullian* tells us their *Jupiters* amounted to three hundred †. The number of their inferior gods was infinite ‡. There were *deities*, according to the vulgar estimation, that presided over every distinct nation, every distinct city, every inconsiderable town, every grove, every river, every fountain ||. *Athens* was full of statues, dedicated to different deities. *Rome*, from political principles, adopted all the *gods*, whom all the various nations respectively worshipped, and thought to eternize her empire by crowding all the immortal powers into the capital. They erected *temples* and *fanés* to all the \* *passions, dis-*

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*eases,*

† Romanus cynicus Varro trecentos Joves—introducitur. Apol. p. 16. Rigalt. Et ne longius multos Joves obeam, tot sunt Jovis monstra, quot nomina. *Min. Felix.* p. 109. *Davis.*

‡ See *Clem. Alex.* p. 17. Paris 1629. Ποσοι δε των Αεωλητων; αναριθμητοι. κ. τ. λ.

|| In the *fields*, Satyrs and Pans: in the *woods*, Oreads and Hamadryads: in the *waters, rivers, and fountains*, Naids: and in the *sea*, Nereids. Κατ' αγρουσιν μιν Σατυρουσιν ην Πανασιν. κ. τ. λ. *Clem. Alexand.* p. 39. Paris 1629.

\* Qui tantus error fuit, ut perniciosius etiam rebus, non modo nomen deorum tribueretur, sed etiam sacra constituerentur. Febris enim sanum in Palatio, et Orbonæ ad ædem Larum, et aram Malæ fortunæ Esquiliiis consecratam videmus.



eases, fears, and evils that infest human life. There were, according to *Varrò*, no less than three hundred different sentiments about the supreme good and sole felicity of mortals. The *Epicureans*, who taught that the world was formed by a casual concurrence of atoms, that the government of the world was business infinitely beneath the dignity of *God*, and that sensual pleasure was man's chief good, were the most flourishing sect, had the greatest numbers of noble and dignified personages who espoused it, as among the *Jews*, the *Sadducees*, whose distinguishing tenets were, that there was no future state, angel,

videmus. *Cicero* de Nat. Deor. Lib. c. xxv, p. 314. Ed. *Davis*, Cantab. 1723. Tullus in re trepidâ duodecim vocit Satiòs, sanaque Pallori ac Pavori. *Liv.* Hist. Lib. i. c. xxvii, p. 42. *Maittaire*. Καὶ γὰρ Αἰδὸς ὀφείλει ἑστῆναι, καὶ Φόβος καὶ Οἴστος. *Pausanias*, Lib. i. p. 39. Lipsiæ-1696. Well might *Tertullian* say of them: Apud vos quodvis colere jus est præter Deum verum. *Apol.* Cap. xxiv. p. 26. *Rigalt*. Cloacinam Tatius et invenit et coluit: Pavorem Hostilius atque Pallorem: mox à nescio quo Febris dedicata: hæc alumna urbis istius superstitio, morbi et male valetudines. Sane et Acca Larentia, et Flora, meretrices propudiosa; inter morbos Romanorum et Deos computanda. *Minucius Felix*, p. 256, 257. Lug. Bat. 1709. Cæteros quidem Deos ad beneficiendum venerabantur: Febrim autem ad minus nocendum templis colebant. *Valerius Maximus*, Lib. ii. Cap. v p. 164. *Torrenii*, Leide 1726. See also *Æliani* Var. Hist. Lib. xii. Cap. xi. p. 734. *Gronov.* Lug. Bat. 1731. *Plin.* Lib. ii. c. vii. *Cicero* de Leg. Lib. ii. *Clem. Alex.* p. 28. Paris. See also p. 16. B. and p. 24. C. and *Minuc. Felix*, p. 144. Cant. 1712.

angel, or spirit, but that the soul perishes with the body, had by far the greatest number of the illustrious and opulent, who adopted this system. Considerable numbers, also, of the philosophers and great men among the *beatbens*, about the time of the gospel's publication, courted the gloom of scepticism, professed to doubt of every thing, denied there was any such thing as *certainty* attainable from any moral reasonings, and that it was absolutely impossible to determine on which side, (not *truth*, for they did not pretend to investigate and discover *truth*, but even on what side) the greatest *probability* lay. Great numbers made the notion of an over-ruling and particular † *providence* the subject of their banter and ridicule, and derided the superstitious vulgar opinion of a *future* \* *state*—and those, who believed

† Quod si mundus divinâ providentiâ, et alicujus numinis auctoritate regeretur, nunquam mereretur *Phalaris* et *Dionysus* regnum: nunquam *Rutilus* et *Camillus* exilium; nunquam *Socrates* Venenum. *Min. Felix*, p. 38. *Cantab.* 1712. *Cicero* De Nat. Deor. Lib. iii. §. 32, 33. Nam si curent, bene bonis sit, male malis; quod nunc abest. *ibid.* p. 327. *Cantab.* 1723.

\* Et metus ille foras præceps Acheruntis agendus  
Funditus, humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo.  
*Lucretii*, Lib. iii. v. 37.

Mortalem tamen esse Animam fateare necesse est. v. 542.

See the whole 3d Book. So *Virgil*,

*Felix*, qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas,

A que metus omnes et inexorabile fatum

Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari. *Georg.*  
Lib. ii. p. 489. See also the conclusion of the sixth *Æneid*.

lieved the immortality of the soul, made its happiness consist in gratifications and indulgences, infinitely unworthy a rational spirit. In these wretched times it was also very customary to † expose children, and to suffer those, who were ‡ maimed or illegitimate, to perish with *hunger* on mountains and in forests, or to be devoured by *birds* or *beasts* of prey. It is amazing that *Plato* deems this inhuman custom § proper and lawful in *particular* cases. Debauchery was the ¶ predominant vice

† Vos enim video procreatos filios nunc feris et avibus exponere, *Minucius Felix*, 151. *Davis*. Μη των εκθετων τη μη αναληφθεις θανατωθη η ωμειν ανδροφοτοι, αλλ' η την αρχην ουκ εγαμμειν, ει μη επι παιδιων αναληφθη. *Justin Martyr*, p. 71. Paris. Και μη εκθεται μεν το γεννηθεν, ως των εκθετων τεκνοκλοουνητων, *Athenag.* p. 161. Οξον, 168e. Qui natos sibi liberos enecent? siquidem et de genere necis differt, utique crudelius in aquâ spiritum extorquetis, aut frigori, et fami, et canibus exponitis. *Tertullian*, p. 16. Rigalt.

‡ Αποκλινηται δε μηδεν των γενομενων νεωτερον τριελς, πλην ει τι γενοιο παιδιον αναπηρον, η τηρας εθους απο γοτης. Ταυτα δ' ουκ εκωλυσειν εκθεσθαι τες γεινομενους. *Dion. Halicar.* p. 85. Vol. i. *Hudson*.

§ Και ταυτα γ' ηδη παλτα διακελευσασμενοι προθυμεισθαι, μαλιγα μεν μηδ' εις φως εκφερειν κνημα μηδεν, ειη γενηται· ειη δε τι βιασθαι, ουτω εκθεσθαι ως ου ουσης τροφης τω τοιοιτω. *Plato de Repub.* Lib. v. Tom. ii. p. 461. *Serrani*.

¶ See a faithful but horrid description of the debauchery of that age in *Clem. Alexand.* p. 40. Paris, 1629, which he concludes with these striking words. Η'τακτην υμων τα ωλα, απωρονηκασαν οι σφθαλμοι, η καινοτερον, προ της σωματοκασα ει σφεις υμειν μιμοιχευκασιν, p. 41. *Ejusdem*, Editionis.

vice in that age, and to procure *|| abortion* was publicly avowed as a *duty* in many instances. Suicide was in fashion, and many of the most eminent \* philosophers set their seal to its lawfulness. A careful perusal of the *first, second, and third* chapters of the *Romans*, will give my reader a full idea of the horrid impiety and universal profligacy both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles* in *that* age. In all the *past* annals of the world never was there a fitter season for the divine interposition to reform and reclaim mankind, to recover them from their polytheism, idolatry, and wickedness, and to give them a pure and perfect system of religion and morals.

*|| Sunt quæ in ipsis visceribus, medicaminibus epotis, originem futuri hominis extinguant, et parricidium faciant antequam parlant, Minucius Felix, 151. Davis. Homicidii festinatio est prohibere nasci. nec refert natam quis eripiat animam, an nascentem disturbet. Tertullian, p. 10. Paris 1641.*

\* *Cicero, Seneca, Aristotle. See Cicero. Fin. Lib. i. Seneca, Epist. 12, 28, 70. Aristotelis, Pol. Lib. vii. Ch. 16.*

120 *In all points of doctrine the books of* [Chap. III.

C H A P. III.

*In all points of Doctrine and Duty, the Books of the NEW TESTAMENT have descended to us in their original integrity.*

THE writings, which contain this revelation, have not been corrupted in any one essential instance of *doctrine* and *duty*, but in this *capital* respect have descended to our times in their *primitive* state and original *purity*. When the books of the *New Testament* were first published to the world, it is natural to think that the *Christians* would entertain the highest esteem and reverence for writings which delivered an *authentic* history of the life and doctrines of *Jesus*, and for records which contained a divine revelation. Every one would be desirous of possessing such an invaluable treasure, and of transcribing it with the greatest accuracy and utmost fidelity. Copies of these books would soon be multiplied without number, universally diffeminated in the whole extent of the Christian world, and appear in as many *translations* as there were *languages* spoken by its professors. So that it would very soon be rendered absolutely *impossible* that these books should be depraved and adulterated in any one important *passage*, or even in any one important *word* or *phrase*. For these sacred records being  
universally

universally regarded as the supreme standard of truth, and the measure of all religious opinions, it would be impossible that any man, or body of men, should corrupt and falsify them in any fundamental article, should foist into them even a single *expression* to favour their peculiar dogmata, or erase from them any sentence, without being detected by thousands. A book, justly esteemed so venerable and sacred by *every individual* of such an *immense body* as the Christians soon formed, was, least of all, obnoxious to pious frauds, and to be tampered with by the rash and profane hand of *sect* and *system*, to serve a cause. Some slight and trivial alterations, indeed, in *later* ages, have been transferred into the text from *translations*, or introduced through the negligence of *transcribers*; but they have soon been detected and proscribed. For it could not be, at any one time, that any the smallest additions should be *made*, or any the smallest words *suppressed*, without being discovered\*. For to these *books* men were continually appealing—these *books* all Christians were continually perusing and consulting—these *books* all societies publicly read, and publicly and privately regarded as the supreme infallible

\* *Quantas autem foveas in ista vel maxime epistola [ad Romanos] Marcion fecerit, auferendo quae voluit, de nostri instrumenti integritate patebit. Tertullian. adv. Marcion. Lib. v. p. 601. Rigalt.*

122 *In all points of doctrine the books of* [Chap. III.

infallible rule of faith and doctrine †—Besides, almost *immediately* upon the first promulgation of Christianity there arose various *sects* who formed themselves into different *societies* under their respective leaders, which always regarded each other with a jealous eye. These *several parties* watched over the Scriptures, to which they all mutually appealed, with an ever-wakeful vigilance and penetration, which not the least alteration could possibly have escaped. These religious disputes and contests have proved an ‡ happy mean of preserving the Scriptures in their original purity, incorrupt and unadulterated, for it is impossible that in any one age the *whole* Christian world could have combined to new-model and adjust these books to *their* sentiments, because there never was an age in which *all* the Christians were unanimously agreed in the *same* system of doctrine and articles of belief. Different opinions have always prevailed, and ever will prevail, and every *different* denomination hath studied, and will for ever study, to justify its mode of faith by the common supreme standard of scriptural infallibility—Moreover, the citations made from these writings in all the religious books that have  
been

† See this argument well represented by Dr. *Benson* in his *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, Vol. i. p. 122—120. 3d Edition.

‡ See Dr. *Benson's* *Reasonableness of the Christian Religion*, Vol. i. p. 128.

been composed by different men in different centuries of the church, from the *first* ages of Christianity through all the *intermediate* times to the *present*, perfectly agree and harmonize with the sacred *original* in our hands, and are an incontestable proof that this divine volume hath, in every great essential, been transmitted down to us in its primitive purity and original integrity. The citations from the New Testament in the writings of the *primitive* Christians in the *first centuries* are so numerous, that from the various scattered passages in their books, if collected, there would be formed *almost* the whole body of the *Gospels* and *Epistles*—and though these citations were, most commonly, made *from memory*, yet *always* with regard to the sense and meaning, and most *commonly* with regard to the words and order of the words, they correspond with the original records from which they were extracted. An irrefragable argument this, how pure and sincere these sacred monuments have always been preserved. And though of *late years* many \* pious per-

\* The great and good Dr. *Whitby* was distressed at the immense number of various readings in the New Testament collected and published by Dr. *Mill*. *Variantium lectionum immensa moles multorum animos suspensos reddet, atque suspiciones haud parvas injiciet parum quid certi ex libris in omni commate, imo in omni fere commatis parte variantibus, expectari posse*—Quantos igitur de textu eodem triumphos agent Pontificii, cum viderint eas lectiones a Millio quadruplo auctiores factas, et demum appendice copiosa locupletatas: *Examen Var. lect. Millii*, p. 3, 4.



124. *In all points of doctrine the books of* [Chap. I.I. persons, who have not attended to these things, have been alarmed, and many † *infidels*, who triumph in any thing that they imagine tends to depreciate and invalidate the Christian religion, have exulted at the discovery of *thirty thousand* various readings in the New Testament, yet every critic and scholar, who is competently qualified to judge in this subject, knows that this is a most *favourable* and *happy* state of things—the more that copies are multiplied, and the more numerous that transcripts and translations from the original are, the more likely is the † *true* text, and the true *original* reading to be investigated and ascertained—the most *correct* and *accurate* antient books we *now* have, are those of which we have the *most* manuscripts; and the most *depraved*, *mutilated*, and *inaccurate* editions of old authors that are now in our hands, are those of which we have the *fewest*, perhaps but a *single* † manuscript. This formidable number, as it is thought by some, of various lections in the New Testament, principally conversant in particles, in spelling proper names, in the substitution

† Tindal's *Christianity as old as the Creation*, p. 324. *Christianity not founded on Argument*, p. 61.

‡ See this fully proved by the very learned Dr. Bentley in his *Pbileutherus Lipsiensis*, p. 64—68, and page 76. 6th Edition; as also by Dr. Chandler in his *Vindication of the Christian Religion against Collins*, p. 313, and Dr. Benson, in his *Reasonableness, &c.* p. 210, Vol. i. 3d Edition.

|| As of *Athenæus*, *Hesychius*, *Clemens Romanus*.

tion of synonymous expressions, and the transposition of the order of words,\* only demonstrates that these books have been *often* transcribed, and afford us the happiest and best opportunity, by a careful and judicious collation, for determining fixing and establishing the original reading—Not to mention, that the providence of

GOD,

\* Et sane, ut dicam quod res est, ex præstantissimâ hæc N. T. Editione *Milliana*, ad quam nunc nostrâ operâ accessio haud spernenda facta est, vel hic præcipue fructus in Ecclesiam redundât, quod nunc demum scire liceat, pleraque tot *Codicum*. *MISS.* *lectiones variantes* ita comparatas esse, ut parum vel nihil inter eas intersit. Quid enim, quæso, interest, utrum, ex. gr. scribatur καγω, an ἐγω? ελασσω, an ελαττω? γινισθω, an γινισθω? λαλωσι, an λαλησασιν? ιδοθησα, an ιδοθησα? μαθεις an μαθηται? ανωχθη, an ηνωχθη, vel προχθη? κυριος, an addito articulo, ο κυριος? ογω, αν ελεπω? επιτα, αν ειτα? εν, an ενι? δηλον οτι, an unâ voce δηλονοτι? Μωσης, an Μουσης? et innumera alia hujus generis, quæ longe maximum variantium lectionum numerum in hac Editione implent. Sane si leviora illa à reliquis separaveris, mirum quam exiguus eorum relinquatur numerus, quæ videantur alicujus esse momenti: *Kusteri* Præfatio ad N. Test. *Rostrodami* 1710. There are a multitude, says Dr. *Benson*, of various readings mentioned by Dr. *Mill* and *Kuster*, which make little or no difference as to the sense. To give the *English* reader some notion of this, I might produce that phrase [*our Lord Jesus Christ*] which is in some copies, *Jesus*: in others, *Christ*: in others, *Jesus Christ*: Some have it *Jesus Christ the Lord*: some read, *our Lord*: some *the Lord Jesus Christ*: and some again *our Lord Jesus Christ*: and finally some perhaps read differently from all these. Dr. *Benson's* Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, Vol. i. p. 214. Edit. 3d.

GOD, who was at such an expence, if I may so express it, in giving this revelation and ratifying its truth by the death of his beloved son, and who, from eternal ages, designed that THIS RELIGION should constitute the faith and hope of such infinite numbers of his rational and immortal creatures, and, *at last*, become the religion of the WHOLE world, would most certainly never permit its divine beauty and celestial form to be sullied and totally obscured in the depravity and darkness of any age or nation, but would preserve it, in every essential and fundamental article of doctrine and duty, from being altered and corrupted by pious frauds; and by his Almighty power and gracious superintendence ever continue to make its sacred streams to flow from one successive age to another in their original clearness, fulness, and usefulness, free from the pollutions of irrational enthusiasm and mercenary superstition, and uncontaminated with the foreign admixtures of any human modes, sentiments and systems.

## C H A P. IV.

*A general account of the sacred authors of the NEW TESTAMENT, and the time in which their respective writings were published.*

## S E C T. I.

*A short history of the Evangelist Matthew.*

**S**T. *Matthew* was a native of *Galilee*, and a publican, or tax-gatherer, under the Romans. He was collector of the customs at the port of *Capernaum*, a maritime town on the sea of *Galilee*. His office consisted in collecting the taxes upon all goods that were there imported or exported, and receiving the tribute which all passengers by water were obliged to pay. The occupation of a publican was a most \*invidious employment, and to the *Jews* was peculiarly odious and detestable, as they had been so long free, and so indignantly supported the *Roman* yoke. In passing through *Capernaum* our Lord saw this worthy publican sitting in the tax-gatherer's office, and by his perfect knowledge of the human heart, for

\* *Theocritus* being once asked, which was the most cruel of all beasts, made answer: that among the wild beasts of the forest they were the *lion* and the *bear*: but among the beasts of the city they were the *Parasite* and *Publican*. Says an unknown poet: Πᾶσις τίλωσις πάντις, ἴσθι αἶψ' ἀγίε.

for the evangelist *John* tells us he wanted no information concerning any one's character, knowing him to be a person of virtuous and amiable dispositions, he said to him, *Follow me*. Upon this invitation he instantly arose and mingled in his train. But undoubtedly his conscientious regards to the common obligations of justice would induce him to secrete nothing, but to deliver in his accounts in an upright manner to those who had employed him. We afterwards find this apostle making a\* grand entertainment at his house, to which he invited Jesus and a great number of publicans and their friends—apparently with this good design—that by the personal converse of Jesus, their prejudices against him might be softened or removed, that they might have an happy opportunity of seeing the amiable endowments which distinguished him, and consequently be disposed to think favourably of him for relinquishing his employment to follow such an instructor. This benevolent design of *Matthew*, one may conjecture, had all its effects—for we afterwards find the publicans among our Lord's auditors, and devoutly attending his ministry. From the time of this invitation to be his follower and disciple, *Matthew* continued with *Jesus Christ*—distinguished with the honour of being one of his twelve apostles, a familiar attendant on his person, a spectator of his

\* Μεγαλη δοχη, Luke v. 29.

his *public* and *private* conduct, an hearer of his discourses, a witness of his temper and morals, and an evidence of his resurrection. After our Saviour's assumption he was along with the other apostles at Jerusalem—and on the day of *pentecost* was endowed with spiritual gifts and miraculous powers. He was crowned with martyrdom, as is commonly believed, in *Æthiopia*, in a city called *Nadabbar*, or *Naddaver*. † The testimonies of antient writers concerning him and his gospel may be seen in that most accurate and useful work of the learned and judicious Dr. *Lardner*, entitled, *the credibility of the gospel history*, in supplement, Vol. i. p. 95. 2d Edition, 1760. Learned men are not agreed about the exact time in which *St. Matthew* published his gospel. If *Irenæus* may be relied upon, who expressly declares that *Matthew* † published his gospel when *Peter and Paul* were preaching at *Rome*, it must have been when *Paul* was in that city the *second* time—about the year of Christ 64—the time when *Nero* persecuted the Christians. *Baronius*, *Grævius*, *Vossius*, *Jones*, and the late learned professor *Wettein*, concur in the opinion that it was published in the year 41, about eight years after our Saviour's ascension. Dr. *Henry Owen*, in his

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† See *Carve's Historia Literaria*, and his *Lives of the Apostles*.

‡ Ο μὲν δὲ Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς ἑβραίοις τῆ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ αὐτοῦ καὶ γράφειν ἐξηγήσει εὐαγγελίου, τοῦ Πέτρου καὶ τοῦ Παύλου ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελιζομένων. *Irenæus*, p. 198, 199, *Grabe*.

late *Observations on the four gospels*, hath fixed the date of its publication much earlier—about the year of Christ 38, the second of *Caligula*, and the fifth from our Lord's assumption.\* But though learned men differ in ascertaining the time in which *St. Matthew* wrote, yet all antiquity is unanimously agreed, that this evangelist compiled his gospel for the service of the *Jews in Palestine*, to confirm those who believed, and to convert, if possible, those who believed not.†

## S E C T. II.

*A short history of the Evangelist Mark.*

**S***T. Mark* was not an *apostle* or *companion* of Jesus Christ during his ministry. All that we learn in the *New Testament* concerning him is, that he was the son of a religious woman at Jerusalem, who had embraced the Christian faith, and at whose house the disciples, in those troublesome times, usually met. We find him in company with *Paul* and *Barnabas* in their journey from *Jerusalem* to *Antioch*, and afterwards he accompanied them to other countries in the capacity of their *minister* or *assistant*. Says *St. Paul* to *Timothy*: *Take Mark and bring him with thee,*  
for

\* Page 22.

† See Dr. *Henry Owen's* observations on the four gospels, p. 13.

for he is profitable to me for the ministry. Upon Paul and Barnabas landing at Perga in Pamphylia Mark left them and returned to Jerusalem. Here he was personally present with all the apostles and heard their discourses—for as yet they were all in Judæa, except James the son of Zebedee, whom Herod Agrippa had beheaded. After this we find a † violent contention, which ended in a mutual separation, between Paul and Barnabas, with regard to associating Mark with them in their ministerial labours. Having reciprocally agreed to visit the Christian churches they had formed, Barnabas, in this intended journey, proposed taking with them John whose surname was Mark. Paul peremptorily opposed this, thinking him an improper companion, as he had before relinquished them at Pamphylia, and declined travelling farther with them in propagating the gospel.

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† Acts xvi, 39. παροξυσμῶς, a very strong expression, denoting a sharp and virulent contention, a bitter altercation, a violent quarrel. The verb παροξυνώω signifies, to be exasperated. When he saw the city entirely devoted to the worship of idols, his spirit was exasperated; παροξύνετο το πνεῦμα αὐτοῦ. Acts xvii. 16. Charity is not exasperated, provoked, οὐ παροξύνεται. 1 Cor. xiii, 5. Many passages might be produced from Greek writers to confirm this sense of the word. See Polybius, p. 262, 265, 276, 277, 283, 372, 373, 375. Hanov. 1619. Diodorus Siculus, p. 354, 366, 382, 383. Rhodoman. 1604. Strabo, p. 143, 195, 223, 291, 393. Paris 1620. Παροξυσμῶς is used in a good sense, Heb. x, 24. to provoke one another to love and to good works: αἱ παροξυσμοί.



*Barnabus* persisted in his resolution, and took our historian with him to *Cyprus*—*Paul* took *Silas* for his associate, and travelled through *Syria* and *Cilicia*. But though *St. Paul* judged *Mark* to be an improper person to attend them, and this sharp altercation and difference arose about the propriety of his accompanying them, yet he was afterwards reconciled to him, and during his confinement at *Rome* mentions him in his epistles with great and deserved respect. *Eusebius* mentions a report, that this apostle and evangelist went to *Egypt*, was the first person who in that country preached the gospel which he had composed, and planted churches in *Alexandria*. \* *Jerom* delivers the † same account, and informs us that he died in the eighth year of *Nero*, and was buried at *Alexandria*. ‡ From which we learn that he did not suffer martyrdom. || *Papias*,

\*\* *Ire-*

\* Τούτου δε Μαρκον πρωτον φασιν επι της Αιγυπτου σιλαμνον το ευαγγελιον, ο δε κη συνεγραψατο, κηρυξαι, εκκλησιας τε πρωτον επι αυτης Αλεξανδρειας συστησασθαι. *Eusebii Ec. Hist. Lib. ii, cap. xvi, p. 53, Valesii. 1659.*

† Assumpto itaque Evangelio, quod ipse confecerat, perrexit ad Aegyptum, et primus Alexandriae Christum annuntians constituit ecclesiam. *De Viris Illuf. c. viii.*

‡ Mortuus est autem octavo Neronis anno, et sepultus Alexandriae. *Ibid.*

|| Μαρκος μιν ερμηνευτης Πιτρω γινομενος, οσα εμνημονευσε, ακριβως εγραψεν ου μιν τοι ταξι τα υπο του Χριστι η λεχθηεντα η πραχθηεντα. ουτε γαρ ηκουσε του Κυριου, ουτε παρακαλουθησεν αυτω. *Papias apud Eusebium, Hist. Eccl. Lib. iii. Cap. ult. 113. Valesii.*

\*\* *Irenæus*, †† *Clement of Alexandria*, and ††† *Origen*, unite in styling *Mark* the *disciple* and *interpreter* of *Peter*. A distinguished passage of *Clement of Alexandria*, who flourished in the year of Christ 194, is worthy to be recited, as it shows us the *occasion* of his writing his gospel. \* The following circumstance induced *Mark* to compose his gospel. The apostle *Peter* having publicly preached the Christian religion in *Rome*, and delivered the doctrines of the gospel by the spirit, many who were present, entreated *Mark*, as he had been a long time his companion, and had a clear knowledge of what was now delivered, that he would commit them to writing. Accordingly, when he had finished his gospel he delivered it to those, who had made this request. To the same purpose *Jerom* <sup>b</sup> says: *Mark*, the disciple and interpreter of *Peter*, at the request of the Christians at *Rome*, wrote a short gospel, according to what he had heard *Peter* relate. The gospel published by *Mark*, <sup>c</sup> says *Tertullian*, may

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be

\*\* Μαρκος ὁ μαθητὴς καὶ ἑρμηνευτὴς Πέτρου, καὶ αὐτὸς τὰ ἴσα Πέτρου κήρυττομένα ἐγγράφως ἡμῖν παραδίδωκε. *Irenæus*, p. 199. Grabe.

†† Ἀκολουθησάντα αὐτῷ [Πέτρῳ] πορεύειν, καὶ μεταμνηστὸν τῶν λεχθέντων. *Clem. Alex.* apud *Eusebium*, Hist. Eccl. Lib. vi. Cap. xiv. p. 216. *Valesii*.

††† He wrote as *Peter* dictated to him. *Origen* in *Dr. Lardner's Credibility*, Vol. viii. p. 235.

a See *Eusebius Eccl. Hist. Lib. vi. Cap. xiv. p. 216. Paris 1659. Valesii*.

b *De Viris Illustribus*, Cap. viii.

c *Tertullian*, p. 505. *Rigalt. 1641.*

be accounted *Peter's*, whose interpreter he was, *Epiphanius* says, that *Mark* was one of Christ's *seventy* disciples: but this assertion cannot be relied upon. It is easy to indulge conjectures and to weave plausible schemes. It is allowed by almost all the antients, that he wrote his gospel at *Rome*, and from a declaration of *Irenæus*, that he published it after the \* decease of *Peter* and *Paul*, it is with certainty concluded that it could not be written before the year 63 or 64 of Christ.

## S E C T. III.

*A short history of the Evangelist Luke.*

**S**T. *Luke*, says *Eusebius*, was a native of *Antioch*, by profession a *physician*, and for the most part a companion of the apostle *Paul*. From his attending *St. Paul* in his travels, and from the testimony of some of the antients, *Basnage*, *Fabricius*, and Dr. † *Lardner* have been induced to conclude that this evangelist was a *Jew*—and some learned men both among the *antients* and *moderns* have been of opinion that he was one of the *seventy*. || The first time that this evangelist is

\* Μετα δε την τευτων εξοδον. *Irenæus*. *Grabe*. p. 169. So I understand the word *εξοδον* in this passage.

† *Lardner's* Supplement to the *Credibility*, Vol. i. p. 236. 2d Edit.

|| See Dr. *Whitby's* Preface, and Dr. *Lardner's* history of this Evangelist, ubi supra.

is mentioned in the New Testament is in his own history of the *Acts of the apostles*. We find him<sup>a</sup> with St. Paul at *Troas*. He attended the apostle to *Jerusalem*—continued with him during his troubles in *Judæa*—sailed in the same ship with him when he was sent a prisoner from *Cæsarea* to *Rome*—and stayed with him in the imperial city during his two years confinement there. In St. Paul's epistles, written during his imprisonment, he is mentioned by name, and, in *one* of those letters, styled the *beloved physician*. The *antients* have not mentioned his suffering martyrdom—it is probable, therefore, that he died a natural death. St. Luke was *not* an *apostle*—but he was as *Irenæus* observes, an<sup>b</sup> inseparable *companion* of the apostle Paul, and committed to writing, the gospel preached by him. *Clement of Alexandria*, as quoted in *Eusebius*, mentions a traditionary report handed down from presbyters of more antient times, which was, that the gospels which contained the *genealogies* were written *first*.<sup>\*</sup> If this tradition may be depended upon, and it is very *probable*, the gospels of *Matthew* and *Luke* were written before St. Mark's. *Tertullian* calls

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<sup>a</sup> Acts xvi, 10, 11.

<sup>b</sup> *Lucas* inseparabilis fuit à Paulo, p. 234. Again, p. 199. Lucas autem sectator Pauli, quod ab illo prædicabatur Evangelium, in libro condidit. *Irenæus* Græc. Oxon 1702.

\* Προγενεσθαι ελεγε [ὁ Κλημης] του ευαγγελιστου τα περιμιχοντα τας γενεολογιας. *Eusebius* Ecc. Hist. Lib. vi. c. xiv. p. 216. *Valesii*. Paris 1659.

*Matthew* and *John*, disciples of *Christ*, *Mark* and *Luke*, disciples of *apostles*. † In like manner *Eusebius* says, that *Luke* had delivered in his gospel a faithful narrative of those transactions, of whose truth he himself had been fully assured, from the distinguished advantages he enjoyed from his great intimacy and long continuance with *Paul*, and his converse with the other *Apostles*. ‡ We learn from the *proem* of his gospel with what fidelity and accuracy he compiled the history of those wonderful transactions it records. He tells his reader, with what religious solicitude he had examined into the historical facts on which Christianity was founded, with what care and caution he had traced the stream to its source, and what application and study he had employed to digest and arrange these great events in a regular series. “As there have been several persons, says he, who have compiled and published to the world historical accounts of those celebrated transactions, for the veracity of which we have such ample and undoubted evidence, having been furnished with materials by those persons who  
were

† Nobis fidem ex *Apostolis* *Joannes* et *Matthæus* instaurant: ex *Apostolicis* *Lucas* et *Marcus* instaurant. *Tertullian*, p. 503. Rigalt.

‡ Τοι ασφαλη λογος εν αυτω ικανως την αληθειαν κατειληφαι, εκ της αμα Παυλω συνουσιας τι κ' διατριβης, κ' της των λοιπων αποστολων ομιλιας ωφειλημεν, δια του ιδιου παριδωκεν ηραγγελιαυ, *Eusebius* Ecc, Hist, p. 96. *Valesii*,

were not only the *preachers* of Christianity, but, from the beginning, were *eye witnesses* of the facts themselves: After their example, I too, O most illustrious *Theophilus*, after having diligently examined into these events and accurately investigated them to their source, have judged it proper to digest them into a regular and connected narration, in order that you may see on what a firm and unshaken basis that religious system is supported, into the doctrines of which you have been carefully initiated." This marks his fidelity as an historian, and strongly prepossesseth the reader in favour of the veracity and probity of the writer. This history, says *St. Jerom*, he composed and published in the regions of *Achaia* and *Bocotia*. \* My learned and worthy friend *Dr. Lardner*, who hath examined these subjects with the greatest accuracy and critical judgment, hath fixed the date of this *gospel* and of the *Acts* to the year 63 or 64. *Dr. Owen* hath assigned an earlier period to the publication of this *gospel*—about the year 53.

\* In Achaiaꝝ Bocotiaꝝque partibus, volumen condidit. Proem. in Comment. Matth.

## S E C T. IV.

*A short history of the Evangelist John.*

**S***T. John*, commonly accounted the *youngest* of *Christ's* disciples, was the son of *Zebedee*, a fisherman on the lake of *Genesaret*. We are apt to connect the idea of extreme penury and indigence with this occupation. But the father of the evangelist appears to have been in good circumstances—for the history informs us that he was owner of a vessel and had *hired servants*. It is injurious to the characters of the apostles to suppose them immersed in the *depths* of poverty and misery, and in such poor and necessitous circumstances, as would dispose them to follow any hardy adventurer and share his fortunes. Upon the common notion that the disciples were so extremely indigent, there would be no *self-denial* and virtue at all in relinquishing such poverty and wretchedness. This was not the case. We find that they made a merit of the *disinterestedness* of their conduct to our Saviour, in that they had *left their all* and followed him—If one may judge of the temper and disposition of this evangelist from his writings, he appears to have been possessed with the most benevolent affections, and to have inherited a large portion of that most excellent \* spirit which he

\* See the amiable character, temper, and disposition of *St. John* beautifully delineated by the late ingenious *Dr. Duchal*, in his *Presumptive Arguments for the truth of the Christian Religion*, Discourse eighth.

he so frequently and pathetically recommends. If we consider his writings as an index of his mind, we shall happily discover the reason, why our blessed Saviour, who was so infallible a judge of intrinsic excellence and moral worth, should distinguish with *peculiar* affection and friendship an amiable person, whose mind was so consimilar to his own. Hence it is that in the history of our Lord, this evangelist is honoured with the appellation of *The disciple whom Jesus loved*. There are recorded several instances of our Saviour's particular affection and love for the apostle *John*—for him he permitted, along with *Peter* and *James*, to behold that wonderful scene, his *transfiguration*—to see several miracles, to which, for want of room, few only could be admitted—to lean on his bosom at the paschal supper—to be present at his devotions in the garden—and to him, at his crucifixion, he committed the care of his mother. These instances of superior respect were paid to amiable dispositions and affections congenial to his own, and flowed from a mind that was conscious what *dignity* and *lustre* such amiableness of temper and goodness of heart, as eminently distinguished this worthy disciple, would reflect upon his religion—The *English* reader is taught to form a wrong idea of the apostle *Peter* and our *historian*, from a very inaccurate and injudicious translation in Acts iv. 13. where the *Jewish Sanhedrim* are made to speak of them as *ignorant*



*rant* and *unlearned* men. The \* *first* term, in the *original*, only denotes, that they had not enjoyed a *liberal education*, and been trained up in the schools of the rabbies—and the † *second* expresses their being not in a public, but a *private*, station of life. This apostle, and his brother *James*, we once find unhappily transported into a most unjustifiable and criminal extravagance. Their sanguinary zeal kindled at the indignity that was offered their master. The temper and spirit, they alas showed on this occasion, may be looked upon as the *very first* instance of a persecuting spirit in the Christian church—and seems to be recorded to serve as a lesson to all future ages, how averse our Saviour was to *persecution*, and how abhorrent a persecuting spirit is from the true genius and design of the gospel. A *Samaritan* village refused to admit our Saviour, and publicly denied him the rites of hospitality, which were hardly ever *denied* in *those* days, merely because he seemed to be hastening swiftly through their territories to *Jerusalem*, without honouring with a visit *their* temple on mount *Gerizim*. Fired at this insult, this apostle and his brother immediately thus accosted our Saviour: Lord, wilt thou that we now command fire to come from heaven and consume them, as *Elias* did!—But he turned and rebuked

† *Ἀγραμματοί, sine literis*: id est, non versati in doctrinis Talmudicis. *Grot.* in loc.

† *Ἰδωσας*.

rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of! From this *unhappy* circumstance learned men have † thought that our Lord gave these two brothers the surname of *Boanerges*, which signifies, the *sons of thunder*—tho' this rather seems to be an honourable appellation, to denote with what resolution, intrepidity, and undaunted fortitude they would publish and propagate the gospel. It was for this *apostle* and his brother *James*, that their mother petitioned our *Saviour*, that he would advance them to the highest honours in that kingdom she fondly imagined he would speedily erect. Grant these my sons may sit, one on thy right, the other on thy left hand in thy kingdom. Undoubtedly this ambitious request was preferred to Christ at the instigation of her sons. In his gospel there is mention made no less than *four* times of *another disciple*, whose name is concealed. Most commentators have with great appearance of truth conjectured this *nameless* person to be the apostle *John*. If he be the person intended, he was known to the high priest—and from *this* circumstance one may infer the *reason* why St. *John* was the *only one* of the twelve who attended the crucifixion. He saw our Lord expire. *He who saw it bore witness, and his record is true.* He was present at the several appearances of our Saviour after his *resurrection*,  
and

† *Cassé's Life of St. James*, p. 142. and *Universal History*, Vol. x. p. 547. 8vo.

and hath given his testimony, to the truth of that grand capital fact, on which the whole fabric of Christianity rests. Our Saviour prophetically told him he should survive the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and intimated, not obscurely, that *Peter* should suffer crucifixion, but that *he* would die a natural death.\* In the effusion of the Holy Ghost he participated, with others, at the day of *pentecost*—he and *Peter* healed the lame man who sat at the gate of the temple—were brought before the *Sanhedrim* on that occasion, menaced and dismissed—were afterwards apprehended, imprisoned, but released by an angel—were, next, sent down to *Samaria*, communicated spiritual gifts to the converts, and returned afterwards to *Jerusalem*, where *John* seems to have continued a considerable time. We afterwards find this apostle banished, as is supposed, by *Domitian*, to the isle of *Patmos*, the scene of his prophetic visions and revelations. From this exile he returned upon that emperor's † death, spent the evening of his life at *Ephesus*, and survived *all the apostles*. *Irenæus* says, he lived to the time of the Emperor *Trajan*, ‡ and *Jerom*, that he died at  
a very

\* See John, Ch. xxi. 18—24.

† Τουρανον τελευτησας απο της Πατμου της ησου ματρωβω ως την Εφισου. *Eusebius*, Ecc. Hist. Lib. iii. p. 92. *Valesii*.  
So also *Jerom* in his book, *Of Illustrious persons*.

‡ Παρισμωι μεχρι των Τραιανω χρονωι. *Irenæus*, Lib. ii. p. 161.  
*Græc*. See also p. 205.

a very advanced age, in the 68th year of our Saviour's death, which is the *third* of *Trajan*, and was interred near *Ephesus*\*—The gospel of St. *John* was written at *Ephesus*, and designed by the author to be a *supplement* to the other three apostles, whose books, † *Eusebius* says, were brought to him, and approved by him as true and faithful narratives, only that there was wanting a written account of *Christ's* transactions in the *former* part of his ministry, and a relation of his *discourses*—which omissions he hath supplied. According to Dr. *Lardner*, his *gospel* was written in the year 68, his *first* epistle, about 80, his *second* and *third* between 80 and 90, and his *Revelation* in 95 or 96.

\* *Confectus senio, sexagesimo octavo post passionem Domini anno mortuus, juxta eandem urbem sepultus est. De Viris illust. Cap. ix.*

† *Vid. Eusebii. Hist. Ecc. Lib. iii. C. xxiv. p. 95. Valerii.*

## S E C T. V.

*A short History of the Apostle Paul.*

‡ **P** *PAUL*, whose name originally was *Saul*, but which he assumed upon his preaching among *Greeks* and *Romans*, to whom that name was familiar, was an *Hebrew of the Hebrews*, a descendent from *Abraham*, the illustrious ancestor of the *Jews*, belonged to the tribe of *Benjamin*, and was a native of *Tarsus* the capital of *Cilicia*. By birth he was a *freeman* of *Rome*—a distinguished honour and privilege, which, probably, some of his ancestors had obtained for some signal services to the commonwealth during the wars. His father was a *Pharisee*, and he himself was educated in the principles of that sect. He had a married sister, who lived at *Jerusalem*, and whose son was of eminent service to her brother during his confinement. *Andronicus*, *Junia*, *Herodion*, *Lucius*, *Jason*, *Sospater*, mentioned in *Romans* Ch. xvi, he calls his *kinsmen*. These his relations had embraced the Christian religion. He enjoyed singular advantages in early life for the culture and improvement of his mind. *Tarsus*, the place of his nativity, was, at that time, the most celebrated

‡ The character of this great apostle is excellently represented by *Lord Lyttelton* in his *Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul*, and by the late ingenious *Dr. Duchal* in his *Presumptive Arguments for the truth of the Christian religion, Discourse 5, 6.*

brated school in the world, and for polite literature far surpassed *Athens* and *Alexandria*. *Strabo*, who lived in *that* age, gives the following account of it. “ The inhabitants of this place cherish such a passion for philosophy, and all the various branches of polite letters, that they have greatly excelled *Athens* and *Alexandria*, and every other place, in which there are schools and academies, for philosophy and erudition. But *Tarsus* differs in this, that those, who here devote themselves to the study of literature, are all *natives* of that country—there are not many from *foreign* parts who reside here. Nor do the natives of the country continue here for life, but they go *abroad* to finish their studies, and, when they have perfected themselves, they choose to live in other places—there are but few who return home.”\*

From this passage of the *Geographer*, it is obvious to remark that *St. Paul's* conduct illustrates the historian's observation, who was actuated by the same *common* passion, which we are here told prevailed among the students of that place, of *going abroad*

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\* Τόσωντη δὲ τοῖς ἐνθάδε ἀνθρώποις σπουδὴ πρὸς τὴν φιλοσοφίαν, καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἐγκυκλίον ἀπάσαν παιδείαν γίγνεται, ὡς ὑπερβλήνεται καὶ Ἀθηνῶν καὶ Ἀλεξανδρείαν, καὶ εἰ τίνα ἄλλοι τόποι δύνατον εἰπεῖν, ἐν ᾧ σχολαὶ καὶ διατριβαὶ τῶν φιλοσοφῶν καὶ τῶν λογῶν γίγνεται. Διαφέρει δὲ τοσούτον, ὅτι ἐνταῦθα μὲν οἱ φιλομαθεῖς ἐπιχωριοὶ πάντες εἰσι· ξένοι δ' οὐκ ἐπιδημοῖσι ῥαδίως· οὐδ' αὖτοι οὗτοι μένουσιν αὐτοῖσι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τελειοῦνται ἐκδημησαντες, καὶ τελευθεύοντες ξενιτεύουσιν ἤδηως, κατερχονται δ' ὀλιγοί. *Strabo*. Lib. xiv. p. 673. *Casaubon*, Paris 1620.

to finish his studies. After *Strabo* hath given a list of several eminent men in the republic of letters who flourished in this city, as philosophers, orators, poets, professors of the belles lettres, he concludes his account in these words: “ But *Rome*, says he, can best witness the great numbers of learned men, the natives of this city, for it is full of literati from *Tarsus* and *Alexandria*.” † In this place, so celebrated for philosophy and science, the apostle went through a course of *Greek learning*, and acquired that knowledge and acquaintance with its most elegant writers, whom we find him sometimes quoting. Having gone through a course of liberal education in this city, he travelled abroad, as *Strabo* says the students of *Tarsus* did, to perfect himself in other branches of useful learning. His passion for knowledge seems to be boundless. He appears to be a person of strong † abilities, quick apprehension, great sprightliness and vivacity, and of signal resolution and firmness—From *Tarsus* he removed to *Jerusalem* to study under *Gamaliel*, an eminent *Jewish* doctor, under whose tuition he made an uncommon proficiency in the knowledge of the law and

† Μαλις α δ' η Ρωμη δυναται διδασκειν το πληθον των εκ της δε της πολως φιλολογων. Ταρσιων γαρ κη Αλιξανδριων επι μεση. p. 675.

† Says *Polycarp* in his epistle to the *Philippians*: Ουτε γαρ εγω, ουτε αλλος ομοιοι εμαι δυναται κατακολλησαι τε σοφια τε μακαρια κη ενδοξη Παυλο, ος γενομενος εν υμιν κατα προσωπων των τοτε ιβρωπων, ιδιδεξεν ακριβως κη εββαιως τον περι αληθειας λογον. *Ignatii Epist.* p. 6. Edit. Oxon. 1708.

the acquisition of rabbinical literature. Here he imbibed such strong prepossessions in favour of the excellence of the Mosaic constitution, and entertained such a warm and full conviction of its authority and divine establishment, that his zeal for the religion of his ancestors instigated him to crush the new-born cause of Christianity in its infancy—undoubtedly thinking it no better founded than several impostures which had lately risen in *Judæa*, and had been soon suppressed. From this violent precipitance, to which his veneration for the law transported him, he gave a cheerful suffrage to the death of the *first* martyr, kept the cloaths of those who stripped themselves to embroe their hands in his blood, and was by his blind injudicious zeal hurried on to the last extravagancies against the Christians—pursuing the professors of that religion, every where, with implacable fury, forcibly entering private houses and dragging persons of both sexes to prison with unfeeling rage. His violencies cannot be justified. His zeal for the law would not suffer him to *examine* the cause he was persecuting. *He did these things ignorantly, and in unbelief.* His moral character, *in other respects*, was unexceptionable. He could appeal to God for the sincerity and probity of his heart, and for the religious regard he had ever paid to the dictates of his conscience—But in this mad sanguinary career he did not persist long. *Judæa* being too narrow to circum-



scribe his passion for persecuting the Christians; he went to the high priest, and desired of him a commission to empower him to suppress the obnoxious cause in *other* parts. This being granted, as he was travelling to *Damascus*, breathing destruction to the whole Christian name, he received full conviction, in an *extraordinary* manner, that the cause he was labouring to exterminate, was the cause of God—and became afterwards a most zealous advocate for Christianity, propagating it in the world with a spirit and ardour which nothing could extinguish, with an intrepidity and fortitude which persecution and death in all its horrors could never move—migrating from country to country, from city to city, almost throughout the whole extent of the *Roman* empire—night and day, in season and out of season, teaching and inculcating the Christian doctrine—working with his own hands to acquire a scanty subsistence for himself, that he might not prejudice the societies he had formed, by levying any contributions upon them for *his own* support—passing through honour and dishonour, through reputation and disreputation, slandered, abused, calumniated, scourged, imprisoned, stoned, made a *public spectacle* of wretchedness to *angels and men*, yet accounting all these dreadful scenes as nothing for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his lord, for whom he cheerfully suffered the loss of all secular advantages, esteeming all temporal honours

honours and emoluments as worthless and useless refuse, when in competition with the interests of the gospel and the riches of eternity—making it his sole study and \* ambition to acquit himself with integrity, honour, and usefulness, in the *ministry he had received of Christ to testify*, and to establish in the world, *the gospel of the grace of God*. I cannot forbear saying, that one of the greatest and noblest characters that ever appeared among men, is that of the apostle *Paul*. It would far exceed the limits of this work should I give a minute detail of his travels—attend him in his confinement at *Jerusalem*—the noble defences he made of himself and of the Christian religion before the *Roman governors*, who, *in general*, treated him with *Roman civility and politeness*, suffering him to have a fair hearing, not surrendering him into the hands of those who thirsted for his blood, giving his friends free access to him, and generously declaring, a declaration indeed which truth and justice extorted from them, *that he had done nothing worthy of bonds or of death*. It would also

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\* The character of this great apostle is beautifully represented by *Clemens Romanus*. Δια ζηλον ὁ Παυλος ὑπομονῆς ἔρασειεν ὑποσχῆν, σωτακίς δισμα φοβισκός, φυγαδιυθείς, λιθασθείς κηυῆ γυνομενῶ εν τε τη ανατολή κη εν τη δύσει, το γυνομενῶ της αιτιως αυτου κλειος ελαβεν, δικαιοσυνη διδαξως ολον τον κοσμον, κη εως το τεμα της δυσσεως ελθων, κη μαρτυρησας εως των ηγμενῶν ουτως απηλλαγη τε κοσμου, κη εις τον ἁγιον τοσπον εσωρευθη, ὑπομονῶ ὡς γυνομενῶ μεγίς ὑποσχαυμῶ. *Clem. Roman. Epist. Corinthib. §. v. p. 24. Edit. Wettin, Cantab.*

be inconsistent with this work to accompany him, in his voyage, of which St. *Luke* has given us a circumstantial account---to particularise the civilities he met with from the *Roman* centurion in this unhappy voyage---on the respect paid him on his arrival in *Rome*, where he lived in his own hired house two years. As St. *Paul* had appealed to the emperor, I make no doubt but he was, soon after his arrival in the capital, brought before him, and that his manner of confinement, that of a prisoner at large, was expressly ordered by the emperor. This kind treatment at court may, perhaps, be accounted for from the centurion *Julius* giving the captain of the guard a minute account of what happened in the voyage; for example, St. *Paul's* prediction of the loss of the ship, but of the loss of no lives,—and the miraculous cures he had effected in *Melita*--- Whither the apostle went after the expiration of these two years, when he obtained his liberty, is not certainly known: some think to *Spain*, from what he says in his epistle to the *Romans*---but this rather seems to be what he intended at that time, than what he ever executed. From his suffering martyrdom at *Rome* not long afterwards, he seems to have judged that city, as it was the grand centre of the world, to which an universal concourse from all parts was made; to be the most eligible place both for propagating Christianity, and for knowing the state of the Christian church in every region, city, and town,

town, where it had been erected. At last on account of a dreadful fire at *Rome*, mentioned by \* *Suetonius* and *Tacitus*, which raged six days and seven nights, to which many believed the emperor *Nero* accessory; to wipe off this odium, he commenced a persecution against the Christians, and treated them, as being the authors of this public calamity, with the last cruelty and inhumanity.\* In this persecution the apostle *Paul* was involved and obtained the crown of martyrdom. The *dates* of his *fourteen* epistles, as far as criticism and probable conjecture can fix them, may be seen in the *table* annexed.

\* Nam quasi offensus [*Nero*] deformitate veterum ædificiorum, et angustiis flexurisque vicorum, incendit urbem—per sex dies septemque noctes eâ clade savitum est. *Sueton.* *Nero*. C. xxxviii. p. 629, 630. *Varior.* Sexto demum die—incendio finis factus. *Tacitus.* *Annal.* Lib. xv. C. xl. p. 281. Vol. ii. *Dublin.*

† The Christians were covered with the skins of wild beasts, and worried by dogs: they were crucified: they were smeared with pitch and other combustibles, and set on fire in the night time to give light to passengers. Pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contecti laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammati, atque ubi defecisset dies in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. *Annal.* Lib. xv. C. xliv. Vol. ii. p. 286. *Dublin.* To this last species of cruelty *Juvenal* is thought to allude in the following verses:

Pone Tigellinum, tedâ lucebis in illa,

Quâ stantes ardent, qui fixo gutture fumant.—*Satyr.* i. v. 155. See the *old Scholiast's* note upon these lines in *Editione Variorum*, 1684.

## S E C T. VI.

*A short history of the Apostle James.*

**J**A M E S, whose epistle is now received into the canon of Scripture, was our Lord's brother, Galat. i. 18, 19. He is not that *James* who was the son of *Zebedee* and the brother of *Peter*, and who was beheaded by *Herod Agrippa*. He was a witness of the resurrection of *Jesus*, for *St. Paul*, in briefly enumerating, in order, the appearances of our Saviour, says, that he was seen of *Cephas*—then of the twelve—after that he was seen of above 500 brethren at once—after that he was seen of *James*—then of all the apostles, namely, at his ascension into heaven—last of all he was seen of me. It should seem that this apostle presided in the church of *Jerusalem* from *Peter's* ordering the family of *Mary*, after his miraculous deliverance from prison, to acquaint *James* and the brethren with his escape, and from this apostle's speaking last in the council at *Jerusalem*, convened to deliberate about the terms of admitting the *Gentile* converts into the Christian church—on which occasion this apostle summed up the arguments, discussed the merits of the controversy, and proposed the conditions on which the heathen converts should be admitted—to which all the others unanimously acceded. We also see his importance, and the great

great respect and deference that was paid him at *Jerusalem*, in that famous passage, Galat. ii. 11, 12. When *Peter* came down to *Antioch*, I openly opposed him, for his conduct was highly worthy of censure; for he sat down at the table of the heathen converts, without any scruple, before some persons arrived from *James*—but upon their arrival he receded and broke off this intercourse with them, induced by the fear of giving umbrage to the *Jews*. We find also that St. *Paul*, upon his arrival in *Jerusalem*—(the time when he was apprehended and imprisoned)—immediately, upon his coming, waited upon *James*—an evidence of the dignity of his apostolic character. To the superintendence of the church at *Jerusalem* he seems to have been appointed by the rest of the apostles—as their continuance at *Jerusalem*, in those troublesome times, was precarious—and it being proper and necessary that there should be an apostle in that city whom the Christians might consult on any emergency. Thus *Clement*, as quoted in *Eusebius*: After our Lord's ascension, *Peter*, *James* and *John*, though they had been particularly distinguished by our Lord, above the other apostles, did not contend about honour, but elected *James* the just to be bishop of *Jerusalem*.\* Various have been the conjectures of learned men concerning his being called our Lord's brother—whether as being the  
son.

\* See *Eusebii Eccl. Hist. Lib. ii. C. i. p. 38. Valesii.*

son of *Joseph* by a former wife—or only as being a relation of his mother *Mary*. The question is more curious than useful, and those who are desirous to see it accurately discussed may consult *Dr. Lardner's Supplement to the Credibility*, Vol. iii. p. 64, 2d Edition, 1760. On account of his distinguished piety and holiness he was surnamed the *Just*. He suffered martyrdom at *Jerusalem*, but the account of it is mixed with many circumstances fabulous and incredible. It is related at length from *Hegeffippus* in *Eusebius's* *Eccles. Hist.* Lib. ii. Cap. xxiii. That most excellent and useful epistle, which is ascribed to *St. James*, but which *Eusebius* saith is † *spurious*, is supposed to be written about the year of Christ 61 or, 62.

## S E C T. VII.

*A short history of the Apostle Peter.*

**S**IMON *Peter*, the son of *Jonas*, and brother of *Andrew*, was a fisherman on the lake of *Gennesaret*. He must be greatly struck at his first interview with *Jesus*, when the moment our Lord saw him, though a perfect stranger, he told him *his name*, and his *father's name*. When *Jesus* beheld him, he said, thou art *Simon*, the son of *Jonas*. This apostle was a married man, when

† *Ἰσχυρὸν δὲ αἰσ. ἰσθμικὸν μὲν.* Know, it is spurious. E. H. Lib. ii. C. xxiv. p. 66. Paris 1659. Valefi.

when invited by our Saviour to accompany him —for we read that on his *wife's* mother our Saviour wrought a signal miracle—and, after our Lord's ascension, his \* wife attended him in his travels, and, the † *antients* say, suffered martyrdom at *Rome* about the same time he did. These two brothers were hearers of *John* the baptist—and from *his* express testimony and their own personal converse with Jesus were fully convinced that he was the *Messiah*, the object, at *that* time, of universal expectation. The eagerness and forwardness of this apostle, bordering on precipitance and temerity, are apparent on many occasions. He is the *first* to reply to all questions proposed by our *Lord* to the *whole* collective body of the disciples. He hesitates not to animadvert upon our Lord himself for his making open declaration of the future indignities and sufferings to which he would be exposed. Presumptuous and self-confident, he made the strongest asseverations that he would never desert his master, though he were sure to meet death with him in its most dreadful form. His boldness and audacity appear in his venturing out to meet Jesus upon the tempestuous sea, in the night time, when they could with great difficulty keep the

\* See 1 Cor. ix. 5.

† Φασι γουν τον μακαριον Πιτρον θεοσπαινον την αυτου γυναικα αγομενην την επι βασιaton, παθηναι της κλησεως χαριν. *Cl. Alexand. Strom. Lib. vii. p. 736. Paris 1629.*



the vessel above water for the winds and waves. Upon our Lord's being apprehended, he drew his sword and struck a servant of the high priest. All the other apostles abandoned their master by a precipitate flight, but *Peter* intrepidly followed him, at some distance, to the high priests palace, went in, and sat down with the servants, to see the end. These are monuments of this apostle's distinguished resolution and fortitude. It was upon P E T E R, as upon a firm and immoveable ROCK that Christ promised he would erect the Christian church, and the gates of hell should not prevail against it, and that he would give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever he should bind on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he should loose on earth should be loosed in heaven. Though, overcome by the fear of imminent death, he denied his Lord, yet he soon after humbled himself and shed a torrent of bitter tears—and it is probable his remorse and distress of mind, for incurring this shame and guilt, prevented him from attending his crucifixion, as we find St. *John* did. On the day of Christ's resurrection, after appearing to *Mary Magdalene* and some other women, the next person, to whom he exhibited himself, was *Peter*. At one of these interviews our Saviour afforded this apostle an opportunity of *thrice* declaring his love for him—upon which our Lord confirmed to him his apostolic

apostolic character, and had him feed the Christian flock with fidelity and tenderness. Before his assumption into heaven he not obscurely hinted the manner of this apostle's death, that another should bind him and carry him whither he would not—intimating, says the historian, by *what* death he should glorify God. He was distinguished by our Saviour with marks of peculiar affection. He was a witness of his transfiguration—was present at the raising of Jairus's daughter—and was admitted to be present at his devotions and agony in the garden of *Gethsemane*. An action of his, upon the *report* that our Saviour was risen, is not without its just significance—that when *John* contented himself with *only* stooping down and taking a transient and superficial view of the state of the sepulchre, *Peter* went in and *searched* it—After Christ's ascension, *Peter* proposed choosing a proper person in the room of the traitor. On the day of *pentecost* we find him haranguing the multitude who had collected about them, with undaunted spirit, charging the Jews with imbruing their hands in the blood of Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among them by many signs and wonders which God had wrought by his hands—publicly asserting his resurrection—and proclaiming to all, that he was the true MESSIAH whom they had crucified and murdered—delivering these declarations with such a spirit and pathos, that *three thousand* souls were that same day

day converted and baptized. We next find this *Apostle* and *John* healing a lame man at the gate of the temple, at the report of which miracle, as the man was universally known in *Jerusalem*, great crowds flocking together, *Peter* addressed himself to them, in a spirited and awakening sermon, by which numbers were convinced and embraced the gospel. He was next imprisoned, brought before the *Sanhedrim*, threatened, and dismissed. Afterwards we find *St. Peter* severely reprehending *Ananias* and *Sapphira* for their mutual agreement to *secrete* some part of the money for which they had sold their estate, and yet deliver in the *rest* to the apostles as the *whole* original sum, hoping to elude and deceive the holy spirit by acting in this fraudulent manner—upon whose reproof they were both instantly struck dead, by the hand of God, in a short space of time, one after the other. We then read how the friends and relations of the sick and indisposed brought them into the streets, and that they were instantaneously restored to perfect health, if but the shadow of *Peter* passed over them. Minutely to relate and expatiate upon all the particulars of this apostle's life would extend the subject beyond the limits assigned to a single chapter. The following incidents, therefore, of this apostle's life, can only be narrated in a brief and concise manner. During the *rest* the churches enjoyed, which continued for some time, he traveled through all parts of *Judæa*—he healed  
*Æneas,*

*Aneas*, who had been confined to his bed by the palsy eight years—he restored *Tabitha* to life who died at *Joppa*—he converted *Cornelius*, the Roman centurion, the first Christian convert from among the Gentiles, who was admitted into the church without circumcision or any injunction to comply with the mosaic observances—he was delivered out of prison by an angel of God—he was reprov'd at *Antioch* by the apostle *Paul* for dissembling and temporizing; and his conduct in separating himself from the *heathen* converts, when he had a little before countenanced them in their Christian liberty, was culpable—and, lastly, he went to *Rome*, and with his wife was involved in the same persecution, and both suffered martyrdom under *Nero*. His two epistles were written about the year of Christ 64.

## S E C T. VIII.

*A short history of the apostle Jude.*

**J**UDE was the brother of Christ. His brothers were *James*, *Joses*, and *Simon*—but whether by brother we are to understand only a relation, according to the Hebrew idiom, or the son of *Joseph* by a former wife, is disputed. There is nothing particular related of this apostle in the four evangelists, except this question which he addressed to his master: Lord! how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not to the world!

160 *A short history of the Apostle Jude.* [Chap. IV.  
world! Full of temporal grandeur and universal  
monarchy he could not imagine how our Saviour  
could establish a kingdom without *manifesting* it  
to the world. A proof, how much this apostle  
was actuated by *Jewish* prejudices, and what fond  
delusive hopes he cherished, in common with all  
the other apostles, of soon beholding his master  
erect a powerful and magnificent empire. There  
is no account, in any credible historian, in what  
countries he preached the gospel—and whether  
he suffered martyrdom or died a natural death.  
His *Epistle* is thought to be written about the  
year of Christ 64, or 65.

C H A P.

## C H A P. V.

*Of the diction, style, and composition of the sacred writers of the NEW TESTAMENT.*

Nothing could be farther from the design of the sacred authors of the New Testament, than that their writings should be esteemed as a model of the true \* sublime in composition. Christianity was never designed to teach men  *rhetoric and philosophy*—I mean, such  *philosophy* as was in vogue in  *those* days, full of speculative refinement and ingenious disquisitions, and embellished with all the elegance with which the  *Greek* language could adorn it. The  *philosophy* of  *Jesus* did not extend its triumphs in the world and advance from country to country with that amazing rapidity, by means of the superior eloquence of its teachers, or the superior  *wisdom of words* and splendour of diction and composition, which distinguished it above every other form of philosophy the world had ever seen.  *St. Paul* draws

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\* Ου λογόν ἔμιν ἀπαγγελλόντων τέχνας, οὐδὲ κίθαινας καὶ αἰνευτικῶς λεγομένων· τοῦτο γὰρ ἴδιον τῶν τῆν ἀληθείαν κλεπτῶν ἐβελούων· ἀλλὰ ἀπλῶς τοῖς ἐπιτυχούσιν ὀνομασί τε καὶ ῥήμασι χρωμένων.  *Justin Martyr, ad Græcos cohort. p. 119. Οχον. Μὴ δοκιμοτήτα φραστίως παρ' αὐτῶν, αἰετῶντας, οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἐν ἔργοις τὰ τῆς ημετέρας θεοσεβείας πρᾶγματα, ibid. p. 120. Οἱ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ μαθηταὶ οἱ μακρὰ χεῖρην εἰπόντες τῇ ποιικίῃ τῶν λέξεων συθεοῖσι καὶ τῇ, ὡς ὠρμασί, ἢ γραφῇ, σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων. Origen, con. Celsum. See also his Philocalia, p. 25. Cantab. 1677.*

an irrefragable argument in favour of the divine authority of the Christian religion from *this very circumstance*—its disclaiming all the showy ornaments of style and language, *yet* collecting such an immense *harvest* of converts in every region. At the time when the apostles were planting the Christian religion in the world, the *Greeks* were *seeking* after *wisdom*—weaving inane and visionary schemes of philosophy—forming ingenious systems—occupied in all the subtilties of ideal speculation—and when after much investigation and study they had moulded their reveries into some kind of form, they openly *professed* such a species of philosophy—clothed it in a pleasing vest of the purest, sublimest language—publicly taught it, and called it *WISDOM*. And these learned and inquisitive *Greeks*, who were so fervently engaged in the pursuit of this *wisdom*, were so enamoured of every metaphysical system and romantic hypothesis, which was set off by the charms of eloquence, and this taste for polite literature and elegance of composition was so universally prevalent among the friends of erudition and science in that age in which the apostles preached, that these philosophers and inquisitive *Greeks*, who were seeking after this *wisdom* and could relish nothing but this *wisdom*, treated the *unadorned simplicity* of the gospel with the utmost ridicule and contempt—the plainness of the gospel had no charms for such a false and vitiated taste—it was to such, *foolishness*—and it could  
not.

not be founded in truth, or have heaven for its author, because it had no studied ornaments of style, no flowing periods, no harmonious and numerous composition to recommend and enforce it. No wonder that they contemned the apostles as *illiterate*, and their systems as *foolishness*, when they had established this absurd notion among them—That if the *gods* were to descend upon earth to teach men *philosophy*, they would teach it in the language of *Plato*. † Christianity had nothing in it to soothe *such* a vain imagination, and captivate such *itching ears* as these, by polished diction and elaborate sentences. The apostle *Paul* tells the *Corinthians*, that Christ sent him to preach the gospel, not with *wisdom of words*, lest his cross should be made of none effect—that when he first made his appearance amongst them at *Corinth*, it was not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, and that his speech and his preaching was not with enticing words of mens wisdom, but in demonstration of the spirit and of power—and the *reason*, why Christianity disclaimed all the specious arts of rhetoric, and disowned all the elaborate persuasive methods of a studied eloquence, is assigned in the next words: *that your faith should not stand in the WISDOM of men but in the POWER of God*—that by this artless simplicity and

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† Quis uberior in dicendo, *Platone*? *Jovem* siquidem aiunt *Philosophi*, si Græcè loquatur, sic loqui. *Cicero* in *Brut*. *Jovem* dicunt, si cælo descenderet, *Platonis* sermone usurum. *Vossius* de *Philosoph*. sect.



164 *Of the diction of the sacred writers* [Chap. V.  
 unaffected plainness, void of all ornament to allure, and all additional pomp to captivate, the *power of God* might be rendered the more illustrious, and the conversion and reformation of the world might be attributed to its sole and proper *source* and *cause*, not to *human* philosophy, and *human* eloquence, but to the *immediate* interposition and energy of God.\* Consonant to this design of God in the publication and success of the gospel, its first teachers appear not to have studied composition, or to be actuated by an ambition to attain the *true sublime* in writing. An artless simplicity characterizes the religion of Jesus; and, *in general*, characterizes the books which exhibit it. Several of the sacred writers appear not to be solicitous about the *choice* of words, the regular arrangement of them, the purity of the *Greek* language, and the harmonious melliflence of their periods. The majority of them were *Jews*, and the peculiar *idioms* of their *native* country not infrequently occur. The *Greek* of St. *Mark*, St. *Paul*, and St. *Peter*, most of all, abound with the *Hebrew* phraseology. The *Jews* have few *adjectives* in their language. *Kingdom and glory*, 1 Thessal. ii. 12. is the manner

\* This is judiciously remarked by *Origen*. Ἰσως γὰρ ἐν καλλῷ ἢ περιβολῇ φράσεως, ὡς τὰ παρ' Ἑλλήσι θαυματοζόμενα, εἰ χεῖρ ἢ γραφή, ὑπεικοσῆσιν ἀν τις οὐ τὴν ἀληθεῖαν κεκρατήκεται τῶν ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐμφαινομένην ἀκολοῦθαι ἢ τὸ τῆς φράσεως καλλῷ ἐψυχολογῆσαι τοὺς ἀκροῦμένους, ἢ ἠπάτησθαι αὐτοὺς πρὸς ἐπιληψίαν. *Philocalia*. p. 25. Cantab. 1677.

ner in which they express *glorious kingdom*. I will give you a *mouth and wisdom*, for *wise discourse*, Luke xxi. 15. *Patience of hope*, for *patient expectation*, 1 Theff. i. 3. *Glory of his power*, for *glorious power*, 2 Theff. i. 9. I mention this because this peculiarity of *Jewish* phrase is of the most frequent occurrence in the *New Testament Greek*. *Of God* is the *Jewish superlative*. *Mountains of God*, and *cedars of God*, for *very high mountains and cedars*. The *river of God* †, for a *very large river*, Psalm lxxv. 9. The *wind of God*, for a *very great wind*, Genes. i. 2. *Moses is called* ἀσέει τῷ Θεῷ, *exceeding beautiful*, divinely fair, as we say, Acts vii. 20. The weapons of our warfare are δυνατὰ τῷ Θεῷ, *exceeding powerful*, 2 Cor. x. 4. The *glory of the Lord* shone around the shepherds, for a *very great glory*, Luke ii. 9. The child Jesus grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom, and the *grace of God* was upon him, a distinguished grace and beauty was diffused over his person\*. So the ingenious and

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† See many more examples of this phraseology in a very curious and excellent book, now very scarce, entitled, *Projet d'une nouvelle version Française de la Bible par Charles la Cene*. Rotterdam 1696. 12°. p. 170.

\* There is a similar passage in the *Odyssey*. Θεῖσσι δ' ἀρετῆς χάριν κατεχέουσιν Ἀθηνῶν. B. 12. See also *Luke*, ch. iv. 22. λόγοις τῆς χάριτος, the beauty and elegance of his diction: language full of *grace and propriety*: as *Homer* expresses it, almost in the same words.—Οἱ χάρις ἀμφιπεριεφέταται εὐσεῖσσι. *Odys.* O. v. 175. Καλλιῆς ἔξ γλυκερῶν ἐριθόμοιρον χαριτῆσσι. *Apollon. Rhod.* L. i. 1230. Λαμψομόμον χάριτῆσσι.—*Lib. iii.* v. 924. Edit. *Hoetzelii*. Elz. 1641.

166 *Of the diction of the sacred writers* [Chap. V.  
learned *Rapbelius*. Thou child shalt be called  
the prophet *of the highest*, a *very great* prophet,  
Luke i. 7, 6. This *Oriental* manner of speaking,  
also, to which the apostles, who were born and  
educated in *Judæa*, were habituated, and which  
they transferred into the language they wrote, is  
not unusual. The *spirit of bondage*, for a *servile*  
*spirit*, Rom. viii. 15. The *spirit of adoption*, for  
a *filial, liberal spirit*, *ibid.* You are not in the  
flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the *spirit of God*  
dwell in you, that is, a *picus, godlike* spirit or  
temper. If any man have not the *spirit of Christ*,  
he is none of his, that is, a *Christ-like* spirit, such  
a disposition and temper, as actuated our Lord,  
Rom. viii. 9. He ordered them to sit down  
συμπροσια, συμπροσια, *companies, companies*, for, in  
*distinct* companies. And they sat down προσιαι,  
προσιαι, *ranks, ranks*, for, in *regular and uniform*  
ranks, Mark vi. 39, 40. This *phraseology*, of  
which many examples in the *Old Testament* might  
be easily adduced, was owing to the paucity of  
*adjectives* in the *Hebrew* language. The apostles  
received their birth and education in *Judæa* not  
in *Attica*—and the *Hebraisms* we find intermixed  
in their *Greek*, are owing exactly to the same  
cause as the *Gallicisms* and *Anglicisms* in the com-  
position of *modern* writers in *Latin*, who, notwith-  
standing those *particular idioms* of their *native*  
*tongue*, in which their ideas naturally flowed, yet,  
upon the whole, have written the *Roman* language  
with *considerable* elegance, and with great and de-  
served

served applause. It was a visionary and romantic hypothesis of *Pfobenius*, which hath been effectually refuted and subverted by the learned *Gataker*, that the New Testament was devoid of all Hebraisms, and written with all the elegance of diction and sublimity of language, which distinguish the most polite and elaborate of the *Greek* classics. Mr. *Blackwall*, in that excellent and useful book, entitled, *The sacred Classics defended and illustrated*, hath carried the notion of the purity and correctness of the New Testament *Greek* to the same romantic extravagance—just as if *St. John* and *St. Peter* designed their writings to be perfect models of *elegant* composition, and consummate standards of the *true sublime*, to all future ages of the church. *Some*, indeed, of the sacred writers have written the *Greek* language in a beautiful and admirable manner. The language of *St. Luke* is exuberant and diffusive, his words are well chosen and well arranged, his sentences are perspicuous, and his periods flow harmoniously. The *epistle of the Hebrews* is truly sublime. It will bear a rigid scrutiny and critical comparison with some of the most finished productions in the *Greek* language. The *epistle of St. James* is very elegant. These *compositions* will be admired, and their authors be celebrated as examples of classic excellence, while there is true taste among men. The purity and correctness of *these* two authors, the *other* writers of the sacred code have not attained. They were not ambi-

tious to excel in *fine* writing. It was not their object. To convert, reform, and save the world, was their sole study, their sole felicity, their grand end and aim. For this they preached: for this they wrote. They did not intend to strike us with *sublimity* in the *periods* they polished, but in the *truths* those periods comprized. Their arduous province and ministration, which they had received from their great master, consisted in *dispersing abroad* the saving and salutary *streams* of that *fountain* which the grace of God had *opened*, they were little solicitous about the particular *elegance* of the *vehicle* in which they *conveyed* them. So that the *singular magnificence* of the sacred writings arises not from the *style* and *manner* of the authors, but from the *greatness* of the *discoveries* and *importance* of the *doctrines* they reveal. I cannot forbear transcribing the following passage of the amiable and excellent M. Rollin\*. “ If then, “ notwithstanding this *simplicity* which marks the “ true *character* of the Scriptures, there are found “ interspersed particular passages so beautiful and “ so resplendent, it is very observable that this “ signal beauty and splendor, proceed not from “ an

\* Si donc, malgré cette simplicité, qui est le vrai caractère des Ecritures, on y trouve des endroits si beaux et si éclatans; il est très-remarquable que cette beauté et cet éclat ne viennent point d'une élocution recherchée et étudiée, mais du fond même des choses qu'on y traite, qui sont par elles-mêmes, si grandes et si élevées, qu'elles entraînent nécessairement la magnificence du stile. Rollin Belles Lettres, vol. ii. p. 422. Amst.

“ an elaborate and studied eloquence, but from  
 “ the *things* which these passages disclose, which  
 “ *in themselves* are so noble and so elevated, that  
 “ they necessarily produce magnificence of style.”  
 Had Christianity been published to the world in that lofty, pompous, and figurative style, which distinguishes the *Coran*, had its first preachers clothed its doctrines in the showy vest of trope and figure, had they studied to captivate men’s attention, and gain success by the specious arts of rhetoric, and exhibited it before the world in a number of histories and treatises, compiled with all the purity and correctness that language could bestow, and finished with all the accuracy and perfection that human erudition and abilities could lavish upon it, it would have carried, like the *Coran*, all the marks and features of a *cunningly-devised fable*, and the whole system of the Christian religion would have appeared to have had *no other* foundation than what human genius, classic elegance, pious fraud, and elaborate imposture had given it. “ For my own part, says a † fine writer, independent of all the prejudices of religion, I had rather see the life of Christ described in the beautiful simplicity of St. *Luke*, or St. *John*, than in the elegant fluency of *Livy*, or the pointed energy of *Tacitus*.”

Having premised these general remarks, I will now subjoin a few concise and cursory strictures upon the *several writers* of the *New Testament*, regarding their respective *style* and *manner* of composition.

SECT.

† *Library*, p.62.

## S E C T. I.

*Remarks on St. Matthew as a writer.*

**H**IS gospel was originally written in *Hebrew*. Antiquity is *unanimous* in this. I think one cannot *dispute* this without opposing the united suffrage of the earliest and best *fatbers*. I own that Mr. *Jones*, the learned author of the *Canon of Scripture*, hath alledged many ingenious and plausible arguments in favour of its being originally written in *Greek*, but they have not made me hesitate. The testimony of antiquity is positive and direct, and the assertions of the primitive writers peremptory and explicit. \* *Papias*, who is supposed by some to have conversed with St. *John*, testifies, That St. *Matthew* composed the divine oracles in the *Hebrew dialect*, and every one translated them to the best of his abilities. † *Irenæus*, who in early life was acquainted with *Polycarp*, the disciple of St. *John*, testifies, That while *Peter* and *Paul* were preaching and establishing the church in *Rome*, *Matthew*, at that time being among the *Hebrews*, published the gospel

\* Ματθαῖος μὲν οὐ ἐβραϊδὶ διαλεκτῷ τὰ λόγια συνέταξετο. ἤρηνευσεν δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἠδύνατο ἑκάστῳ. Papias apud Euseb. Ecc. Hist. Lib. iii. ad fin. Edit. Gr. Rob. Stephan. p. 32. Paris 1544.

† Ὁ μὲν δὴ Ματθαῖος ἐν τοῖς Ἑβραίοις τῆ ἰδίᾳ διαλεκτῷ ἀρ. ἠρ. ἢ γραφῆναι ἐξηγήσας εὐαγγελίου, τοῦ Πέτρου ἢ τοῦ Παύλου ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἐπαγγελιζομένων. Adver. hæres. Lib. iii. c. 1. Græc.

gospel in *their language*. \* *Origen* declares, That *Matthew* delivered his gospel to Christian converts from among the *Jews*, written in the *Hebrew* language. *Eusebius* asserts the same thing— That *Matthew* wrote in *Hebrew*, and others of the fathers in the following centuries. Says *Dr. Cave*, in his *History of learned Men*, † That *Matthew* wrote his Evangelic History in *Hebrew*, the ancients declare with unanimous consent; so that in *this* point it is highly injurious to oppose the suffrage of almost all antiquity. The learned *Dr. Scot*, in the preface to his version of *St. Matthew*, also says, That the *same* tradition, which informs us of the *author* of this gospel, peremptorily maintains that he wrote it in *Hebrew*. More testimonies may be seen in *Dr. Whitby's* preface, *Dr. Scot's* preface to his Version, *Dr. Lardner's* first volume of his Supplement to the Credibility. Consult also the late eminently learned professor

*Wet-*

\* Ματθαῖος ἐκδιδάσκει αὐτὸ τοῖς ἀπὸ ἰουδαϊσμοῦ πισύσασιν, γραμμασὶν ἰβραϊκοῖς συντίθηγμένον. *Origen* apud *Euseb.* Hist. Ecc. Lib. vi. p. 226. *Valesii*.

† Et quidem historiam suam Evangelicam hebraicè scripsisse, miro fanè consensu tradunt veteres; adeo ut totius pene antiquitatis testimoniis refragari hac in re nefas sit. *Cave's* Historia Literaria, p. 8. Edit. Lond. 1688. “ *St. Matthew* is said to have published his gospel the first of them, and in the *Hebrew tongue*, for the proper benefit of his countrymen. — This was therefore the real case of this *Hebrew* gospel; which was scarce sooner published, than translated into *Greek* by an unknown hand, and the *Hebrew* copy thrown aside, and within a few ages after quite lost.” *Dr. Middleton's* Works, Vol. ii. p. 402. 8°.



172 *Remarks on St. Matthew as a writer.* [Chap. V. *Wetstein's* preface to *St. Matthew*. Who translated it into *Greek* we now have no certainty. As early as *Jerom's* time it was \* not known who was the author of the *Greek* version. It is not to be doubted but it was done with great fidelity and exactness. It hath all the marks and characters of the most religious accuracy. It opens with exhibiting before the reader, according to the *Jerish* custom, a genealogical table of our Saviour's family, in a lineal descent, for a series of several thousand years, from *Abraham* to *Joseph*. It informs us of the miraculous conception of *Jesus Christ*—of his birth at *Bethlehem*—of the arrival of the *Magi* at *Jerusalem*, related by no other of the evangelists — of *Joseph's* flight into *Egypt* — of the insidious measures *Herod* contrived to get this illustrious infant into his power—of the murder of all the young children in *Bethlehem*, and its surrounds—of the appearance of *John* the baptist in the wilderness proclaiming repentance, and the speedy advent of their long expected *Messiah*—of the infinite numbers who flocked to his baptism from all parts, making penitent confession of their sins, and making the best preparation for giving a virtuous and worthy reception to this great and glorious messenger—of *John* baptising *Christ*—of the spirit of *God* visibly descending upon him, a voice from heaven, at the same time, solemnly articulating these words:  
*This*

\* See the eminently learned *Dr. Scot's* preface to *Matthew*, p. 4.

Seft. I.] *Remarks on St. Matthew as a writer.* 173

*This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased!*  
The account of *Christ's temptation*, which next follows, seems to be an *ideal* and *visionary* transaction, exhibited before the mind of our Lord in a prophetic trance or vision — exactly parallel to the scenes which the ancient prophets record, when they tell us they were *led* or *carried*, or *transported* by the spirit to such and such a place — to the banks of the *Euphrates*, for example — where they beheld and transacted in idea such and such things — their bodily senses being, all the time of this extasy, suspended, and these scenical representations spread before their minds †. This evangelist then gives us an account of Christ's preaching repentance and proclaiming the speedy erection of the gospel kingdom — of his inviting *Simon* and *Andrew*, *James* and *John* to be his companions — of the miraculous cures he effected, and the prodigious crowds that collected to him from every quarter. We then have, in this evangelist, a minute and  
circum-

† See the ingenious Mr. *Farmer's Enquiry into the Nature and Design of our Saviour's Temptation*. In the same manner *Hermas* speaks: Et dum ambulassem, obdormivi, et SPIRITUS ME RAPUIT, et TULIT me per quendam locum ad dexteram, per quem non poterat homo iter facere. See *Hermæ Pastor.* in init. p. 2. Edit. Oxon. Again, in the beginning of the account of the *second vision*, he says: Rursumque me abstulit spiritus, et eduxit me in eundem locum, p. 7. Says Dr. *Clarke*: “When the angel in the Revelation carried away St. John in the spirit into the wilderness, the meaning is not that he was carried thither really and literally, but only in a *visionary* representation.” Dr. *Clarke's Sermons*, Vol. iii. p. 168. 12°.

circumstantial detail of the instruction our Lord delivered to this vast assembled multitude in his SERMON ON THE MOUNT—the most complete and finished model, the most consummately glorious and divine system of doctrine and duty the world ever saw, the most *worthy* of the nature of God and the most *perfective* of the happiness of man. The *primitive* Christians used to make their children commit it to memory—and every one who calls himself a Christian ought to bear its lessons engraven on his heart in indelible characters. It is observable in how concise and perspicuous a manner its divine instructions are represented—how familiar and intelligible they are rendered to the meanest capacities. Here is a complete epitome of the duty of a Christian, delivered in the plainest terms, enforced by the greatest authority, and recommended by the full assurance of the most glorious retributions. The history of Christ, considered in the character of a teacher sent from God, would have been greatly defective and imperfect, if we had *not* been presented with this comprehensive summary of his divine and moral instructions. We are greatly indebted to this evangelist for recording, in so *ample* and *particular* a manner, this our Saviour's *sermon*—probably the *whole* of it, in the order in which it was originally delivered—and thereby presenting us with a most beautiful and perfect *model* of Christian ethics, to form the great rule of our daily lives, and to be the amiable directress of our tempers and dispositions. It is obvious to remark,

remark, that this evangelist cites the largest number of passages from the writings of the *Old Testament*, and records the greatest number of those public discourses of our Lord, in which he inveighed against the *superstition* and *hypocrisy* of the *Jews*. As this evangelist was a constant and inseparable attendant upon Christ's person, and wrote the *first* of all the sacred writers of the *New Testament*, he seems to have paid the the greatest regard to a *chronological series* of events, and to have arranged the various facts and transactions he records in the *order of time* in which they happened. He claims therefore, I think, the best right to be the *standard* to which the *chronology* of the other evangelists should be adjusted; for *Mark* appears to be little more than an *epitomist* of *St. Matthew*, and *John* wrote his gospel to be a supplement to the others; and I am fully convinced, upon many careful and repeated perusals of *St. Luke* and collations of his history with the other evangelists, that, if *St. Matthew's* gospel is to be regarded as a faithful and accurate monument of historical records, *St. Luke* hath *some few inaccuracies* with regard to the order of time, and that some few historical transactions of our Saviour, and his apostles, which *he* relates to have happened at such a particular time and place, are declared by *St. Matthew* to have happened on a *different* occasion, and at a *different* time. This observation occurred to me several years ago, and I have since found that *Gratius* had made the  
same

176 *Remarks on St. Matthew as a writer.* [Chap. V. same remark \*. Indeed it must obtrude itself upon every one who reads these two evangelists with care. Let the *different* time, in which these two historians respectively say that our Saviour reproved his disciples for disputing about precedence, serve as a proof of this irreconcilable *anachronism*. Except St. *John*, the evangelist *Matthew* enjoyed the *happiest* opportunity for presenting the world with a regular connected narrative of the life of Christ, according to the order of time, and the successive series of his transactions. In his exactness, *therefore*, as to the *time* of our Saviour's actions, as well as his fidelity as to the *nature* of our Saviour's doctrines, we have the *amplest* reason fully to acquiesce — His gospel abounds more than any of the others with allusions to *Jewish* customs, and with terms and phrases of *Jewish* theology. The style is every where plain and perspicuous — the words are arranged in their natural order — the periods are free from obscurity and intricacy — the narrative is well conducted — the discourses, parables, and actions of Jesus, are described in an artless unaffected simplicity, without any encomiums of the historian, the *reader* is left to draw the *proper* inference. We meet with a few unusual words, such as κερζια, αγγαρευς, καταλογειω, επιουσιω, αφεδρων, διδραγμα, κολυβισης, διυλιζω, τραπεζιτης, κολοβοω, &c. He is the only evan-

\* Falluntur qui hinc colligunt propositum Luciae temporum ordinem pressius sequi quam alii ante ipsum fecissent. Nam contra apparet illum non semel ob rerum cohærentiam connexisse quæ temporibus erant discreta. *Grotius ad Luc.* 1. 3. p. 332.

Sect. I.] *Remarks on St. Matthew as a writer.* 177  
 evangelist, who hath given us an account of our Lord's description of the *process* of the general judgment — and his relation of that great event is awful and solemn. He makes no mention of our Saviour's ascension into heaven, nor of the propagation and success of his gospel in the world. His gospel was composed for the benefit and edification of the Jewish Christians, as all antiquity declares. It bears all the marks of being written for persons labouring under \* persecution, to console and support them under sorrows and sufferings for their religion. The genius of *this gospel* is worthy an apostle — shows the familiar friend and companion of the divine Jesus — and the whole form and structure of it, evince its author to have had a perfect acquaintance with the *public* and *private* life, the principles, temper and disposition of that illustrious person whose character he delineates. That this gospel was written for the support and consolation of persons under distress and persecution in those troublesome times, as an † early writer asserts, appears in a particular manner from that circumstantial and minute account this evangelist hath given us of the commission our Lord gave to the apostles, when he endowed them with miraculous powers, and deputed them to preach the gospel in the several towns and villages of *Judea*. Our Lord evidently foresaw to what contumelious and cruel treatment they would necessarily be exposed —

\* N he

\* See Dr. *Henry Owen's* Observations on the four Gospels, p. 1.

† See Dr. *Owen's* Observations, &c. p. 21.

he therefore prepares them for the conflict—fortifies them with the noblest hopes and principles to sustain these trials with a Christian greatness of soul—and the evangelist *Matthew*, by circumstantially recording this commission, read the persecuted Christians of that age an useful lesson of instruction what principles were to support them in these unhappy scenes. As this passage clearly indicates the *occasion* of *St. Matthew* writing his gospel, and serves as the best key to open to us his intention and design in composing it, and to ascertain the *date* of it from the *circumstances* of those for whose use it was compiled, I have thought it not improper to close this section with exhibiting before the reader a free and explanatory version of it.

MATTHEW, chap. x.

5 These twelve Jesus commissioned and appointed to the apostolic office, and sent them—previously giving them the following advice and directions—Publish not the report of the gospel among the *heathens*, neither enter into one city inhabited by the *Samaritans*.

6 But confine your public ministrations

solely to the inhabitants of Judæa, who have been so deplorably neglected and suffered to wander in the fatal paths of ignorance and wickedness.

7 Proclaim in every place where there are rational creatures, to hear the news and say—The gospel dispensation is just commencing.

8 Heal the indisposed—cure the lepers—raise the dead—expel dæmons

dæmons—and as you had these spiritual gifts *freely* bestowed upon you, do you also *freely* impart their salutary effects to others.

9 I solemnly warn you against a sordid mercenary disposition—do you therefore upon no account take money for the good you do.

10 Be not anxious in preparing accommodations and laying up provisions for your journey—the benevolence of the well disposed will supply you with the necessaries and conveniences of life, and the faithful and diligent discharge of your duty will entitle you to them.

11 When you go into a town or village, make enquiry which of the inhabitants is best known and most generally esteemed for true worth and excellency

of character—to such apply, where you will most probably find a kind reception—and continue there while you stay, that they may be witnesses of your disinterestedness and integrity.

12 When you enter into the family greet it in the most friendly and obliging terms, and wish it all divine and human happiness.

13 And if that family possess such real worth as hath been represented to you, the blessings you implore shall descend upon it—but if the hopes you have been taught to form of it be disappointed and you meet with a repulse, *you*, however, *yourselves* will enjoy the conscious pleasure and satisfaction of having done your duty—and the blessings which you have supplicated the Al-



mighty to bestow upon that *family*, shall be imparted to *you*.

14 Moreover, whatever town or family shall refuse to admit you and hear your public instructions, shake off the dust of your feet against them—by this significant action, giving a public and solemn testimony to all, that you have freely offered to them the advantages and privileges of the gospel, but they have wilfully rejected them.

15 Be assured that in the general judgement *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* shall be punished with less severity than that town, for its having resisted greater evidence than what *those cities* were ever favoured with.

16 I am sensible by sending you abroad to preach the gospel I expose you to the insult,

abuse and cruelty of a depraved world—Consider yourselves, therefore, as sheep in the midst of wolves, and join the innocence of the harmless dove to the vigilance and prudence of the cautious serpent.

17 Let your conduct be ever actuated by discretion, and guard with the greatest circumspection against irritating men's passions unnecessarily—for with all the caution you can observe, so implacably will the generality of the world be exasperated against you merely for preaching the gospel, that they will drag you before the civil magistrate as the disturbers and pests of society, and scourge you in the synagogues as enemies to the established religion.

18 And you shall be brought for your public

public profession of Christianity before the tribunals of the most august personages, where the apologies you will make in vindication of its truth and excellency, shall serve as public testimonies to them and the world of its divine authority.

19 But when you are carried before the most illustrious and dignified characters, be not anxious in studying a defence of your principles and conduct; for that God, in whose cause you are engaged, will enable you in that emergency to apologize for yourselves.

20 So that your public pleas on such occasions will not be so much the efforts of *human* wisdom, as the dictates and suggestions of the spirit of God.

21 THE GOSPEL you are going to preach, will in its consequen-

ces produce the most virulent and implacable feuds, and the most unnatural and deadly animosities in families, accordingly as it is embraced or rejected by their respective members---for brother shall murder brother, a father his own child, and the sons shall embroil their hands in the blood of their parents.

22 For you shall be held in almost universal detestation for your profession---but he who through all these distressful scenes continues steady in his attachment to my cause, shall finally be rewarded with everlasting life.

23 Notwithstanding therefore, all the outrages you are exposed to, show yourselves indefatigable in preaching the gospel; and when you meet with persecutions in one town fly to another, and with invincible

cible resolution preach the gospel there--- for be assured you shall not have visited all the towns in *Judæa* before the most dreadful destruction overtake it.

24 A *scholar* hath no reason to expect better treatment than his *teacher*, or a *servant* than his *master*.

25 Ought not a disciple, or slave, to think himself happy if he hath only to encounter the *same* difficulties, and submit to the *same* usage as his instructor, or lord, hath experienced from the world --- If they have called the *master* of the house a confederate with *Belzebub*, how much more will they load his domestics with the most odious names and scurrilous reproaches.

26 Let not however all this series of abuse overwhelm you in terror and despair, and

discourage you from preaching the gospel; for there comes a day when all the hidden scenes of life will be laid open, and supreme justice vindicate and gloriously reward oppressed innocence and persecuted virtue.

27 Let not the prospect therefore of any human suffering intimidate and deject you, but discharge your ministrations with undaunted courage, proclaiming in the most *public* and frequented places, those instructions which I have given you in our *private* retirements.

28 Fear not those who can only inflict bodily pain, and deprive you of a precarious being, but whose power extends no farther--- but let that great Being be the object of your fear, who can involve both soul and body in total and everlasting de-

destruction—Let that great Being, I repeat it, be the object of your constant fear.

29 For if the meanest and most inconsiderable creatures, are perpetually under the inspection of God and perish not without his cognisance, how much more must divine providence interest itself in the guardianship and protection of rational beings, and not suffer them to be wantonly sacrificed by the rage and malice of mankind without his knowledge and permission.

30 So far from this, that the least evil cannot befall you without his direction—for God is intimately acquainted with all your minutest concerns, and the very hairs of your head are numbered by his all-comprehensive wisdom.

31 Banish, therefore, from your breasts all fear of human malice and persecution --- an intelligent being worthily engaged in publishing among mankind a religion of God's

own appointment, is surely more entitled to the divine care and regard than the irrational and inferior creatures.

32 These sufferings are the sure test of men's principles—whosoever therefore, notwithstanding the menaces of tyrants and the rage of persecutors, shall with undaunted resolution profess his belief of Christianity, him will I publicly acknowledge to be my true disciple before God and the assembled world.

33 But whosoever shall be terrified by the dread of public odium or fear of persecution into a public recantation of the Christian principles, and openly renounce his profession, him will I also reject at the general resurrection.

34 The promulgation of the Christian religion will produce effects in the world the very reverse of its genius and tendency---for tho' it is designed to promote universal harmony and concord,

and to extinguish men's worst passions, yet it will blow them into the most vehement and destructive flames.

35 For it will occasion such violent quarrels and unhappy discords as will not only break all the common ties of humanity, but also dissolve the most intimate bonds of consanguinity.

36 And through religious differences, a man's most implacable enemies shall be those of his own family.

37 But whenever family affections happen to interfere and clash with your duty, the former must be given up without hesitation—for he that sacrifices his religion, either to parental tenderness or filial piety, forfeits the Christian character and will never be acknowledged as a genuine disciple.

38 Unworthy the name of Christian is he who will not submit to the greatest difficulties for the sake of it.

39 For he who *saves his life* in this world by

mean compliances, at the expence of his conscience and religion, shall in another be ever *deprived of it*—but he who *loses* his life in my cause, shall with infinite advantage *regain* it in an happy immortality.

40 THESE are the admonitions I give you, and with this authority I invest you, so that every one who receives you in effect receives me—and he who obeys my instructions obeys the will of God who originally delegated and sent me into the world.

41 He who entertains a public instructor, or a good man, under these characters, and pays their respective dignity and worth, a real esteem and friendly regard shall be entitled to a share of their future reward.

42 And whosoever shall do you the least act of benevolence merely on account of your being *my* disciples, his generosity flowing from such a principle shall not go unrewarded.

SECT.

## S E C T. II.

*Observations on St. MARK as a writer.*

**A**T the request of the christians in *Rome*, who desired to have in writing the doctrine they had heard *Peter* deliver, *St. Mark* wrote his gospel. It bears evident signatures, that it was composed for the use of the believers at *Rome*, for there are several *Latin* words in it, as λεγειων, κεντυριων, σπεκυλατωρ, κραββατον\*. As the *Romans* would not understand the *Jewish* phrase κοινας χειρην, he explains it—τουτεςιν, ανιπτοις. It is a plain, simple, concise, compendious narrative—no account of Christ's *genealogy*, which would have been of *less* significance to the *Romans*—no account of his miraculous *conception* and *birth*—he begins with introducing his reader abruptly *in medias res*—*The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God*. It is little else than an *abridgment*, or *abstract*, of *St. Matthew* and *St. Luke*, with a few incidental additions here and there inserted. There is *hardly* a single fact which is not recorded in the gospel of *Matthew* and *Luke*. It

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is

\* Κραββατον, at least, is very often used by *Latin* authors. *Non modo lectos, sed etiam grabatos*. *Cicero* de *Divin.* lib. 2. p. 279. *Davis*. *Ibat tripes grabatus*. *Martial*, lib. 12. *Epig.* 32. v. 11. *Fractum qui veteris pedem grabati*. *Ca-tullus* 10, 22.

is evident from the slightest collation, that the books of these two Evangelists were before him, and that he *epitomised* them, but here and there varied a little in the circumstances of the miracles and parables of our Lord. That a *Roman* might know what a dreary and inhospitable solitude that was in which our Saviour was tempted, he adds—*he was with the wild beasts*. He mentions the number of the swine that perished—*two thousand* \*. He says, the twelve apostles whom Christ commissioned and sent to preach in Judæa, *anointed many with oil*, and healed them—a little *incidental* circumstance related by no other. *Cimon the Cyrenian* being mentioned as the Person whom the soldiers compelled to bear the Cross of Christ, he adds, that this Person was the father of *Alexander and Rufus*, whom we learn from the Epistle to the *Romans*, xvi. 17. then resided at *Rome*. All these little circumstantial additions to the *general* accounts in *Matthew* and *Luke*, which he abridged, he undoubtedly received from † *Peter*, who  
was

\* See more instances of these little incidental insertions in Dr. *Lardner's* Supplement to his *Credibility*, Vol. 1. p. 202, 203. 2d edit.

† Neque me movet, quod Marcus Matthæi historiam contraxit: non enim ita se Matthæo adstrinxit, ut non alicubi mutaret verba, adderet etiam aliquid, Petro, ut credi par est, si quid super cæteros meminerat, suggerente. See *Wetstein's* N. Testament, p. 504.

count of these things, he was precisely in the same situation as the historian *Thucydides*, who acted for some time in the *Peloponesian* war which he relates, and who tells us, almost in the words of *St. Luke*, that to qualify himself for publishing to the world a circumstantial and accurate detail of its great transactions, he had made the most diligent and particular enquiries, with the utmost fidelity, concerning every incident \*. And with respect to his writing the *history of the Acts of the Apostles*, he had every *advantage*, with regard to the knowledge of facts, and of their principles and motives that an *historian* can enjoy. For he was *personally* conversant with those *who had been eye-witnesses and ministers of the word from the beginning*—he was the inseparable *attendant* of *St. Paul* during a very considerable part of the transactions he celebrates, and was not merely a *spectator*, but one of the principal *actors* in that public *theatre*, whose various and affecting *scenes* he exhibits before his reader. His history of *Christ* has all the characters of fidelity and accuracy, if not with regard to the exact chronological order, yet with regard to the genuineness and authenticity of the facts. He

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begins

\* Τα δ' έργα των πραχθέντων εν τω πολεμῳ, ουκ εκ του παρα τυχοντος πυθανομενος ηξίωσα γραφειν, ουδ' ως εμοι εδοκει, αλλ' οίς τε αυτος παρην, και παρα των αλλων ὅσον δυνατον ακριβεια περι εκαστε επεξελεθων. *Thucydides*, Vol. 1. p. 53. *Glasgow*.



that is, in every distinct region subject to the Roman empire, including also the barbarous nations. A demonstration, that the publication of this gospel hath not so early a date as those Greek subscriptions affix to it, which the reader will find at the end of this gospel in *Wetstein's Testament*. How closely this useful Epitomist hath copied both St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, will appear from the specimens annexed, at the end of this volume—from which the reader will clearly perceive, that such a perfect similarity and correspondence, such a sameness and identity of words and expressions, for whole passages together, could not be a casual and accidental thing, but must have been transcribed and copied.

## S E C T. III.

*Remarks on St. LUKE as a writer.*

HAD not St. *Paul* informed us, that this Evangelist was by profession a physician, and consequently a man of letters, his writings would have been a sufficient evidence that he had enjoyed a liberal education. “Pure classic Greek”, exclaims *Grotius*, for which this author, who had read the medical and historic writers, is eminently distinguished.” And in another place, *Luke*,

\* Bene Græca locutio, quales multæ in hoc Scriptore, qui et Medicos et Historicos legerat. *Grotius* ad Acta Apost. cap. 1. v. 4.

as being a scholar, abounds with expressions that are of classical purity \*. The distinguished sweetness of his style, the smoothness of his periods, the beautiful and perspicuous arrangement of his words, cannot fail to strike and delight every reader possessed of an elegant taste in polite literature. When one hath read either his *gospel* or his *history* of the Apostles, one's thoughts are naturally directed to *Xenophon*, whom the *Athenians* stiled the *Attic muse*, for his sweet and melodious prosaic numbers, on whom they said the *nine Parnassian sisters* had shed their selectest influence, and whose language all the *Graces* had combined to form and embellish †. Nothing can be better accommodated to the grand transactions he records, than the elegant simplicity of his style—divested of all studied ornaments—plain, chaste, and perspicuous—one easy, regular, well-conducted narrative—greatly resembling *Xenophon's* history of the *Expedition of Cyrus*, or his *History of Greece*, for the simple, artless, unaffected manner of the narration, or the *Commentaries of Julius*

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Cæsar,

\* Lucas, ut eruditus, multis uitur uocibus purè Græcis. *Grotius* ad Acta Apost. cap. 5. 30.

† Quid ego commemorem *Xenophontis* iucunditatem illam in affectatam, sed quam nulla possit affectatio consequi? ut ipsæ finxisse sermonem *Gratiæ* videantur; et quod de *Pericle* veteris comædiæ testimonium est, in hunc transferri iustissime possit, in labris ejus sedisse quandam persuadendi deam. *Quintilian*, lib. 10. cap. 1. p. 745: *Variorum* 1665.

*Cæsar*, a work distinguished for its plainness, but which, in point of *elegance* and the *true sublime*, says *Hirtius*, was never surpassed by the most elaborate compositions \*. But his history of Christ is not merely recommended by the *elegance* of its composition, but for the *authenticity* of its facts. In writing it he acted the part of a faithful historian. Truth was his great object and aim. He diligently traced, he tells us, the sacred stream up to its source. Others, incited by the greatness of the transactions, had published historical accounts of them that were crude and inaccurate, intermixed with fable and fiction, abounding with marvellous events, that had their foundation only in uncertain fame. But this *Evangelist*, who enjoyed, he tells us, the happiest opportunities for exploring and investigating truth, and who had carefully examined and enquired into these great events, had every qualification, from the probity and goodness of his heart, from his living in the times in which these illustrious transactions happened, and from his being a *companion* and *fellow-labourer* with the *Apostles*, for giving the world a *faithful* and *authentic* history of them. With regard to his composing and publishing an exact and minute account

\* Nihil tam operosè ab aliis esse perfectum, quod non horum *elegantia* commentariorum superetur, *Hirtii* de Bel. Gal. lib. 8. p. 190. Ed. *Clarke*, 8vo.

was an eye-witness. "He is plainly, \* says Dr. Owen, an *Epitomist*, and delivers no facts throughout his whole gospel (a single miracle alone excepted) but what are recorded by one or other of the two former Evangelists. He is often indeed very circumstantial in his narration, and adds many things for the sake of the *Romans*, to enable them the better to understand his accounts. And when you have allowed him this, you will find little, or nothing more, that can properly be called his own." And again, p. 52, the same ingenious and learned writer observes: "In compiling this narrative St. *Mark* had little more to do, it seems, than to abridge the gospels which lay before him—varying some expressions, and inserting some *additions*, as occasion required. That St. *Mark* followed this plan, no one can doubt, who compares his gospel with those of the two former Evangelists. He copies largely from both; and takes either the one or the other almost perpetually for his guide." It is obvious to remark, that the *date* of this gospel comes down *lower* than St. *Luke's*, for the conclusion of it acquaints us, to what a vast extent Christianity had spread its triumphs in the world *before* he published his gospel. The Apostles, he says, had gone forth from *Jerusalem* into every country, and had promulgated the gospel EVERY WHERE:

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that

\* See his *Observations on the four Gospels*, p. 72.

begins at the *fountain-head*, follows with careful footsteps the *stream* in its heavenly *course*, till after the death of Christ we see it derived into a thousand different *channels*, in every *direction*, to *refresh* and *bleſs* the *whole* world. He begins his history with the miraculous conception of John, the appointed harbinger of Christ—the miſſion of the Angel *Gabriel* to the Virgin *Mary*—represents the mutual salutations and devout acknowledgments of *Elizabeth* and *Mary*, upon the prospect of their giving birth to children so illustrious—the birth of *John* the Baptist, and the prophetic strains of pious exultation, which *Zacharias*, under a divine impulse, then uttered. We have next an account of the edict which *Augustus* published, that all the inhabitants of *Judea* should be assessed—of *Joseph* and the Virgin *Mary* travelling to *Bethlehem* in consequence of this edict—of the nativity of *Jesus*—of the manner in which he was accommodated—of the glorious appearance of the angels to the shepherds—of his mother taking him to *Jerusalem* to present him to God, according to the *Jewish* custom—of *Simeon's* exultation upon seeing the *Consolation of Israel*—of his conversing with the *Jewish* doctors in the temple at twelve years of age—of his returning to *Nazareth*, and of his filial and dutiful subjection to his poor and indigent parents. I have particularized these things, because this

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Evangelist is the \* *only one* who hath related them—and because they evince the care he had taken to trace his subject to its *source*. The reader will be pleased with the following character of this Evangelist, as a *writer*, by an excellent scholar, and one of the best judges in polite literature, which the present age hath produced †. “ St. *Luke* is pure, copious, and flowing in his language, and has a wonderful and most entertaining variety of select circumstances in his narration of our Saviour’s divine actions.—Both in his Gospel and apostolical Acts he is accurate and neat, clear and flowing, with a natural and easy grace; his stile is admirably accommodated to the design of history. The narrative of the *Acts of the Apostles* is perspicuous and noble; the discourses inserted, emphatical, eloquent, and sublime. He is justly applauded for his politeness and elegance by some critics, who seem to magnify him, in order to depreciate the rest of the Evangelists.—

St.

\* Plurima enim et magis necessaria Evangelii per hunc cognovimus: sicut Joannis generationem, et de Zacharia historiam, et adventum Angeli ad Mariam, et exclamationem Elizabeth, et Angelorum ad pastores descensum, et eaque ab illis dicta sunt, et Annæ et Simeonis de Christo testimonium, et quod duodecim annorum in Hierusalem relictus sit, et baptismum Joannis, et quot annorum Dominus, et quia in quinto-decimo anno Tiberii Cæsaris.—Omnia hujus modi per solum Lucam cognovimus, et plurimos actus Domini per hunc didicimus. *Irenæus*, lib. 3. cap. 14. Oxon 1702, Grabe.

† *Blackwall's sacred Classics*, Vol. 1. 295. 12mo.

St. *Luke's* style has a good deal of resemblance with that of his great master *Paul*; and like him he had a learned and liberal education. I believe he had been very conversant with the best classic authors; many of his words and expressions are exactly parallel to theirs." St. *Luke*, on many occasions, seems to have had St. *Matthew's* gospel before him, and to have transcribed from that Evangelist many passages, with very few alterations or variations, almost word for word. The similarity and coincidence is too great to be a casual and accidental thing. Several examples of this transcription are produced in Dr. *Owen's* observations on the four gospels, and to save the reader the trouble of collating the two gospels, a specimen of the *copy* and the *original*, contrasted in two opposite columns, is exhibited in one of the *tables* annexed to this volume. We are indebted to this historian for several discourses and parables of our Lord, not recorded in the *other* Evangelists—particularly for two distinguished parables, which most illustriously shew our Saviour's understanding and powers to be more than human, that he could, as *incidents* arose, and *occasions* presented themselves\*, *invent* and deliver *extempore* such elegant and admirable apologues as these

\* This is justly remarked, and finely represented, by the ingenious Mr. *Bourn of Norwich*, in his excellent discourses on the parables. Vol. 3d, *Introduction* sub. fin.

these—the most difficult species of composition—so finely contrived, so well connected, so striking and so instructive in their several parts, rising with such greatness to their conclusion, concluding with so useful a moral, and forming such a beautiful and consistent whole—and they also eminently shew how well adapted our Saviour's *method* of instruction was to reclaim and to instruct mankind, to awaken and to impress them, since dry *didactic precepts* are soon lost to our remembrance, while short moral stories, such as our Saviour's *parables* were, delivered by a prophet invested with a divine authority, would never be forgot. The *two* distinguished parables I mean, for which we are indebted to St. *Luke*, are the parable of the prodigal son, and the parable of the rich man and *Lazarus*.—The *first* containing such a variety of incidents, narrated in so artless and affecting a manner, awakening in our bosoms a thousand different passions and sensibilities by turns, indignation, sorrow, sympathy, joy, placing him, as in a theatrical representation, before our eyes, in a great diversity of fortune, and producing the strongest emotions the heart can feel—the other presenting to our view the miseries that await the luxurious voluptuary, and the hard-hearted unfeeling miser, in a future world, and the blessedness that will crown indigent and suffering virtue. A diffuse and paraphrastic version of these



188 PARABLE of the prodigal son. [Chap. V. *two parables*, to which it is impossible for me to do adequate justice, concludes this account of the distinguished merit of this Evangelist, as a most elegant and classical writer.

*Parable of the prodigal son.* Luke xv. 11.

A GENTLEMAN of a splendid family and opulent fortune had *two* sons.—One day the *younger* approached his father, and begged him, in the most soothing and importunate terms, to make a partition of his effects betwixt *himself* and his *elder* brother.—The indulgent parent, overcome by his blandishment, immediately divided all his fortune between them.—A few days after the *younger* brother converted all the estates that had been thus assigned him into ready money—left his native soil—and settled in a *foreign* country—where by a course of debauchery and profligacy, and every expensive and fashionable amusement and pleasure, in a very short time he squandered it all away.—Soon as he had dissipated his fortune, and was now reduced to extreme indigence, a terrible famine visited the country in which he resided, and raged with such dire and universal devastation, that he was in want even of the common necessaries of life.—Finding himself now destitute of bread, and having nothing to satisfy a raging appetite, he went to an opulent citizen of that country,

country, and begged him in the most supplicant terms, that he would employ him in any menial drudgery.—The person hired him, and sent him into his fields to feed swine.—Here he was so dreadfully tormented with hunger, that he envied even the swine the husks which he saw them greedily devour, and would willingly have allayed, with *these*, the dire sensations he felt, but none of his fellow servants would permit him.—But reflection, which his vices had kept so long in a profound sleep, now awoke.—He now began to review the past scenes of his life, and all the plenty and happiness, in which he had *once* lived, rushed into his mind.—What a vast number of servants, said he, hath my father, who riot in superfluous abundance and affluence, while I am emaciated and dying with hunger!—I am determined to go to my dear aged parent, and endeavour to excite his tenderness and compassion for me.—I will kneel before him, and accost him in these pathetic terms.—“ Best of parents! with the deepest contrition I acknowledge myself an ungrateful creature to heaven and to you!—I have rendered myself, by a course of many shameful vices, unworthy of the name of your *child*; condescend to hire me into your family in the capacity of the meanest *slave*!”—Having formed this resolution, he travelled towards home, without cloaths, and without shoes, with all the haste that

that a body pining with hunger and exhausted by fatigue could make.—When he was now come within sight of home, his father saw him at a distance—knew him—and was at once subdued with parental tenderness and pity.—He rushed to meet him with swift and impatient steps—folded him in his arms—impressed on his lips a thousand affectionate kisses—the tears straying down his venerable cheeks, and the big passions that struggled in his breast choking his utterance.—After some time the son said, Best and kindest of parents! I have been guilty of the blackest ingratitude both to God and to you!—I am unworthy to be called your child!—The father, without making any reply to these words, called his slave, saying, Bring hither immediately a compleat suit of the best robes I have in my house—and do you fetch the fat calf from the stall, and kill it—for we will devote this day to festivity and joy.—For this is my son!—he, whose death I have so long and so bitterly deplored, is yet alive!—Him, whom I believed had miserably perished, I have now recovered.—A most splendid entertainment was accordingly prepared—and every heart was dilated with transport on this happy occasion.—In the mean time, while they were thus joyfully celebrating his return, the *elder* brother was absent in the fields.—On his coming home in the evening, when he approached the house, he heard  
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the whole dome resound with vocal and instrumental music, and a company of dancers.—He called one of the slaves, and asked him the meaning of this unexpected scene.—The slave said, Your brother, Sir, is just returned from abroad, and your father hath celebrated this happy occasion by a splendid and sumptuous entertainment. This account of his father's conduct highly incensed and exasperated him—and he obstinately refused to go into the hall to his brother, and to the other company.—His behaviour being told the father, he came out to him, and even intreated him to come in and share their felicity.—To these affectionate persuasions he sullenly replied, I have done all your drudgery for a great number of years past, and never once disobeyed any of your orders, and you never made me a present even of such a trifle as a kid, and bad me go and entertain my friends.—But no sooner doth this libertine return to you, after having dissipated all the fortune you gave him in the vilest sensuality and debauchery, but you embrace him in an ecstasy of joy, bathe him in a flood of tears, and solemnize the day by a splendid and magnificent feast.—His father said to him, My dear son, the paternal inheritance, you know, is yours—*you have always* been with me.—I have never regretted your absence.—You too ought, therefore, to indulge the warmest joy, and mutually to share in

192      PARABLE of the rich man. [Chap. V.  
in our transports, in receiving a brother whose  
death we have so often lamented, and recovering  
one whose loss we have so bitterly deplored.

*Parable of the rich man and Lazarus.* Luke xvi. 19.

THERE was a rich man, possessed of an  
immense fortune, who was always dressed in  
the most splendid and sumptuous robes, and  
was every day regaled with all the refinements of  
luxury and sensuality.—At the proud gates of this  
rich voluptuary was laid a most miserable object,  
whose name was *Lazarus*, covered with ulcers.—  
This unhappy creature solicited, in the most  
plaintive and moving terms, that he might have  
only the crumbs that dropped from the luxurious  
board, to allay his raging hunger—but was re-  
fused.—But the dogs, more friendly and compas-  
sionate, assuaged his pain, and gave him a mo-  
mentary ease by licking his sores.—Death soon  
gave this wretched creature a kind dismissal  
from his sorrows—but behold he was instantly  
conveyed by angels into the regions of immortal  
bliss, and made an assessor with *Abraham*.—The  
proud sensualist also died, and was interred.—  
But the moment after the dissolution of soul and  
body, he found himself precipitated into the most  
dreadful and horrible miseries.—In these doleful  
regions, throwing his eyes around from side to  
side,

side, he descried, at an immense distance, his great progenitor *Abraham*, and *Lazarus* reclining on his bosom, in the full fruition of ineffable joy.—Instantly he raised his voice, and in the most piercing and affecting accents, cried, Pity, O thou great and worthy ancestor, do pity me! Send *Lazarus*, I conjure thee, to me.—It is but a small favour I solicit.—Only to dip the tip of his finger in cold water, and put one single refreshing drop to my tongue—for I suffer the most dire and excruciating torments in these encircling flames!—*Abraham* said to him: Consider, my son, on *earth* you were blessed with affluence, and traversed a circle of every fond amusement and joy; *Lazarus*, on the contrary, was overwhelmed with all human life's variety of wretchedness—but here the scene is reversed.—Now he is consummately happy, and thou art inexpressibly wretched.—Besides, it is impossible for us to afford thee the assistance thou so pathetically implorest—for there is a vast and profound gulf that eternally interposes betwixt us, and for ever precludes all mutual intercourse betwixt the inhabitants of these two different regions.—To this he replied: Suffer me, however, O most holy and illustrious progenitor, to prevail with you to send him to my father's house—I have *five* brothers dissolved in luxury and pleasure—bid him appear to these, and warn them, in the most solemn

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manner,

manner, to repent and reform their lives, that they too may not be consigned to these doleful and horrid abodes.—To this request *Abraham* replied: They have the books of *Moses* and the prophets.—The rules of their duty are there plainly delineated.—Let them make those rules the law of their moral conduct and obedience.—He resumed: Suffer me, great ancestor, to be importunate with you.—If a celestial spirit were solemnly deputed to them from the mansions of the dead to admonish them, they would be reclaimed from their vices.—He answered: If they are determined to slight the faithful advice of *Moses* and the *prophets*, they would also disregard the most solemn admonitions that could be given them by a messenger from the dead.

## S E C T. IV.

*Remarks on St. John as a writer.*

**A**N unaffected simplicity marks this *Apostle's* writings. All is plain truth, divested of every adventitious ornament. No pomp of words, no labour of composition, no smooth arrangement of periods, are here studied\*. The *gospel* of

\* *Stylus Joannis, uti interpretes observant, est valde simplex. Paulus ad pedes Gamalielis, et Lucas medicus scribunt, ut literati solent: Joannes autem simplicitatem piscatoris retinuit. Quæ tamen simplicitas humilitatque verborum*

of Jesus, like the *worship* of God, is here exhibited in *spirit and in truth*, free from every external art and artifice to embellish and adorn it. The *casquet* is rude and inelegant, but the *pearl* it contains is of inestimable value. Negligently plain, and simple, and familiar, his language; but disclosing the grandest ideas, opening the most glorious prospects, and fraught with doctrines of the greatest sublimity. St. *John's* gospel is like *Virgil's fame*—it deigns to walk upon the *earth*, but fixes its head above the *heavens*\*. The *Hebrew* idiom is of more frequent occurrence in this Apostle, than in any writer of the New Testament. When the *Jews* declare any thing in the strongest terms, they join to the direct *affirmation* an absolute *negation* of the contrary. With this *mode* of speaking the writings of St. *John* abound. For example: *He that bath the son bath life; but he that bath not the son, bath not life.* But tho' his diction is so familiar and unaffected, tho' his sentences, *separately* considered, are so easy and perspicuous, yet there are few writers, in whom we meet with more difficulty, upon *many* occasions, in tracing out the connection, in fixing and ascertaining the true meaning of

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rum per rerum majestatem atque sublimitatem abunde compensatur. *Weslein* in proem. Joannis, p. 831.

\* *Ingrrediturque solo et caput inter nubila condit.*

*Æneid*, lib. 4. 177.



many passages, and gaining a precise and determinate idea of a discourse, consisting of many *detached* members, *unitedly* and *conjunctively* considered. None of these difficulties occur in the *historical* narratives he writes: but in the *public conferences* of our Saviour with the *Jews*, recorded in the *fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and tenth*, chapters of his gospel—and in his *private discourses* to his disciples in some of the *subsequent* chapters, we are often at a loss in forming a clear and distinct view of the *several parts collectively* considered. It is not easy, *oftentimes*, for the mind of the most acute and intelligent reader to form the little broken *parts* and *morsels*, into which St. John's style is *crumbled*, into a compact, regular and uniform *body*. Not to mention, that several parts of these discourses related by this Evangelist, are *metaphorical* and *figurative*, and, consequently, in their *nature* not so obvious and perspicuous, as being wrapped in the veil of allegory. Not that the style of this sacred author is so intricate and perplexed, and his manner of expressing himself and communicating his ideas so embarrassed, and so unhappy, as to justify that censure the famous \* *Engedin* hath passed upon him as a writer. “ If, says he, a concise, abrupt obscurity, inconsistent with itself, and made up of allegories, is to be called sublimity of speech, I own *John* to be

\* See *Blackwall's sacred classics*, Vol. 1. p. 228. 12mo.

be sublime: for there is scarce one discourse of Christ, which is not altogether allegorical, and very hard to be understood."—Every page of his divine writings is impressed with hardly any other characters but those of the purest \* benevolence and love. His heart seems to be entirely occupied and possessed with the amiable spirit and genius of the gospel, and both in his gospel and in his epistles, he is continually inculcating upon his reader these most amiable qualities, as the highest perfection of human nature, and the distinguishing glory of the gospel—repeating, inculcating, and enforcing them in the most affectionate terms, by the most pathetic, persuasive, artless eloquence, in a plain, honest, affecting manner, that discovers to us the probity and sincerity of the author's heart—for such *simplicity* is the natural language of a good heart, which greatly moves and impresses us, and raises the strongest sensibilities and emotions. Negligent and artless as this writer is, there is no one in the New Testament who so powerfully makes his way into the reader's heart, so powerfully wins and insensibly steals upon our affections, and so powerfully subdues and melts the human soul into the love of God, of Jesus, and of goodness. As a proof of his unrivalled excellence in this respect, I need only refer my  
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\* See St. John's amiable character finely represented by the late Dr. *Duchal* in his *Presumptive Evidences*.

reader to the *fourteenth, fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth* chapters of his gospel, and the *second and third* of his *first* Epistle, which no good mind can read without being greatly affected. The distinguished goodness and tenderness of his heart shine in every page—his writings are the fair transcript of his own soul—as we read, we are sure the writer himself felt that goodness which thus embalms every line. I do not know what secret magic there is in the plain unadorned simplicity of his manner, that enchants and fascinates my heart every time I read him, and throws a stronger influence o'er my mind, than the most pure and elaborate diction of the most pure and elaborate author I ever read. Let any person, possessed of the least share of delicate and tender sensibilities, attend to the sensations and various passions that rend his heart by turns, while he reads over the account of the sickness and death of *Lazarus*—the disconsolate sorrow of his two sisters—the sympathetic condolance and tears of Jesus—his devout prayer at the grave—his exclamation, *Lazarus come forth!*—and that most astonishing event, the corpse throwing itself out of the sepulchre, bound hand and foot with grave cloaths—let any person, possessed of the least feeling and sensibility, attend to this affecting narrative, and I flatter myself, that I can *then* safely lodge the appeal with his own *heart* for the truth and

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and justness of this remark. Simplicity, indeed, of itself charms.—It is the vest of truth and virtue.—It is the fairest, loveliest robe of nature—and hath infinitely greater power to captivate and engage the soul, than all the gaudy ornaments and false artificial embellishments that ever were studied and lavished.

## S E C T. V.

*Remarks on St. PAUL as a writer.*

ALL the writings of St. PAUL speak him a man of a most exalted genius, and the strongest abilities. His composition is peculiarly nervous and animated. He possessed a fervid conception, a glowing but chastised fancy, a quick apprehension, and a most immensely ample and liberal heart. Inheriting from nature distinguished powers, he carried the culture and improvement of them to the most exalted height to which human learning could push them. An excellent scholar, an acute reasoner, a great orator, a most instructive and spirited writer. *Longinus*, a person of the finest taste, and justest discernment in criticism and polite literature, classifies the Apostle *Paul* among the most celebrated \* orators of Greece. His

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*speeches*

\* Δημοθενς, Λυσίας, Αισχίνης, Αρισειδης, Ισαίος, Τιμαρχος, Ισοκράτης, Δημοθενς ὁ καὶ Κριθίνῳ, Ξενοφῶν, πρὸς τοῦτοις Πάυλῳ ὁ Ταρσεύς. *Longinus*, p. 260. *Fearce*, 8vo.

*speeches* in the *Acts of the Apostles* are worthy the *Roman senate*. They breathe a most generous fire and fervor, are animated with a divine spirit of liberty and truth, abound with instances of as fine address, as any the most celebrated *orations* of *Demosthenes* or *Cicero* can boast; and his *answers*, when at the *bar*, to the questions proposed to him by the court, have a politeness, and a greatness, which nothing in antiquity hardly ever equalled. Witness that celebrated reply to king *Agrippa*, who publicly declared to him, he had almost persuaded him to be a christian. *Would to God that not only you, but also ALL that bear me this day, were not ALMOST, but ALTOGETHER, such as I am*—EXCEPT THESE BONDS. What a prodigious effect must this striking conclusion, and the sight of the irons held up to enforce it, make upon the minds of the audience! To his singular attainments in learning the *Roman* governor publicly bore an honourable testimony, imagining the intenseness of his application to his studies, and his profound erudition, had disordered his understanding, and occasioned this supposed insanity.

His writings shew him eminently acquainted with *Greek* learning and *Hebrew* literature. He greatly excelled in the profound and accurate knowledge of the *Old Testament*, which he is perpetually citing and explaining with great skill and judgment, and pertinently accommodating to the subject

subject he is discussing. Born at *Tarsus*, the most illustrious seat of the *muses* in those days, initiated in that city into the learning and philosophy of the *Greeks*, conversing, in early life, with their most elegant and celebrated writers, whom we find him quoting, and afterwards finishing his course of education at the feet of *Gamaliel*, the learned Jewish rabbi, he came forth into public and active life, with a mind stored with the most ample and various treasures of science and knowledge that can adorn and dignify the human soul. He himself tells us, that the distinguished progress he had made was known of all the *Jews*, and that in this literary career he left all his co-equals and contemporaries far behind him. *I profited in the Jewish religion above my fellows.* A person possessed of natural abilities so signal, of literary acquisitions so extensive, of an activity and spirit so enterprising, and of an integrity and probity so inviolate, the wisdom of God judged a fit instrument to employ in displaying the banners, and spreading the triumphs of Christianity among mankind. A *negligent greatness*, if I may so express it, appears in his writings. Full of the dignity of his subject, a torrent of sacred eloquence bursts forth, and bears down every thing before it with irresistible rapidity. He stays not to arrange and harmonize his words and his periods, but rushes on, as his vast ideas transport him, borne away by the sublimity

limity of his theme, and, like *Pindar*, when seized with poetic inspiration, with strong pinions soars above the clouds, and far, far below, at an immense distance, leaves all *mortal* things \*. Hence his frequent and prolix digressions, tho' at the same time his all-comprehensive mind never loses sight of his subject, but he returns from these excursions, resumes and pursues it with an ardour and strength of reasoning that astonishes and convinces. He introduces any subject, which he is afraid will prejudice and disgust his bigotted countrymen the *Jews*, with an humility and modesty that secures your attention, and with an insinuating form of address to which you can deny nothing. This appears particularly in his Epistle to the *Romans*, where we see with what reluctance and heart-felt grief he mentions the ungrateful truth of the *Jews* rejection of the Messiah, and their direliktion of God for their insuperable obstinacy. How studious he is to provoke them to jealousy

\* — Negatâ tentat iter viâ:  
Cætusque vulgares et udam  
Spernit humum fûgiente pennâ. HORACE.

Novem lyricorum longè *Pindarus* princeps, spiritus magnificentiâ, sententiis, figuris, beatissimâ rerum verborumque copiâ, et velut quodam eloquentiæ flumine: propter quæ Horatius eum merito credit nemini imitabilem. *Quintilian*, lib. 10. cap. 1. p. 740. *Var.* *Quintilian's* description of the exalted genius of *Pindar*, in this passage, is very applicable to St. Paul as a writer.

jealousy and emulation by the example of the *Gentiles*, and how many persuasive and cogent arts and arguments doth he employ to win them over to the religion of Jesus. In these delicate touches, in these fine arts of moral suasion St. *Paul* greatly excels. Upon occasion, also, we find him employing the most keen and cutting raillery in satyrizing the faults and foibles of those to whom he wrote. With what sarcastic pleasantry doth he animadvert upon the *Corinthians* for their injudicious folly, in suffering themselves to be duped by a false judaizing teacher. I do not remember, I have ever met with an instance of *irony* more delicate and poignant than the following passage. *In what respect*, says he to the *Corinthians*, *have you been inferior to the other churches, except that I never extorted a maintenance from you—do forgive me this injury!*—To his eloquence as a public speaker, we have the testimony of the *Lycaonians*, who, foolishly imagining the gods to have descended from heaven among them, in the persons of *Barnabas* and *Paul*, called the former, *Jupiter*, and the latter, *Mercury*, because he was the chief speaker. And tho' it is said his *bodily presence was mean*, and his *speech contemptible*, yet it ought to be remembered, that this is the aspersion of his enemies, the effusions of malignity, to defame and sink him, and ruin his usefulness.—If I were asked, what *writer* among the *ancients* St. *Paul* most



most resembles in his stile and composition, I should answer *Plutarch*, with regard to neglect of ornament, disregard of harmonious arrangement, frequency of parentheses and digressions, tho' the *Apostle's* manner is infinitely more animated and spirited than that of the *Philosopher*. If I were asked, *whom* he most resembles among the *moderns*, I should say, the great Mr. *Howe*, who possessed strong abilities, great learning, a fine imagination, an exalted piety, an uncommon depth of thought and energy of language, but whose manner of writing, tho' nervous, is rather inelegant, whose periods are rude and rough and inharmonious, full of excursive and parenthetical insertions, sentence within sentence, *wheel within wheel, like Ezekiel's vision*, but abundantly compensating these little defects by the astonishing greatness of the writer's ideas and conceptions. The *two* specimens I have here exhibited shew *St. Paul's* abilities in a distinguished light, the *first* as an *orator*, the second as a *writer*, dexterously employing every insinuating form of argument and address to incite those, to whom he wrote, to a generous and liberal contribution to worthy and necessitous objects.

St. Paul's Speech, which he delivered before King *Agrippa*, the Governor *Festus*, *Bernice*, the Roman tribunes, and persons of the first distinction in *Cæsarea*—which brilliant assembly being all seated, and the Apostle brought into the court, Acts, chap. xxvi.

**A**grippa then said to Paul, you have free permission to vindicate yourself—upon this Paul stretched out his hand, and delivered the following apology.

2 DISTINGUISHED is my happiness, O king *Agrippa*, that I am now favoured with an opportunity of publicly vindicating myself, before so illustrious a personage, from the various asper-

sions that the Jews have cast upon me.

3 Especially as I am pleasingly conscious, that you are perfectly acquainted with the whole religious system and popular controversies of the Jews—This persuasion encourages me to solicit, that you would hear what I have to offer in defence of the principles I have adopted, with lenity and candour.

4 To my conduct and character in *early* life, which was spent among my own countrymen, on the public theatre of *Jerusalem*, all the Jews are no strangers.

5 They all know my life and the liberal education I received, if they were disposed ingenuously to attest it.—They all know that I was educated in the strictest sect of our religion, and that

I em-

I embraced the principles of the *Pharisees*.

6 And now do I stand at this tribunal for my firm and avowed belief in that transporting \* promise, which God solemnly made to our illustrious forefathers.

7 A promise, after whose expected blessedness the whole community of *Israel* fervently aspires, and to attain which all the twelve tribes, day and night, serve God with unremitting ardour of devotion—And yet, because I cherish this common hope, O king Agrippa, am I pursued by the whole body of the Jews with unrelenting enmity and rage.

8 What! is it a thing absolutely incredible with you, that the great God is able to reanimate the dead!

9 I once thought it my duty to do every thing in my power to crush the cause of Jesus in its birth.

10 Accordingly in Jerusalem I distinguished myself by zealous endeavours to suppress it.—Great numbers of the Christians I confined in jails—to me the high priests granted a commission to harass them—I ever gave a cheerful suffrage to those who were resolved to assassinate them.

11 In every synagogue by my orders they were mangled with scourges, and punished with extreme cruelty.—By the tortures I inflicted, I obliged them to calumniate and revile their leader.—At last, the excesses of my unbounded fury against them would not be cir-

cum-

\* The promise of the Messiah.

cumfcribed within the narrow limits of *Judæa.*

—My madness instigated me to overleap its boundaries, and persecute in *foreign* towns and cities.

12 But as I was travelling to Damascus with an unlimited commission from the high priests—

13 On the public road—about the middle of the day—I saw, O king, from the parted clouds, all on a sudden, an ineffable light, infinitely more dazzling than the effulgence of the sun, dart and blaze about me and my companions.

14 We were all instantly struck to the earth—where, as I lay prostrate, I heard the following words solemnly uttered—Saul! Saul! why dost thou persecute me! It is madness for thee to contend with a superior power!

15 Trembling I said, Lord! who art thou?—

The voice replied, I am Jesus, whom thou art persecuting!

16 But rise, for I have now appeared to thee to constitute thee a minister and a witness of what thou hast seen, and to publish to the world the truths I shall in future reveal to thee.

17 I will be thy guardian amidst the rage of the *Jews*, and the fury of the *Heathens*, to whom I will depute thee.

18 To pour the light of truth upon the mental eye, to dispel the gloomy darkness from their benighted souls, to reclaim them from the adoration of *false* to the worship of the *true* God, that, by embracing my religion, they may obtain a total remission of their past sins, and finally secure a blessed immortality

talities among the virtuous.

19 To the solemn commands enjoined upon me by this heavenly vision, O king Agrippa, I have not been disobedient:

20 But to the Jews in Damascus *first*, then to Jerusalem, afterwards to all Judæa, at last to heathen nations, have I publicly proclaimed the indispensable necessity of repentance, and of a devout and holy life.

21 It is for these principles, and for this conduct, that the Jews seized me in the temple, and violently attempted to murder me.

22 But by the powerful interposition of my God, I have been rescued from every danger, and now stand before you this day a monument of the divine

mercy—freely declaring to the noble and ignoble no other truths, but what Moses and the prophets have expressly asserted:

23 For example, that the Messiah would be liable to sufferings—that he would be the *first* person who should be raised from the grave to *absolute* immortality—and that he would diffuse a most glorious and sacred light in the world, to illuminate both the Jews and Gentiles without distinction.

24 Here *Festus* interrupted his discourse, by suddenly exclaiming, with a loud and vehement voice, Certainly, Paul, you are mad—your profound erudition hath disordered your intellects.

25 To whom the Apostle replied, My understanding, most illustrious

trious *Festus*, is not disordered—what I now utter is the dictate of sober truth and sedate reflection.

26 I appeal to the king, before whom I have spoken with this freedom, for the truth of my declarations—his majesty, I am persuaded, is not ignorant of any part of these public transactions.—These things were not done in some obscure retreat.

27 Do you believe, O king Agrippa, the predictions of the ancient prophets?—I am persuaded you believe them.

28 Agrippa then said to him, You *almost* induce me to turn Christian.

29 Would to God, the Apostle replied, that all my present auditors were not *almost*, but *al-*

together such as I am—except the infelicity of this chain.”

30 After he had said this, the King, the Procurator, Bernicè, and the rest of the company, rose up and withdrew.

31 Saying, as they went out, one to another, This man hath done nothing to deserve either death or imprisonment!

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St. Paul's arguments to excite the *Corinthians* to charity and beneficence.

2 Cor. chap. viii.

1 CHRISTIAN brethren, I cannot forbear acquainting you with that most liberal contribution which hath been made by the churches of *Macedonia*.

2 That notwithstanding the severe trial of persecution they have undergone, and the deep poverty

poverty in which they are immersed, the transports of devout joy with which their christian principles inspire them, have prompted them to exert themselves in the most munificent and generous manner.

3 For I can testify they have been chearful and voluntary benefactors to the utmost *extent* of their abilities, nay *beyond* their abilities.

4 For they solicited me with many entreaties, that I would receive their charitable collection, and make distribution of it for the benefit of the necessitous Christians in *Judea*.

5 In this respect they have surpassed my most sanguine hopes, for they have not only, through the will of God, devoted themselves to the service of *Christ*, but to the service of *me*.

6 So that the beneficence *they* discovered, induced me to desire *Titus*, that as he had *begun*, so he would *finish*, this charitable contribution among *you*.

7 Since therefore you are distinguished for miraculous gifts, for an ability of conversing in various languages, for superior knowledge, for all virtue, and for your singular regard and affection for me, see that you, on this occasion, distinguish yourselves *as much* for your *liberality*.

8 Not that I would be understood to lay an authoritative injunction upon you.—I am only desirous, that the exemplary readiness of *others* should excite *you* to give a substantial proof of the genuineness of your benevolence.

9 For you are no strangers to the amiable benignity

benignity of our Lord Jesus Christ, that tho' he possessed a station of the most illustrious dignity, yet stooped to a condition of the most abject poverty for our sake, that by his *indigence* we might be *enriched*.

10 I cannot but freely speak my sentiments to you on this topic.—To exert yourselves upon this occasion, is highly proper for *you*, who *an year* ago have begun not only to perform these charitable acts, but to perform them with profuse and chearful dispositions.

11 Do you now therefore compleat these contributions—that as you have discovered a very prompt disposition to *begin*, you may be also incited to *accomplish* the execution of it, accor-

ding to your *respective* circumstances.

12 For if there is but a liberal generous disposition, the Deity accepts it according to what it *can*, not according to what it *cannot*, give.

13 I do not mean, that in order to take off the pressure of distress from *others*, it should be laid upon *you*—but that the strictest rules of equity should be observed—that your munificence should, on the present occasion, relieve them under their indigence,

14 that, in like circumstances, *their* liberality may supply *your* exigencies, in order that the strictest equity in the reciprocal communication of these beneficent offices may be regarded.

15 As it is written, He that gathered *much* manna had not a *larger* quantity



quantity than others: and he who collected but a *little*, had not a *less* quantity than the rest.

16 Thanks be to God, who kindled in the breast of *Titus* such an ardour of affection for you!

17 For as he received such comfort and satisfaction from the visit he lately paid you, out of his fervent regards for you, he is now, from his own voluntary inclination, set out upon a *second* journey to you.

18 I have sent along with him another Christian brother, who hath acquired deserved reputation among all the societies of Christians, for his integrity and labours in propagating the gospel.

19 And not only is he held in universal esteem, but he hath been associated with me, by the suffrage of the churches,

in the management of this collection, which is instituted to promote the glory of God, and to excite your chearful, charitable contributions.

20 In conducting this charity, I will most cautiously avoid all just censure, and give occasion to no personal reflection upon me for an improper direction of this great trust.

21 I shall study to acquit myself in it with honour, not only in the sight of God, but of men.

22 I have dispatched, along with these two, another Christian brother also, whose active diligence to serve me I have experienced on many occasions—and on this emergency in particular, hath shewed singular activity and readiness, from a warm confidence he reposes in you.

23 Whether therefore

fore you regard *Titus*, you are to consider him as my associate, engaged in the same common labours as myself—or whether my other two Christian brethren, who are along with him, they are Apostles of the churches, and a distinguished honour to the Christian religion.

24 Let *these* then see, let all the churches see, a demonstration of your benevolence, and what abundant reason I have to glory in you.

CHAP. ix.

1 WITH regard to this contribution for the necessitous Christians in *Judæa*, it is superfluous for me to urge any more arguments to excite you to it.

2 For I have the strongest persuasion of your prompt and generous dispositions—for which I have deservedly

celebrated you among the *Macedonians*,—assuring them, that *Acbaia* was ready for every benevolent office of this kind a *year* ago.—And this account of your exemplary liberality hath incited a spirit of emulation in considerable numbers to contribute to this charity.

3 I have therefore dispatched the Christian brethren to you at this time, for fear my glorying in you in this respect might be unhappily frustrated; and in order, as I mentioned before, that your collection may be ready against my arrival.

4 Lest, if the *Macedonians* should come along with me, and they surprize you absolutely unprepared, I should, to say nothing of *you* yourselves, be covered with confusion, when I reviewed the exalted

confident eulogies I had formerly lavished upon you.

5 I judged it therefore highly requisite to beg my Christian brethren, that they would set out before me on their journey to you, and accomplish the above-mentioned collection among you, previous to my coming, that it may be ready as a voluntary generous donation, and not as a mean, avaricious pittance.

6 For in this respect one may justly apply the following passage of scripture.--He that sows with a *scanty* hand, reaps a *scanty* harvest: he that sows with a *copious* hand, reaps a *copious* harvest.

7 But let every person give as his heart prompts and dictates to him.—Let his charity not be bestowed with

reluctance, or extorted by necessity—for God loveth a chearful giver.

8 God is able to shower down upon you every felicity, and at all times to bless you with such affluence and success, that you may be abundantly qualified to perform every humane and benevolent office.

9 As it is written—He hath diffused the streams of his goodness around: he hath relieved the wants of the necessitous: his benignity endureth for ever.

10 And may that Being who supplies the husbandman with seed, and the human race with the necessaries of life, prosper your temporal interests, and give a blessing to the generous effects of your beneficence!

11 And may you ever possess

possess such happy circumstances, as shall enable you to perform every benevolent office-- a disposition this, which occasions many grateful acknowledgments to be paid to the supreme parent.

12 For this charitable contribution, with which we are entrusted, doth not only alleviate the distresses of the indigent Christians, but will cause the most devout and fervent thanksgivings to God from immense numbers.

13 For this collection will be a means of their glorifying God for your professed attachment to the gospel of Christ, and for your benevolent contribution to them and to others.

14 You will also secure a share in their prayers, and the first place in their affections, on account of that exceeding liberal generosity you have expressed towards them.

15 Thanks be to God for his ineffable benignity!

## S E C T. VI.

*Remarks on St. JAMES as a writer.*

**I**T was a severe reflection which *Luther* passed on *St. James*, but which he afterwards retracted, that his Epistle was not really worth a straw in respect of the other epistles, and did by no means breathe the evangelical spirit \*. This rash and petulant animadversion of the *Reformer* took its rise from the apprehended notion of this *Apostle's* contradicting *St. Paul* in the doctrine of *Justification*. But undoubtedly every serious, intelligent and impartial reader, after a careful and devout perusal, will pronounce this, one of the most elegant, pleasing, pathetic, instructive and useful epistles in the sacred volume. One cannot rise from reading it without feeling one's heart better, and one's affections more strongly disposed to every good word and work—to every *good word*, because he faithfully represents the numerous and pernicious evils that ruin the peace and happiness of society from an unguarded licentiousness in *speaking*—and to every *good work*, because the

\* Sancti Jacobi Epistola, respectu horum, inquit *Lutherus*, est verè straminea epistola, neque enim indolem Evangelicam arguit. *Wetstein*. N. Test. 2d vol. p. 658. That *Luther* retracted this censure, see *Blackwall's* sacred Classics, 1st vol. p. 301. *Not. Edit.* 12mo,

the genuineness of our christian profession, and our final acceptance with God, are solely dependant on our practical holiness. The style hath all that beautiful and elegant simplicity which so distinguishingly marks the sacred classics. The diction is very pure, chaste, and correct—the periods are smooth and perspicuous—the composition is elegantly concise and sententious—and the sentiments are noble and instructive, moral and useful, and in every respect worthy an Apostle. The divine worth and excellence of this Epistle infinitely transcends every eulogy that human imagination can dictate, or human language utter. He, who makes the instructions of this Epistle the great rule of his daily life, and the amiable directory of his affections and heart, will *be* what God and Jesus *designed* he should be. There are many figurative descriptions and allusions in this beautiful Epistle that are truly classical, finely conceived and pleasingly expressed. The following are distinguished passages—In the *first* chapter he says: That the rich man and his riches are as transient and momentary as a precarious short-lived flower—for the sun arises, attains his meridian, darts his scorching beams upon it, its nutriment is exhausted, its stem is parched and dried, its beauteous variegated leaves languish and drop, and its once vivid colours are lost for ever—Thus fading and transitory is the rich man and his riches—Every blessing

ting we enjoy, and every distinguished felicity we taste, is derived from a celestial source, and descends to us from the great parent of light, who emits from himself a most pure and permanent radiance, subject to no variation, liable to no obscurity, or the least diminution. “ The terms in this passage, says \* Mr. *Blackwall*, are exactly proper and astronomical, according to the appearances of things, and the common notions of mankind. Upon this appearance, and received opinion, the sun, the prince of the planetary heavens, has his parallaxes or changes, appears different in the east, in his meridian height, and decline to the west. He has his annual departures from us, which are the solstices or τροπαι: according to these departures he casts different shades. But God is the unchangeable sun that does not rise or set, come nearer to, or go farther from, any part or space of the universe, an eternal unapproachable light without any variation, eclipse, or mixture of shade.” It is a very beautiful, apt, expressive, and striking metaphor, where he compares a *careless bearer*, - a mere *nominal* professor of religion, and not a *practical observer* of it, to a man, who gazes upon his reflected image in a mirror—he takes a transient survey of his person, mixes again with the world, and the form and features, he hath just been fondly admiring, are instantly lost to his remembrance.

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\* *Blackwall's* sacred Classics, vol. 1. p. 301. 12mo.

Our vain and foolish prepossessions in favour of dress and external appearance, and our criminal contempt of those who are meanly appavelled, even at places of religious worship, are in a lively and spirited manner exposed in the following passage. My fellow christians, let not your profession of the gospel of Jesus Christ, our glorious governor, be accompanied with partiality and personal prepossessions.—For should there enter into your assembly a person arrayed in a magnificent and splendid dress, with a brilliant diamond sparkling on his hand; and should there enter at the *same* time a man in a mean and fordid habit—your eyes being instantly attracted with the lustre of this superb vest, should you immediately introduce the person thus sumptuously habited into the best seat—but turning to the poor man contemptuously say to him: Stand you there—or—sit down here under my footstool—Is not this a flagrant *partiality* in you—is not this a criminal conduct, which your minds at the same time generously condemn?—A finer passage cannot be produced from the most elegant of the Greek and Roman authors, than this writer's beautiful and striking representation of the great importance of governing the tongue, and the infinite mischiefs that garrulity and evil-speaking produce among mankind. It is conceived in the true classic taste. See chap iii. 3—10. The brevity and uncertainty of human life is very pathetically and beautifully



tifully described in that affecting passage, chap. iv. 13. What impious presumption is there in the following language: To-day or to-morrow we will certainly travel to such a particular city—we will reside there a year—will devote ourselves to commerce and accumulate wealth. Alas, you know not what events to-morrow's sun may see—for what is the life of mortals!—It is a light fantastic vapour, which appears for one moment, and the next is utterly dissipated and lost. He beautifully stiles Christianity, chap. i. 25. *the perfect law of liberty*—an happy appellation, whose expressive justness every reader feels. That great fundamental rule of all social duty, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, he calls *νομιμὸν ἑασιλικόν*,—a very *classical epithet*, which the best writers apply to any thing that is \* *supremely excellent and capital*. In sum, St. James, as a writer, ranks with St. Luke, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews—and his Epistle is one of the most fine and finished productions in the New Testament, whether we regard the distinguished elegance of the diction and composition, or the excellent morality it familiarly and affectionately inculcates.

## S E C T.

\* See many examples in Dr. Benson's note on James ii. 8. Dr. Allix in *vitâ Justinî*, p. 397, as quoted by Dr. Grabe in *Justin. Martyr*, p. 23. Edit. Oxon, 1703, 8vo.

## S E C T. VII.

*Remarks on St. PETER as a writer.*

EVERY part of St. Peter's writings indicates a mind that felt the power of the doctrines he delivered, and a soul that glowed with a most fervent zeal for the Christian religion. But he is a very irregular and immethodical writer. I do not know *who* it was I once heard make this observation, That there was not a full stop in all his *first* Epistle. As he writes along, he starts a thought, pursues it, 'till in the pursuit something else present itself, which in like manner seizes his imagination 'till it is dismissed for another object. He appears to be too intent upon better things to have studied composition. He was not solicitous about the choice of words, or the harmonious disposition of words—he paid but little attention to manner and method in writing—what engaged his thoughts and heart were the grand truths and discoveries of the gospel, and the indispensable obligations christians were under to illustrate them in their daily conduct. The earnest and affectionate injunctions he lays upon minister and people, old and young, male and female, to adorn their common profession, are pathetic and worthy an Apostle. In his *second* Epistle he satyrizes with an holy indignation and vehemence,  
the

the abandoned principles and practices of the *false teachers* and *false prophets*, who in those early times rose up in the christian church, and disseminated their pernicious tenets with such art and cunning—entering into private houses, and leading captive silly women laden with sins, and making the credulity of the ignorant minister to their lust and avarice. His prophetic description of the general conflagration, and the end of all terrestrial things, is very awful, and was evidently described in that minute and circumstantial solemnity to engage us to prepare for it. Such great and affecting truths as these strike, by their own intrinsic weight and moment, more than all the elaborate periods that the wit and genius of men ever polished. When one is reading such interesting divine discoveries as these, it is the *ideas* which fill the soul, the mind pays little regard to those *invented* symbols, which are only the factitious and external *signs* of them. }  
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S E C T.

## S E C T. VIII.

*Remarks on St. JUDE as a writer.*

THERE is a very great similarity between the *Epistle of St. Jude*, and the *second Chapter of the second of Peter*—not merely in *subject*, but also in *expression*. The whole Epistle almost entirely consists of a spirited and most vehement invective against the abominable principles and practices of several profligate wretches in those times, who pretended indeed to be christians, but disgraced their profession by the most abandoned excesses, and the most atrocious enormities—turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the one true God, polluting the chaste *Agapæ* of the primitive Christians with intemperance and drunkenness, carnal and sensual, a reproach to human nature, and the disgrace of the Christian name. Against these wicked Christians and their scandalous vices this holy Apostle declaims with a most vehement ardour, brands them and their vices with an everlasting note of infamy, to deter those to whom he writes, and all others in every future age, from the same licentious principles and detestable crimes. One sees the pious indignation and rage with which the holy bosom of this good Apostle glowed at the time he wrote this invective against vice. The expressions, like those

those of the *second* Chapter of the *second* of Peter, of which this Epistle is a counterpart, are remarkably strong, the language animated, the figures and comparisons bold, apt, and striking—there is an energy, a force, a grandeur of expression and style—an apparent labour for words and images, expressive enough to give the reader a just and adequate idea of the profligate characters he exposes—and the whole is written in that unconnected desultory manner, which demonstrates the tumultuous passions which struggled in the author's mind when he composed it, how much it was hurt with these scandalous immoralities in those who called themselves Christians, and with what fervor and spirit he tore off the *mask* of these hypocrites, that the church and the world might see all that turpitude and deformity that lurked behind it.

## C H A P. VI.

*Of the various sects and professions mentioned in the New Testament, the Sadducees, Pharisees, Scribes, Lawyers, Herodians, Samaritans, Stoics, Epicureans, Nicolaitans.*

FROM the *New Testament* we learn, that the Jewish nation, in those times, was divided into religious parties, which differed widely in opinion, and pursued each other with the fiercest animosity, and with implacable hatred. Of these sects the principal were the *Sadducees* and the *Pharisees*—for the *Essenes*, of whose distinguishing tenets and manner of life *Josephus* hath given a minute and particular account, are not once mentioned in the sacred volume—for they studiously courted retirement, devoted themselves to agriculture, affected great simplicity and innocence of manners, secluded themselves from the noise and hurry of towns and cities, and removed into silence and solitude, as most friendly to that *contemplation* and inoffensive plainness of life, in which they made religion and happiness principally consist.

## S E C T. I.

*Of the SADDUCEES.*

THE sect of the *Sadducees* derived its origin and name from one *Sadoc*, who flourished in the reign of *Ptolemy Philadelphus*, about 263  
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years before Christ. This *Sadoc* was the pupil of *Antigonus Soebæus*, president of the *Sanhedrim*—an eminent Jewish *Doctör*, who in his lectures inculcated upon his scholars the reasonableness of serving God, from the innate and intrinsic excellence of the *duty* itself, not from the servile principle of mercenary recompense. From this doctrine of so celebrated a Rabbi, *Sadoc* deduced this inference—That there was no *futurity*, and that all the rewards which the *Deity* bestowed were *solely* confined to *this* life. Sanguine in this sentiment, and active in propagating it, he gained a number of adherents, who espoused his principles, and from him were denominated *Sadducees*. Their *Creed* is thus concisely represented: The *Sadducees* assert that there is no resurrection, neither angel, or spirit. They denied the immortality of the soul, and the existence of all spiritual and immaterial beings—they acknowledged, indeed, that the world was formed by the power of God, and was superintended by his providence, but that the *soul*, at death, suffered one common extinction with the *body*. Hence that captious query, concerning the woman who had survived *seven* husbands, which, consistently with their avowed principles, they addressed to our Lord for his solution, thinking by it to involve him in an inextricable dilemma. They interrogated him to determine for them, to which of her *seven* deceased husbands she should be assigned in a future state. This sect acknowledged the scriptures *alone* to be of divine authority, and obligatory upon men as  
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a system of *religion* and *morals*, and paid no regard to those *traditionary* maxims and *human* institutions which the *Pharisees* so highly exalted, and even revered above the scriptures themselves. As to *numbers*, this sect was inconsiderable; but this deficiency was supplied by the dignity and eminence of the persons who espoused its principles—for the most illustrious among the Jews, either as to *family* or *opulence*, were *Sadducees*. *Luke* mentions an high priest who was of the sect of the *Sadducees*—and *Josephus* mentions several others, as being exalted to this supreme dignity in church and state, who were *Sadducees*. Their principles, however, were not popular—they were only adopted, as the *Epicurean* principles were in *Greece* and *Rome*, by a few persons of the first quality. The following is the account which \* *Josephus* gives of this sect. “The *Sadducees* maintain, that the soul perishes with the body: They pay no regard to the observance of any prescriptions, except the injunctions of scripture. They deem it a virtue to maintain disputes with the teachers of that wisdom which others espouse. Those who have adopted their tenets are but few, but those few are persons of the first distinction. Hardly any business of the state is transacted by them; for when they are invested with any civil office, it is entirely against their inclination, and solely through necessity—for then they conform

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\* Σαδδουκαίοις δὲ τὰς ψυχὰς ὁ λόγος συναφανίζεται τοῖς σώμασι. η. τ. λ. p. 793. *Hudson*.



to the measures of the *Pharisees*, otherwise the common people would never bear them." The same historian, in \* *another* place, informs us—that this sect strenuously maintained the perfect freedom and liberty of the human will, in opposition to the *Essenes* and *Pharisees*, who were *predestinarians* and *fatalists*—and observes, that in their mutual intercourse with each other, they were morose and savage; and that, in their judicial sentences, they were always for inflicting punishment upon criminals with the most rigid severity.

## S E C T. II.

*Of the PHARISEES.*

**T**HE *Pharisees* were the most distinguished, popular, and flourishing sect among the Jews. This *name* they assumed on account of their *separating* themselves to superior strictness in religious observances. They affected great mortification and abstraction from the world—imposed on themselves frequent stated fasts, which they solemnized with all the formal austerities that superstition could invent—made long prayers at the corners of crowded streets, to attract upon them the eyes of the passing multitude, and cause themselves to be admired and venerated, as mirrors of sanctity and devotedness to God. They disfigured their faces, that they might appear to men to fast—they macerated their bodies with

\* Josephi Antiq. lib. 13. p. 574. *Hudson.*

with penal inflictions and abstinence—charged their features with gloom and solemnity—made their phylacterics ostentatiously broad—founded a trumpet before them, to give public notice when they would distribute alms—paraded about the market, and places of public concourse, in long flowing robes, feasting on the incense and fulsome applause of the gazing vulgar. According to our *Saviour's* representation of them, they were a race of the most demure hypocrites that ever disgraced human nature—for under this specious mask of religion and piety, lurked the most abominable and atrocious vices. What dire woes and denunciations doth the holy Redeemer utter against them—comparing them to *whited sepulchres*, which *outwardly* appear beautiful, but *inwardly* are full of putrefaction and horror—branding them with making clean the *outside* of the cup and platter, while the *inside* was polluted with rapaciousness, intemperance, and all iniquity.—stigmatizing them with devouring widows houses, and, with unfeeling cruelty, depriving the orphan and widow of their just property—and yet all the while, for a pretence, making long prayers, covering these private scenes of the blackest wickedness with the fair and showy veil of religion. They compassed sea and land, to make *profelytes* to the *Jewish* religion from among the *Pagans*; and these *profelytes*, through the influence of their own scandalous examples and characters, they soon rendered more profligate and abandoned

than ever they were *before* their conversion. In short, from the faithful representation of our *Saviour*, and from the account of the Evangelists, they made the essence of Religion solely consist in scrupulously observing a vast multiplicity of invented rites and ceremonies—embellishing it with external pomp and show and pageantry—discharging a number of little superstitious niceties and minute formalities—paying tithes of mint, anise and cummin, but utterly neglecting the weightier matters of the law, justice, fidelity, and mercy—the *former* they most punctiliously performed, the *latter* they contemned, as of comparative insignificance. The scriptural glosses, and comments, and maxims of their rabbinical ancestors, they held in the highest \* estimation, and defamed the plain rules and prescriptions of the law of God, as but of subordinate and *secondary* value and excellence to them. *They made the law of God of none effect, through their traditions.*—By their fondness for these superstitious traditionary maxims, they absolutely vacated and annulled the plain and express injunctions of God by *Moses* and the *prophets*—teaching for *doctrines* the commandments of *men*, and exalting *human* inventions into *divine* directions. They had always the greatest sway in the government, both of church and state; and if

\* Νομιμα πολλα τινα παρεδσαν τω δημω οι Φαρισαιαι εκ πατερων διαδοχης, απερ ουκ αναγεγραπται εν τοις Μωυσεως νομοις. Josephus. Antiq. lib. 13. c. 10. §. 6. p. 588. Hudson.

if at any time the *Sadducees* were, through necessity, compelled to fill any posts of office and dignity, they were obliged, as *Josephus* assures us, to be under the direction of *Pharisaic* measures and influence \*. The *common people* were entirely † devoted to them. This appears from many passages in *Josephus*, and above all, from the account of the condemnation of Jesus Christ, recorded by the Evangelists—for though infinite crowds had conducted him in triumph to the capital, and to the temple, yet no sooner were they conscious that the *Pharisees* and leading men were unanimous for his execution, but they joined in the general clamour: Crucify him! Crucify him! This would be unaccountable, considering the late honours and adoration they universally paid him, did not we know, both from *Josephus* and from *scripture*, that the *common people* were entirely at the disposal of the *Pharisees*, and implicitly gave their suffrage to every religious prescription and *judicial* sentence that had *their* sanction. So absolute is *their* influence over the *multitude*, says *Josephus*, that if *they* speak but a word, even against a king or an high priest, they are instantly

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\* Οποτε γαρ επ' αρχας παρελθειεν, ακουσιως μεν και ηατ' αναγκας, προσχωρουσι δ' ουν οίς ο Φαρισαιος λεγει, δια το μη αλλως ανεκτους γενεσθαι τοις πληθεσιν. *Antiq.* lib. 13. p. 793.

† Των Φαρισαιων το πληθος συμμαχου ενχυτων. *Antiq.* lib. 3. p. 588. *Hudson.*

stantly credited\*. They were adored by the people, and this inflated them with such supercilious arrogance and pride. The *Sadducees* believed there was no resurrection, neither angel or spirit; but the *Pharisees* confessed *both*. But their notion of the resurrection was nothing more than the *Pythagorean* transmigration, as appears from the testimony of *Josephus*, who was a *Pharisee*. They believed the doctrine of *Predestination*, and that all things were under the government of an irreversible fatality †. The doctrine of ‡ *everlasting torments* was an article of their Creed. In fine, the scrupulous performance of a thousand trifling minutenesses made up their religion—the love and acquisition of power, and the reputation of superior sanctity, were the end and aim of all their actions—they had a *form* of godliness, but were strangers to the *power* of it—for they were under the dominion of the most detestable of all vices, *spiritual pride* and *hypocrisy*.

\* Τοσαυτην δε εχουσι την ισχυν παρα τω πληθει, ως και κατα βασιλειωσ τι λεγοντες και κατα αρχιερευωσ, ευθυσ πιστευεσθαι. Antiq. lib. 13. cap. 10. §. 5. p. 587. Oxon.

† Πρασσεσθαι τε ειμαρμενη τα παντα αξιουντες. Josephi Antiq. lib. 18. p. 793. Hudson.

‡ Ειργμοι αιδιον προσθεσθαι. Ibid.

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S E C T. III.

## Of the SCRIBES.

**T**HE *Scribes* were the Jewish Clergy. They publicly read the Law, and instructed the people on the sabbath day, in the respective synagogues, or places of religious worship. They did not form any distinct sect—they were a profession of men devoted to the ministry, and to the study of sacred literature. They were the *literati* among the Jews—they sat in *Moses' seat*—and their knowledge of the *Law*, and of the *Divinity* that was then in vogue, gave them a place in the *Sanhedrim*, or *supreme council* of the nation, and qualified them to be the public and stated teachers of the people. They generally belonged to the *Pharisaic* sect—made themselves profoundly skilful in all their traditionary tenets and explications of the law, and on the sabbath, improved and edified the assembled people with the superior excellence and moment of this kind of knowledge. Hence, whenever the word *Scribe* occurs in the New Testament, we are to affix to it the idea of a *public instructor* and *teacher* of religion. Originally they had their *name* from their employment, which at first was *transcribing* the law, and multiplying copies of it. But in process of time, they exalted themselves into the *public ministers* and *expofitors* of it—authoritatively determined what doctrines were contained in scripture, and what were not—taught the common people

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in what sense to understand the law and the prophets—and were the Oracles which were consulted in all difficult points of doctrine and duty.

## S E C T. IV.

## Of the LAWYERS.

**L**AWYERS and *Scribes* are synonymous terms, importing one and the same order and profession of men—since him, who in *one* Evangelist is called a *Scribe*, *another*, relating the same transaction, calls a *Lawyer*—except, indeed, by the *latter* we understand a person who *studied* the sacred writings *in private*, as the *former* were employed in teaching and expounding them *in public*. This, which was a conjecture of my own some years ago, I find corroborated by the opinion of the ingenious Dr. *Macknight*\*. “Considering the veneration, says he, which the Jews had for the books of the law, it is reasonable to suppose, that some of the doctors of each sect would apply themselves more especially to the study of these books *in private*, and to the explication of them in public, and that such as did so might obtain the appellation of *Lawyers*.”

## S E C T. V.

## Of the HERODIANS.

**T**HE *Herodians* were a sect that derived their origin and name from *Herod the Great*, king of Judæa. Several of the ancient *fathers*, and some

\* See his *Harmony of the Four Gospels*, p. 374. 2d Edit.

some modern *divines*, have imagined, that the distinguishing tenet of this profession of men was, their belief that *Herod* was the *Messiah*. Others have conjectured that the courtiers, domestics, and friends of *Herod*, from their attachment to their master, and to his political measures, enjoyed this denomination. *Herod* was a powerful and opulent prince—the friend of *Augustus*—and throughout the whole of his *long* reign studied every art and artifice to ingratiate himself with the *Emperor*, and to secure the favour of the principal personages in the court of *Rome*. He was a most insinuating sycophant—wholly devoted to *Rome*—fond of *Roman* manners and usages—destitute of all religion—sacrificing every thing sacred to political principles, and to the mercenary views of interest and ambition. *Josephus* informs us, that his ambition and his entire devotion to *Cæsar*, and to the leading men at *Rome*, induced him to depart from the usages of his country, and in many instances to violate its institutions—building temples in the *Greek* taste, and erecting statues for idolatrous worship—apologizing for this to the Jews, that he was absolutely necessitated to do these things by the superior powers \*. Many of the Jews, particularly of the *Sadducees*, came  
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\* Ἦτο δε της εις τουτο φιλοτιμιας και της θεραπειας, ην εθεραπευε Καισαρα και Ρωμαιων τους πλειστον δυναμειους, εκβαινειν των εθων ηναγκαζετο, και πολλα των νομιμων παραχαραττειν, πολεις τε κτιζων υπο φιλοτιμιας και ναους εγχειρων. κ. τ. λ. Josephi Antiq. lib. 15. cap. 9. §. 5. p. 694. Hudson.



into all his measures, espoused his political maxims, joined with him in flattering the court of *Rome* with the most servile adulation, abandoned all regards to the principles and obligations of the religion of their country, and adopted heathen manners and heathen vices. These, from their admission of the principles, and compliance with the practices of the court of *Herod*, received from the Jews the appellation of *Herodians*, and were generally the most depraved and profligate of men. We find the *Sadducees*, who denied a future state, and consequently who had little regard for the religion and liberty of their country, being disposed by their principles for any enormities, readily embraced the tenets of this party—for the same persons, who in *one* of the gospels are called *Herodians*, are in another called *Sadducees*.

## S E C T. VI.

## Of the SAMARITANS.

THE *Samaritans* were originally an heterogeneous medley of *heathens*, who were sent by the king of *Assyria*, after he had taken *Samaria* the capital of the *ten* tribes, and removed them into his own dominions, to re-people the desolate country. This miscellaneous colony from *Cutha*, *Avah*, *Hamath*, and *Sepharvaim*, filled the deserted cities and towns of *Israel*, and immediately instituted the idolatrous rites of their respective countries. After their settlement, being infested with

with wild beasts, and attributing this calamity to their neglect of the tutelar *God* of *that* country in which they *now* resided, they informed the *Assyrian* monarch of their unhappy situation, and in the most supplicant terms implored him, to send some person to instruct them in the worship of the *God* of *Israel*, whose resentment, they imagined, had inflicted upon them these dire devastations. Moved by their petition the king of *Assyria* commanded, saying; *carry thither one of the priests whom you brought from thence, and let him go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land.* The priest, thus deputed, took up his residence at *Bethel*, and instructed this *Pagan* colony in the worship of the *God* of *Israel*. *Howbeit*, adds the historian, *every nation made Gods of his own, and worshipped their several heathen deities in conjunction with the true God.* In this confused miscellany of religions they continued for a long series of years—their children and their children's children fearing the *Lord* and serving graven images—and thus established a very different set of principles and practices to what that happy flourishing country *once* had known. It is natural to imagine, with what sovereign contempt the *Jews* must regard this motley religion, and those who maintained it. Which odium and contempt were greatly aggravated, when this pagan colony used all their power and influence to obstruct and frustrate their design of rebuilding the city and temple of *Jerusalem* on their return from the captivity; and when they could not by open force crush their attempt,

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clandestinely accused them to *Artaxerxes* as traitors and rebels to his government.—In subsequent time the animosities between the *Jews* and *Samaritans* became, on the following occasion, more embittered and virulent. *Sanballat*, being appointed by *Darius* governor of *Samaria*, seeing the city of *Jerusalem* to be opulent and splendid, and which in former times had given great disturbance to the *Assyrians* and *Syrian* kings, gave his daughter in marriage to *Manasses*, the brother of *Jaddus* the high-priest—thinking by this pledge he should conciliate the friendship and benevolence of the *Jewish* nation. But the members of the Sanhedrim, fired with indignation, that one who had contracted an affinity with a stranger should share the honours of the pontificate, excited a violent commotion against him—all insisting that *Manasses* should repudiate his wife, or resign the duties of the sanctuary. The high-priest joined in this popular tumult, and prohibited his brother from the altar. Upon this universal insurrection *Manasses* fled to *Sanballat* his father-in-law—in the strongest terms asserting to him the affection he had for his daughter, but declaring his unwillingness on her account to be stripped of the sacerdotal dignity—the highest station in his country, and an honour which was solely confined to his family. Upon which *Sanballat* assured him, that, provided he would not dissolve the marriage union he had contracted, he would invest him with the power and splendour of the high-priest's office, constitute him  
governor

governor of all the country over which *he himself* presided, would build him a temple on mount *Gerizim* similar to that of *Jerusalem*, and promised to secure these honours to him, by obtaining an imperial sanction from the *Persian* monarch. Induced by these promises, *Manasses* stayed at *Samaria*, and was joined by a great number of priests and *Israelites*, who had been involved in similar connections \*. On mount *Gerizim* a temple was erected—the everlasting cause of the bitterest virulence, and the most deadly and irreconcilable odium. For this the *Jews* could never forgive the *Samaritans*—they pursued them with a virulence which nothing could soften, broke off all social connections and friendly intercourse with them, and upon every occasion loaded them with the most contumelious and opprobrious language that resentment could dictate. How flagrant and bitter their rage was, appears from the instance of the woman of *Samaria*, who appeared amazed that our Lord, who was a *Jew*, should so far depart from the national antipathy as to ask her, who was a *Samaritan*, even for a cup of cold water—for the *Jews*, adds the historian, *have no dealings with the Samaritans*. With a *Jew* the very name of *Samaritan* comprized madness, and malice, and drunkenness, and apostacy, and rebellion, and universal detestation. When they were instigated with rage against our blessed Saviour, the *first* word their fury dictated was

\* See Joseph. Antiq. lib. II. p. 500, 501. *Hudson*.

was, *Samaritan*.—*Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil!* It is remarkable, that the amiable and benevolent son of *Sirach*, whose head and heart appear to have been animated with such distinguished goodness, hath this expression in his writings: *Two nations my soul hateth, the Samaritans and the Philistines*\*—a signal and affecting proof, how far the wisest and best of men among the *Jews* were carried away with the national prejudices. Nor did the *Samaritans* yield to the *Jews* in virulence and invective—reproaching them for erecting their temple on a situation which was not authorized by the divine command, and asserting, that *Gerizim* was the sole, genuine, individual seat, which God had originally consecrated and chosen to fix his name and worship there. How sanguine the attachment of the *Samaritans* was to their temple and worship, appears from their refusing our Saviour the rites of hospitality, which in those early ages were hardly ever refused, because his face was set towards *Jerusalem*, and it appeared that he intended only to pass transiently through their territories, without visiting their temple.—They acknowledged only the five books of *Moses*, which they have preserved in the old original *Hebrew* character. The other books of the Old Testament they rejected, as destitute of divine authority.

\* See Ecclesiastic. Chap. I. 26. and *Arnald* in loc.

## S E C T. VII.

## Of the STOICS.

THE *Stoics*, mentioned *Acts* xvii. 18. were a sect of heathen Philosophers, of which *Zeno*, who flourished about 350 years before Christ, was the original founder. They received their denomination from the *place* in which *Zeno* delivered his lectures, which was a *Portico* at *Athens* \*. Their distinguishing tenets were: The eternity of matter, the corporeity of God, the conflagration and renovation of the world. They were most rigid Necessarians, and believed all things were subjected to an irresistible and irreversible fatality. They strenuously asserted, that man was self-sufficient to his own virtue and happiness, and stood in no need of divine assistances—that virtue was its own sufficient reward, and vice its own sufficient punishment. The grand end and aim of their severe philosophy, was to divest human nature of all passions and affections—and they made the highest attainment and perfection of virtue consist in a total apathy and insensibility of human evils. Their *Wise man* was *equal*, if not *superior*, to *Jupiter* himself, and

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\* Ανακαμπτων δε [Ζηνων] εν τη ποικιλη σοφ.—διεθετο τους λογους—και δια τουτο Στωικοι εκα λουντο. *Diogenes Laertius*. *Zeno*. lib. 7. vol. 1. p. 367. edit. *Meibom*. Etiam a locis conventicularum et stationum suarum, *Stoici*, *Academici*. *Tertullian*. p. 5. *Rigalt*.

had no such things as wants and imperfections about him. They affected great austerity in their manners, a proud singularity of dress and habit, and were distinguished, above all the *other* sects of Philosophy, for their superior haughtiness and supercilious arrogance.

## S E C T. VIII.

## Of the EPICUREANS.

THE *Epicureans*, mentioned in the *same* chapter, were the followers of *Epicurus*, who flourished about 300 years before Christ. They maintained, that sensual pleasure was man's supreme felicity.—That the beautiful fabric of the world was formed by a fortuitous concurrence of atoms.—That the government of the world was business very unworthy the majesty of the Gods—and that the immortal powers were perpetually reclining on the clouds, in soft inactive ease and indolence, regaling on *nectar* and *ambrosia*, and gratifying every wandering libidinous desire. They derided the doctrine of a providence—asserted, that future rewards and punishments were all a ridiculous and romantic chimera—that the *present* life was the *whole* of human existence, and that the *soul*, at death, suffered one common extinction with the body.

## S E C T. IX.

## Of the NICOLAITANS.

THE sect of the *Nicolaitans*, mentioned *Revelation* ii. 6. derived their name and origin from one *Nicolas*, who was appointed by the Apostles one of the seven deacons in the church of *Antioch* \*. They maintained the lawfulness of promiscuous concubinage, and like *Plato*, in his *republic*, were for establishing in the christian church a community of women. They made no scruple of eating things that had been offered to idols. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, however, gives an honourable testimony to the character of this deacon, and says, that in his writings he inculcated abstinence and self-denial, and the virtuous subjection of our sensual desires, but that his words were perverted †. Upon carefully expending the different testimonies of the antients, the following account may be collected. The wife of this

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deacon

\* *Nicolaitæ autem magistrum quidem habent Nicolaum unum ex vii. qui primi ad diaconium ab Apostolis ordinati sunt: qui indiscretè vivunt. Plenissimè autem per Joannis Apocalypsin manifestantur qui sint, nullam differentiam esse docentes in mœchando et idolothyton edere. Irenæus, lib. i. cap. 27. p. 103. Grabe.*

† Τοιοῦτοι δὲ καὶ οἱ φασκόντες εἰς αὐτοὺς Νικολαῖον ἔπεσθαι, ἀπομνημονεῖμα τι ἀνδρός φερόντες ἐκ παρατροπῆς, το δεῖν παραχεῖσθαι τῆ σαρκι. ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν γενναίως κολουεῖν δεῖν ἐδῆλου τὰς τε ἕδονας, τὰς τε ἐπιθυμίας, καὶ τῆ ἀσκήσει ταύτη καταμαραίνειν τὰς τῆς σαρκὸς ὄρμας τε καὶ ἔπιθεσεις. *Cl. Alexandrini Stromata. lib. 2. p. 411. Paris 1629.*



deacon was a woman of distinguished beauty. *Nicolas* was accused to the apostles of being jealous of her. It seems he could not bear that *kiss of charity*, which, in the primitive age, was usual among Christians of both sexes. Being reprehended by the apostles for this criminal suspicion and jealousy, he plunged into the contrary extreme, publicly brought out his wife, permitted her to marry whom she pleased, from that time lived *himself* in inviolable chastity, but, like the *Spartans*, allowed *others* the promiscuous use of women. This door being once opened in the Christian church, so contrary to the evangelic purity, no wonder that a torrent of debauchery and licentiousness rushed into the sanctuary.

## C H A P. VII.

*Of the Dæmoniacs, so frequently mentioned in the  
New Testament.*

A PERSON who is not accustomed to the language and sentiments of the antients, cannot but be alarmed at the instances he meets with in the New Testament, of such numbers of unhappy objects who were *possessed with devils*, and express the last astonishment, that *Judæa* should abound with such miserable spectacles, who roamed about from place to place, agitated and harrassed by malignant dæmons, when, in *modern times*, he sees and hears of *no* such examples of human wretchedness! Especially must it affect and shock such a reader, to reflect, that many of these wretched creatures are said to be inhabited and actuated, not merely by a *single* dæmon, but to be haunted and infested by great numbers of these malevolent, infernal spirits. The body of *one* of these miserable objects is said to have afforded a receptacle to a whole *legion* of them. The *Roman legion*, at that time, consisted of about *six thousand six hundred* \*. To suppose these narrations to be *literally* true, and that such vast numbers of both sexes were *really* delivered to the cruel dominion and tyranny of such invisible swarms of malignant spirits, which had an uncontroled licence to torment them at mercy,

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\* Bishop *Smallbrooke* hath amused himself with calculating how *many* devils, consequently, must have entered in *every* hog. *Answer to Woolston.*

is impiety against the majesty of heaven, a flagrant reflection upon the government of God, a sentiment that hurts and shocks every humane mind, and highly derogates from the supreme wisdom and goodness of the blessed God. What end could it answer in the divine administration of the world, that myriads of these diabolical agents should be turned loose, and invade mankind just at that *particular* time? Was it to aggrandize the power of Christ, in exorcising them—or did he require the testimony of these dæmons to the divinity of his character—or was the expulsion of these malignant beings by our blessed Lord, from the bodies of the possessed, designed to indicate to us, that Christ came upon earth to crush the power of Satan, and for ever to exterminate his cruel and powerful emissaries from the world? This cannot be said.—For *after* our Saviour's death and resurrection, we have, in the *Acts of the Apostles*, not infrequent instances of these dæmoniacs. *Dæmonology* constituted no inconsiderable part of the *philosophy* of those times. The whole air that encircles us was supposed to be full of dæmons\*. It was the common prevailing

\* Είναι τε πάντα του αερα ψυχων εμπλεων. και τουτους, δαιμονας τε και ηρωας νομιζεσθαι. *Diogenes Laertius*, edit. Meibom. p. 514. So also *Hesiod*.

Τοι μεν δαιμονες εισι, Διος μεγαλου δια βουλας,  
Εσθλοι, επιχθονιοι, Φυλακες θνητων ανθρωπων.

Οι γα φυλασσουν τε δικας και σχετλια εργα,

Ηερα εσσαμενοι, παντη φαιτωντες επ' αιαν.

*Opera & dies*, v. 122, &c.

vailing opinion, both among *Jews* and *Heathens*, that the human body was liable to their incur-  
sions, and obnoxious to their agency. Those disorders and diseases which are accompanied with  
frightful symptoms, and which they could not account for from any known principles, they at-  
tributed to the influence of these invisible powers. *Maniacal* and *epileptic* cases were imputed to their  
cruel tyranny over those they inhabited. Distrac-  
tion, phrenzy, melancholy, convulsive fits, and  
all degrees of insanity, were so dire and dreadful  
in themselves, that they introduced *these deities* to  
solve those appearances they could not *rationally*  
explain. The pining and languishing of a sick  
man, *Homer* ascribes to the infliction of a malig-  
nant *dæmon* \*. The *Greeks* imputed madness  
*sometimes* to the agitation of the *Furies*, who were  
*three* infernal sisters, who were imagined to take  
possession of men by the mandate of the immortal  
Gods, and to haunt and stimulate them to the  
most horrible excesses. *Sometimes* they attributed  
it to the influence of † *Diana*, or the ‡ *moon*.  
The *Romans* thought insanity, and all its dread-  
ful effects, were caused by *Ceres*, or the *Larvæ*.  
This appears from several passages in *Plautus*—  
in one of whose *Comedies* a person is introduced,  
who pretends he was disordered in his mind, and

R 4

begins

\* Ως δ' οταν ασπασιος εϊοτος παιδεσαι φανειη  
πατρος, ος εν νισω κειται κρατερ' αλγεια πασχων,  
Δηρον τηχομενος, συγερος δε οι εχραε δαιμων.

*Odys.* E. 394.

† Αρτεμιδοεληται. ‡ Σεληνεληται.

begins to *rage* and *rave* with great violence and wildness. A physician being called in, asks what was his disorder—was he agitated by the *Larva*, or by *Ceres* \*—indicating, by these terms, different degrees of insanity, supposed to be occasioned by these imaginary Divinities. And in † another comedy, *Sofia*, the servant of *Amphitruo*, desires his master, that he would give orders, that *Alcmena*, who peremptorily persisted in her asseverations with regard to the identity of *Amphitruo*'s person, should be *lustrated*, that is, treated as insane cases were in those days—to which his master replies, That such an operation was highly necessary, for indeed she was *full of larvæ*—just as the dæmoniac, mentioned in the gospels, said, he had a *legion of dæmons* within him. In like manner, Dr *Lightfoot* ‡ says, it was very customary with the *Jews* to impute certain grievous diseases, those especially by which either the body is distorted, or the mind disordered, and agitated with phrenzy, to evil dæmons. In a passage in *St. John*, *to have a devil* and *to be mad*

\* Quid esset illi morbi dixerat? narra senex  
Num *larvatus* aut *ceritus*? fac sciam.

*Plauti Menæch.* p. 607. Var. 1684.

† ————— Quæso quin tu isthanc jubes

*Pro ceritâ circumferri. Am.* Quin factus est opus?

Nam hæc quidem *ædipol larvarum plena* est.

*Plaut. Amphit.* act. 2. sc. 2. p. 43. Var.

‡ Judæis usitatissimum erat morbos quosdam graviores, eos præsertim quibus vel distortum est corpus, vel mens turbata, et agitata phrenesi, malis spiritibus attribuere. *Lightfoot.* Hor. Heb. Matt. xvii. 15.

*mad* are used as synonymous expressions, or terms of \* the same import. The *Jews* being heinously exasperated against *Jesus Christ*, said, *Thou hast a devil and art mad* †. According to one Evangelist, the parent of a young person, who had epileptic fits, tells our Lord that he was *lunatic* and sore vexed—according to another, that a *spirit* seized and tore him—consequently *lunatic* and *dæmoniac* signify the same ‡. According to the *Jews*, every thing that affected either the *body* or the *mind* in an extraordinary manner had its cause and origin from dæmons. Of the former the following is a distinguished instance. There was at that time a miserable spectacle, who for *eighteen years*, says *St. Luke*, *had been bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself*. Such objects most of my readers must have seen—particularly about *fourteen years* ago I remember to have seen, more than once, a very remarkable and striking example of this kind in *London* streets—a middle aged person, very thin and emaciated, who walked along with his head depressed to a level with his knees, his back incurvated and fixed in that posture, the muscular fibres having become contrac-

\* The same form of expression occurs in a passage of *Justin Martyr*. Και οι ψυχαις αποθανοντων λαμβανόμενοι και ριπτουμένοι ανθρωποι, ους δαιμονοληπτους και μαινομενους καλουσι παντες. *Justin Martyr*, p. 65. Ed. Paris, 1636.

† *John* x. 20.

‡ *Matthew* says, Σεληνιαζεται και κακως πατχει, *ch.* xvii. 15. *Luke* says, πνευμα λαμβανει αυτον, *ch.* ix. 39.

ted and rigid. Such a spectacle as this our Saviour, by a single *touch*, instantaneously moulded into an *erect* posture—and *immediately she became straight*. But in the *Jewish* phraseology how is this case expressed?—*Satan* is said to have thrown and chained the human body in this deplorable state. *Lo, this woman whom Satan hath bound these eighteen years*. All uncommon appearances and effects, relative to the human system, were ascribed to the \* influence of dæmons. The people of that age, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were unanimous in believing, that the *body* and the *mind* were subject to the impulse and controul of dæmons, who

\* The following is a very *curious* passage in *Tertullian*. Nunc de operatione eorum [dæmonum] satis erit exponere. Operatio eorum est hominis eversio. sic malitia spiritalis à primordio auspicata est in hominis exitium. Itaque *corporibus* quidem et valetudines infligunt, et aliquos casus acerbos; *animæ* vero repentinos et extraordinarios per vim excessus. Suppetit illis ad *utramque* substantiam hominis *adeundam subtilitas* et *tenuitas* sua. Multum spiritalibus viribus licet, ut invisibiles et insensibiles in effectu potius quam in actu suo appareant, si poma, si fruges nescio quod auræ latens vitium in flore præcipitat, in germine exanimat, in pubertate convulnerat, ac si cæcâ ratione tentatus aër pestilentes haustus suos offundit. *Eâdem* igitur obscuritate contagionis, aspiratio dæmonum et angelorum *mentis* quoque corruptelas agit furoribus et amentis sædis, ac sævis libidinibus, cum erroribus variis; quorum iste potissimus, quo deos istos captis et circumscriptis hominum mentibus commendat, ut et sibi pabula propria nidoris et sanguinis procuret simulachris imaginibus oblata.—Omnis spiritus *ales*, hoc et angeli et *dæmones*, igitur *momento ubique* sunt, *totus orbis* illis locus unus est. *Tertullian*. p. 23. *Rigalt*. Paris 1641.

who oftentimes took possession of men, and inflicted upon them the most dire and horrid disorders. The disciples and apostles believed these possessions, and it was no part of our Saviour's design to disabuse them, and teach them a system of speculative philosophy. All the men of that *age*, and of many subsequent *ages*, believed that the earth was immoveably fixed on its basis, and the sun, and the whole planetary system revolved around it. The primitive *Fathers*, it is well known, believed the earth was not of a globose form, but to be one vast extended flat surface diversified with mountains and forests and seas. It was never the intention of the great God that the *Jewish* prophets, that his Son, and his apostles and messengers should undeceive mankind in these uninteresting particulars. The great design of the blessed God in all his dispensations hath been to make men holy and happy—not to amuse them with idle theories and philosophical disquisitions. Our Saviour cured these unhappy cases, without deigning to entertain those around him with any subtle and elaborate harangues on the nature and origin of them—the miracle was the same—the divine power the same—nay, *more* illustrious, in correcting, in a moment, all the juices and solids of a disordered body, than in bidding a spirit of inferior power depart and quit it. All the cases of *possessions* in the New Testament were either *madness* or *epilepsy*—tho' of the latter I only recollect *one* instance. The possessed with dæ-



mons talk as *madmen*, act as *madmen*. What a just and faithful description of *madness*, with all its dire attendant symptoms, have we in those two wretched creatures, who had been often bound with chains and fetters, but had broken them, and roved about, far from the \* converse of men, in unfrequented solitudes and the tombs of the dead, raging and raving, and cutting themselves with stones! What a strong and striking picture have we of raging madness and distraction in *Legion*! Immediately upon his landing he was met by a man, who was formerly an inhabitant of the town, but had been for a very considerable time possessed with dæmons, or, afflicted with madness—This wretched object lived not in any house, but rambled naked among the dreary sepulchres of the dead. As soon as he saw *Jesus*, he ran up to him, and with a most violent and frightful vociferation cried out, O *Jesus*! Son of the most high God! What business have you with me?—Let me entreat you not to aggravate my torments! This unhappy creature, whom *Jesus* was going miraculously to heal, was frequently agitated with such violent fits of distraction, that he would burst the strongest bonds and fetters in which he was confined, and with frantic rage and fury rush into the wild and unfrequented desarts. *Jesus* asked him his name.—My name, staring wildly, one may suppose, and exalting his voice, is *Legion*

\* Ον θυμον κατεδων, πατον ανθρωπων αλλεινων. *Iliad.*  
ζ. 202.

gion—for a legion of dæmons have taken possession of me. The possessed man then begged of him, a request quite in character, such as madmen naturally make, that he would not precipitate his dæmons into the profound abyfs! It happened, that there was at some distance a large herd of swine feeding on a mountain.—The madman, uttering such fantastick and extravagant things, as persons disordered in their intellects usually do, earnestly importuned *Jesus*, that the dæmons, which were in him, might enter the swine!—*Jesus* accordingly suffered the swine to be seized with madness.—Immediately the whole herd rushed forward in the wildest confusion—ran with the greatest violence down a steep precipice—plunged into the lake, and all perished in the waves.—What a most exact and accurate description have we of that obstinate and terrible disorder the *Epilepsy*, in the case of the young person mentioned, *Mark*, chap. ix. Wherever the dæmon taketh him, he teareth him, and he foameth and gnasheth his teeth, and pineth away, and oftentimes he hath cast him into the fire and into the water to destroy him \*. Into one of these dreadful

\* *Hippocrates* and *Celsus* give the same description of this terrible disorder. The former says: Αφωνος γινεται, και αφρος εκ του σωματος εκρεει, και οι οδοντες συνιρηχασι—προσπιπτει—Οκοταν ο χρονος γινεται τη νοση, ουκ ετι ησιμος γινεται. *Hippoc. de morbo sacro.* *Celsus* says: Homo subito concidit, ex ore spumæ moventur—hominem confundit. *Celsus*, lib. 3. c. 23. p. 172. *Almeloveen, Amst.* 1713.

dreadful fits he fell as the parent was recounting this unhappy story of his child to our *Lord*, and the historian says, he fell on the ground and wallowed foaming.—It is farther to be remarked, that there were no *public* and *private madhouses* in *those* days, in which the insane and melancholy might be confined and properly accommodated—these are *institutions* that are known only to *modern* ages, and are owing to that *humanity* and *benevolence* with which the genius of the Christian religion hath inspired its professors—but these unhappy wretches were *then* permitted to strolé about wherever their wandering steps directed them. We meet with them in the synagogues, or places of religious worship—we meet with them in towns and cities, where they were allowed to ramble uncontrolled. Being thought to be inhabited by dæmons, they were esteemed \* *sacred persons*, and regarded with religious awe and reverence.—That they should be so well acquainted with the dignity and divinity of our Saviour's mission and ministry will create no difficulty, when it is considered, that the fame of *Jesus Christ*, and of the miraculous cures he effected, had soon penetrated through all *Judæa*, *Galilee*, and even *Syria*, that those who labour under alienation of mind have their lucid intervals, talk sensibly, and reason acutely on every other subject and topic, except on that unhappy *peculiar*, that hath engaged their thoughts too intensely, and contributed

\* *Morbus sacer.*

buted to disturb and overfet their minds. “That this is the cafe, fays the great and learned \* Dr. *Mead*, will not be doubted by any one who reflects that a madman hath a good memory, often manages his affairs, except when fome vain ideas come acrofs his mind, with tolerable prudence, nay, fometimes with more than ordinary cunning.” Our Saviour, who had a perfect and infallible knowledge of all things, knew undoubtedly that thefe were natural difeafes and affections, to which frail humanity is fubject, and not owing to the cruel inflictions of infernal dæmons—but he fpoke in the ftile of his native country, he accommodated himfelf to the language that was then univerfally ufed, juft as the moft learned profefors of the *Newtonian* philofophy now fpeak of the *rifing* and *fetting* of the fun, and juft as the moft intelligent *Physicians* now talk of *St. Anthony’s fire*, tho’ few, I fuppofe, believe that the good faint hath any hand in kindling it, and of that ftrange diforder called *chorea Sancti Viti*, *St. Vitus’s dance*, tho’ all will agree to exculpate *St. Vitus* from being any way acceffary to it, and of another *namelefs* difeafe, tho’ none believes the *Paphian* queen to be the parent of fuch a dire infliction. *Hippocrates*, in *one* of his treatifes, if that particular treatife were indeed written by him, fpeaks with great indignation of certain ignorant *Empirics* in his time, who made it their ftudy to prepofters the common people, as many *Enthufi-*  
*afts*

\* *Mead’s medica facra*, p. 76. of Dr. *Stack’s* tranflation.

asts do in our day, with the notion of real possessions, covering their ignorance, says the *divine old man*, with the specious veil of deity, asserting the disease to proceed from such and such a particular divinity as the cause of it, and pretending to make use of lustrations, charms, and magic tricks to expel it—whereas, says *Hippocrates*, there is nothing in this that implies that any divine being is the cause of it, but it is a natural disorder incident to human kind \*. So writes this great Physician, and *Physicians* are surely the best judges of these things. † *Plotinus*, an eminent philosopher, who lived in the *third* century, blames people for ascribing such diseases to *dæmons*, as may be accounted for in a *natural* way. And to mention no more, the late eminent Dr. *Mead* in his *Medica sacra* thus speaks: “With regard to this power of the devils over human bodies, believed equally by the *Jews* and other nations, I have already said, that the Divinity ought not to be made a party concerned in imposing diseases, which may possibly have natural causes ‡ —and again—§ I hope nobody will believe, that the devils have had the power granted them of torturing men at their wanton pleasure.” The learned *Joseph Mead’s* account of *dæmoniacs*, Dr. *Sykes’s* *Enquiry*, and *Further Enquiry into the meaning of dæmoniacs*,

\* Ωστε μηκετι το θειον αιτιον ειναι, αλλα τι ανθρωπινον. *Hippoc. de morbo sacro.*

† See Dr. *Lardner’s* case of *demoniacs*, p. 86.

‡ *Mead’s medica sacra*, p. 88. *Stack’s* translation.

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*dæmoniacs*, both printed 1737, Dr. *Mead's medi-  
ca sacra*, and the *Case of Dæmoniacs mentioned in  
the New Testament* by my learned and worthy  
friend Dr. *Lardner*, are very useful and instruc-  
tive books, and very proper to be consulted and  
carefully read by every one who is desirous to gain  
satisfaction on this subject.

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## C H A P. VIII.

## MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS.

## S E C T. I.

*Jesus Christ perfectly knew the hearts and thoughts of all with whom he conversed.*

LET him who sits down to a careful perusal of the gospels, remember, that the Son of God had a distinct and accurate knowledge of the hearts of all who surrounded his person. If the reader do not carry this thought impressed on his mind to the reading of the Evangelic historians, the dialogists will rather appear to be *crossing questions*, than conducting a customary and regular conversation. Before our Saviour's view, all the latent purposes and designs of men lay disclosed—his knowledge penetrated all the folds of the human heart—and he had a clear and infallible perception of the springs and motives, from which all the captious questions and insidious enquiries that were addressed to him flowed. When we read his sacred history, we should never forget that he directed his answers, not to the mere *verbal* interrogations, but to the *heart* of the speaker. The faculty of discerning the spirits of men, with which the Apostles were endowed, and which, in the *infancy* and *establishment* of the Christian church, was absolutely necessary to them, with regard to their selecting persons of probity and integrity, to whom they might impart spi-  
ritual

ritual gifts and miraculous powers, and whom they might place over the societies they had formed, was possessed by our *Saviour* in the most perfect and consummate degree. His God and Father gave his spirit, without measure, to him. Says one of the Evangelists, *When Jesus was in Jerusalem, at the passover, on the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did; but Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew all men*—he did not depend on the fidelity of these temporary converts—placed no sanguine confidence in their steady adherence to his cause—for he perfectly knew the principles that swayed them, how much they were at the devotion of the *Pharisees* and leading men of the nation, and that they would desert him, and be clamorous for his condemnation and execution, as the event afterwards showed—for, adds the historian, *he needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man.* A sentiment, which will serve as an useful key to solve many apparent difficulties in the discourses and conversations of Jesus. Surrounded, as he was continually, with insidious and enraged adversaries, who sought every occasion to extort from him something that might be deemed either injurious to the *Roman* government, or to the religion and laws of his country, this infallible knowledge of the human heart prevented him from falling into the specious snares they were constantly spreading for him, and enabled him to expose the dissimulation and wickedness of those



260 CHRIST'S *supernatural knowledge*. [Chap. VIII.  
 who planned these artful schemes to circumvent  
 and destroy him. We often find him speaking to  
 the hearts of his enemies, before the dictates and  
 suggestions of their inward malice were cloathed  
 with words \*. Without their being expressed by  
 any *outward* signs, he saw and laid open the envy,  
 malignity and revenge, that rankled in their bo-  
 somes. Though the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and  
 the spies they sent to catch him in his words, ap-  
 proached him with smooth flattery and plausible  
 adulation, yet his piercing view at once saw  
 through the disguise, and qualified him to strip  
 the painted mask from these demure and aban-  
 doned hypocrites, and to exhibit openly before  
 the multitude the black and enormous guilt it  
 covered. The following are distinguished instances  
 of this. *Matthew ix.* They brought to him a  
 miserable object, lying on a couch, shaking with  
 the palsy.—Jesus, being conscious of the faith they  
 reposed in him as a divine messenger, said to the  
 paralytic, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be for-  
 given thee! Some of the *Scribes*, when they heard  
 this, said *within themselves*, What horrid blas-  
 phemy against God is this man guilty of!—But  
 Jesus, who was perfectly acquainted with every  
*sentiment in the human heart*, said to them, Why  
 do you cherish in your *minds* malevolent and inju-  
 rious *thoughts* against me. For is it a less exertion  
 and proof of divine power to forgive his sins, than  
 to restore him to health and strength?—But what  
 induced

\* Στητην, ουδε τι μιν προσεφωμεον, ουδ' ερευντο.

Αυταρ ο εγγω ησιν ενι φρεσι, φωνησεν τε. II. A. 332.

induced me to express myself in this manner, was to convince you, by an evident miracle, that the son of man is endowed with authority to forgive sin.—He had no sooner spoken these words, but he turned to the sick person, and said: Rise—take up thy couch—and go home.—Immediately the man found his limbs nerved with strength—he rose—took up his couch—and carried it home. *Luke vi.* Entering, on another sabbath, into a synagogue, and instructing the people, there happened to be in the assembly a person whose right-hand was withered.—This circumstance instantly excited all the attention of the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*—flattering themselves, that if he should cure this person on the sabbath-day, it would afford them sufficient cause for censuring and condemning his conduct.—But he perfectly knew the perverse thoughts and malignant dispositions that lurked in their breasts.—He then ordered the man with the withered hand to stand up in the midst of the assembly.—After this he turned to them, and said, Permit me to ask you, whether it be lawful, on the sabbath-day, to perform benevolent or malevolent actions, to save or to destroy life.—They kept a profound silence.—Jesus looking around them with a mixture of pity and indignation, for their perverseness and obstinacy, said to the man: Extend thine hand—he extended it, and it was instantaneously restored to the same perfect state as the other. *St. John* tells his reader, chap. vi 64. that Jesus, from the very first beginning of his ministry, perfectly knew those who

262 CHRIST'S *supernatural knowledge*. [Ch. VIII.  
were deliberately resolved not to be convinced by all the evidences he should exhibit; and he knew also, says he, the *person*, by whose treachery he was to be delivered into the hands of his enemies. He gave the *woman of Samaria*, tho' he casually met with her at a fountain, a brief history of her life. *Come, see a man, who told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* And when the disciples had been agitating a warm debate among themselves, which of them should be advanced to the *bighest* honours in that *kingdom*, they flattered themselves that their master would very speedily *erect*, it is said, that Jesus knew the secret *purposes* they harboured in their *breasts*, and was perfectly acquainted with their ambitious views, and sanguine hopes of greatness and grandeur, though they had never avowed them to him, or given the least distant intimation of them. His conference with *Nicodemus*, one of the *Jewish Sanhedrim*, who stole to him in the night to have a secret interview, is an address to the *real principles* that governed this illustrious person; and the answer our Lord returned to his declaration, is entirely foreign and incongruous, unless we consider it as immediately directed to the heart of the ruler, and intended to rectify those internal dispositions which swayed him, and which were intimately known to our blessed Lord. This our Saviour's knowledge of the human heart will also lead us to account for that silence he observed when he stood before *Pilate's* tribunal, surrounded with the chief priests and elders, who charged him before  
fore

fore the governour with many heinous crimes, But to the many accusations that were here brought against him by the high priests and the *Sanbedrim*, he made no reply. Upon this *Pilate* said: Why do you continue silent? Do you not hear the heavy crimes they alledge against you?—But *Jesus* still preserved a profound silence—so that the governour was greatly astonished at his behaviour. Our Saviour knew, that any apology, before *such* a court, would be of no avail—he knew their inflexible resolutions to condemn him, and that they were deliberately determined, whatever *defence* he might make, to shed his blood. Knowing their sanguinary purpose, from which nothing would divert them, he answered not a word to all the charges they alledged.—But the most signal instance of our Saviour's knowledge of the thoughts of those with whom he conversed, occurs in part of that consolatory discourse he addressed to his disciples, the night in which he was betrayed, recorded in the xvth chapter of *John*—from which it appears, that he *anticipated* and *answered* several questions which they *intended* to have proposed to him. He knew every thought that rose, and every painful reflection that struggled in their bosoms, and directed his answers to the inward sensibilities and secret suggestions of their minds. And the *answers* he returned to the interrogatories they only *designed* to have proposed to him, and the apposite and satisfactory replications he made to the enquiries they only *meant* to have propounded, for they had not *expressed* them,

264 CHRIST'S *moral instructions*. [Chap. VIII.  
convinced them, as it necessarily must, of the  
DIVINITY of his character, and extorted from  
them that natural declaration: *Lord, thou knowest  
all things! and needest not that any should ask  
thee*—by this we believe that thou camest forth  
from God! For that person who can tell me the  
*succession of ideas*, as they rise in my mind, before  
I utter them—who can *answer* my difficulties be-  
fore I *propose* them—and adapt proper *replies* to  
*secret* reflections that are only known to God and  
to myself, must have a knowledge more than  
human, and afford me the strongest conviction,  
that he is invested with a *divine* authority and  
commission.

S E C T. II.

*Jesus took occasion, from various NATURAL objects,  
which in various places presented themselves, to  
inculcate MORAL instruction.*

THIS was the happiest method of conveying  
moral instruction that could have been cho-  
sen. By these means impressions would be infixed  
in the mind of the hearer, that nothing would ever  
erase—for the sight of the place and object after-  
wards would always recall and warmly imprint  
on the mind the heavenly instructions they once  
naturally suggested. And the doctrine that was  
raised from such and such appearances that  
then presented themselves, the easy transition  
that was made from the *produce* of such a place  
to the *culture* of such and such moral dispositions  
and habits, would contribute to form such a con-  
catenation

catenation of ideas, as would never fail to recur when the image of either presented itself to the mind. Impressions made in this manner, in favour of religious truths, would be indelible. Abstract reasonings and deductions of moral argumentation, however just and rational, are the portion only of a few refined speculatists, and those, who know any thing of the nature and principles of the human mind, know that that instruction is the most durable and permanent that is conveyed into the mind by *sensible* images, not by the long and tedious labour of acute and subtle investigation. How *wise* was it, therefore, in our Lord, who had a perfect cognizance of the human mind, to make surrounding objects minister occasion to his heavenly instructions—to make the *volume* of nature, wherever it *opened*, to supply materials for inculcating the lessons of his divine philosophy \*. Whatever place he visited, wherever he travelled he would stop, and point the multitude that followed him to such and such objects that casually presented, and, while the object was full in their view, in a picturesque and affecting manner, he exhibited his doctrine by easy and natural images taken from it. But it is not for *me* to add any thing on this subject, to what *two* of the best scholars of the present age have written, with whose ingenious observations, those of my readers who have not yet perused

\* As one of our best poets expresses it:

— Books in the running Brooks,

Sermons in Trees, and GOD in every thing.

266 CHRIST'S *moral instructions*. [Chap. VIII.  
rused these writers, will be pleased and instructed. " His manner of teaching, says the excellent *Dr. Law of Cambridge* \*, was the most easy and natural that could be imagined. He generally draws his doctrine from the present occasion and the objects that surround him; from the most common occurrences and occupations; from the seasons of the year; the service of the *Jewish* synagogue, or their solemnities; from some extraordinary accidents, remarkable places, or transactions, and the like.—Thus upon curing a blind man he stiles himself the light of the world, and admonishes the *Pharisees* of their spiritual blindness and inexcusable obstinacy in refusing to be cured and enlightened by him. On little children being brought to him, he recommends the innocence and humility of that state, as very proper qualities for all those who would be true members of his church; and under the same figure, intimates the privileges that belong to all such. Beholding the flowers of the field, and the fowls of the air, he teaches his disciples to frame right and worthy notions of that Providence which supports them, and therefore will support beings of a rank so much superior to them. Observing the fruits of the earth, he instructs them to judge of men by their fruits, and not to be themselves unfruitful under all the means of grace. Taking notice of their behaviour at a feast, he first gives general advice therein to both the master and his guests; and from thence brings

\* *Theory of Religion*, p. 302. Edit. 4th. 1759.

brings them to the consideration of a better entertainment, to which they were all invited, but of which few among them would be persuaded to render themselves worthy. From meat and drink he leads them to the eating of his body, and drinking his blood, in a spiritual sense; the being nourished with his doctrine, and partaking of his kingdom. From outward *washing*, to the purifying of the heart, and cleansing the affections. From tasting of the fruit of the vine after the paschal supper, to the celebration of an eternal festival of freedom, rest, and happiness in another world. From the *salt*, he takes occasion to acquaint them with the nature of their office, which was to season the minds of men, and keep them from the contagion of the world, as well as give them a true taste and relish for the enjoyment of that kingdom; and at the same time reminds them of the absolute necessity for their duly executing this their office; otherwise, instead of being the best, the purest, and most useful, they would become the most worthless, and incurable, and contemptible among mankind. Those that were fishers, he teaches how to catch men: and shews them how far this would resemble their former employment, in taking of all kinds, both bad and good; which were at first inseparable, but would at length be carefully distinguished from each other. Seeing the money-changers, he exhorts his disciples to lay out their several talents to the best advantage. Being among the sheep-folds, he proves himself to be  
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the true shepherd of souls, describing the particulars in which his character exactly answered that of a good shepherd. Among vines, he discourses on the spiritual husbandman and vine-dresser, and draws a parallel between his vineyard and the natural one. Upon the appearance of summer in the trees before him, he points out as evident signs of his approaching kingdom. At the season of fruits, he puts the *Jews* in mind, that the time was come, when some would be expected from them in return for all the labours that had been bestowed upon them; and intimates the judgment that would shortly overtake all such among them as were found unprofitable. When the harvest comes on, he reminds them of the spiritual harvest, or the gathering of his church among men; admonishes them to labour diligently in that work, and add their prayers to heaven for success. From servants being made free on the sabbatical year, he takes occasion to proclaim a greater and more noble freedom from the slavery of sin and bondage of corruption. And from the *Jewish* ceremony of fetching water on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of the miracle wrought for their fathers in the thirsty wilderness, he introduces an offer of that *living water*, which should be unto them a well springing up unto everlasting life; the gospel of immortal happiness and salvation, and the plentiful effusion of the holy spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive. Upon hearing of some that were killed by the fall of a  
tower,

tower, and others put to death by the *Roman* governour in the midst of their sacrifices, he guards them against all misconstruction and rash censure in such cases; exhorts them all to take due warning by these punishments, and foretels the general destruction of such as would not be persuaded to it; and which would be the more distinguishable, as coming attended with the very same circumstances. From the conspicuous eminence of a city standing on a mountain, he turns his discourse to the no less remarkable situation of his own disciples. From the temple before him, he points to that of his body, which was most properly so called from the divinity residing in him. From *Herod's* unadvisedly leading his army out to meet the king of *Arabia*, who came against him with superior forces, and defeated him; a lesson is laid down to all who entered on the Christian warfare, that they should first well weigh, and carefully compute the difficulties that attended it, before they were engaged in a matter of such consequence. From the robberies which were more particularly frequent in that age, he forms a beautiful story of a certain traveller, who fell among thieves, was stripped, and wounded, and could find relief from none of his own country or persuasion; but met with it in one of those from whom he had the least reason to expect any, as being so much used to despise and hate that people, and their way of worship. From whence he forces his opponent to approve this amiable

amiable instance of humanity, even in the odious character of a *Samaritan*; and thereby shows him incontestably, that the like good office would no less become a *Jew* in the like circumstances. And from what often happened about that time, namely, that those who obtained the kingdom of *Judea* went to *Rome* to be confirmed in it, and on their return called such to account as had been wanting in their duty, and took ample vengeance on those who rebelled against them, which was the case particularly under *Archelaus*, he gives his followers to understand, that after he had ascended into heaven, and taken full possession of his spiritual kingdom, he would come again in power and great glory, and not only punish that rebellious nation of the *Jews*, with exemplary judgments; but at length condemn all those who willfully opposed his gospel, as well as those, who continued to neglect and disregard it.—Many more instances might be given, where *Christ* has formed his arguments and exhortations on such things as offered themselves to him; applying each most aptly to his present purpose: and where this does not so immediately appear, we have reason to believe it chiefly owing to the omission of some circumstances in the history; as is observed by a very eminent writer [*Newton* on *Daniel*, p. 148, note a.] “By this means he improved every thing into a useful moral, made every object and event serve for a constant monitor and remembrancer of his instructions; which by these means must be more easily retained, than they

they could be by a long train of abstract reasoning, or under any artificial arrangement of a number of particulars laid down together."—  
 “ In the spring, says the learned and judicious Dr. *Jortin* \*, our Saviour went into the fields, and sat down on a mountain, and made that discourse which is recorded in St. *Matthew*, and which is full of observations arising from the things which offered themselves to his sight. For when he exhorted his disciples to trust in God, he bad them *behold* the fowls of the air, which were then flying about them, and were fed by divine providence, tho' they did not *sow*, nor reap, nor gather into barns: he bad them take notice of the lillies of the field, which were then blown, and were so beautifully clothed by the same power, and yet toiled not like the husbandmen, who were then at work. Being in a place whence they had a wide prospect of a cultivated land, he bad them observe how God caused the sun to shine, and the rain to descend upon the fields and gardens even of the wicked and ungrateful: and he continued to convey his doctrine to them under rural images; speaking of good trees, and corrupt trees; of knowing men by their fruits; of wolves in sheeps cloathing; of grapes not growing upon thorns, nor figs on thistles; of the folly of casting precious things to dogs and swine; of good measure pressed down, and shaken together, and running over. Speaking at the

\* Dr. *Jortin* on the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 218. 2d Edit.

the same time to people, many of whom were fishermen, and lived much upon fish, he says, *What man of you will give his son a serpent if he ask a fish?* Therefore when he said, in the same discourse, to his disciples, *Ye are the light of the world, a city that is set on an hill cannot be hid;* it is probable, that he pointed to a city within their view, situated upon the brow of a hill. And when he called them the *salt of the earth*, he alluded perhaps to the husbandmen who were manuring the ground: and when he compared every person who observed his precepts to a man who built an house upon a rock, which stood firm; and every one who slighted his words, to a man who built an house upon the sand, which was thrown down by the winds and floods: when he used this comparison, it is not improbable that he had before his eyes, houses standing upon high ground, and houses in the valley in a ruinous condition, which had been destroyed by inundations. Going from *Bethany* to *Jerusalem* with his disciples, as they passed over a mountain, he said, *If ye shall say to this mountain, be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done.* *Matth. xxi. 21.* When he says, *Luke xxii. 25. The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors,* he alludes to the vanity of some wicked princes in those times who deserved the title of robbers much better than of benefactors [v. *Cleric. in loc.*] When the woman of *Samaria* wondered that he should ask water of her, he took occa-  
sion

sion to represent his doctrine under the image of *living water*, or water which flows from a spring. When he was by the sea-shore, *Matt.* xiii. He spake three parables to the people, concerning a sower, because it was then probably seed-time, as others have observed. At the time of the passover, alluding to it, he says, *John* v. 24. *He that heareth my word* μεταλεθηνεν, is passed from death unto life, (*Grot.*) When he spake of the fig-tree, which had borne no fruit for three years, and was to be cut down if it produced none the next year; he alluded perhaps to the time that he spent in preaching to the *Jews*, as well as to their obstinacy, and to the punishment which would follow it."

S E C T. III.

*Our SAVIOUR sometimes instructed by symbolical actions.*

UPON many occasions we find the *Antients*, particularly the *Easterns*, were wont to convey *moral* instructions not merely by didactic precept, but by certain *symbolical actions*. This is the most striking method of impressing the human mind—for *actions* speak a stronger language than *words*. It is a just observation of *Horace*, That the things we *bear* affect the mind much less than those which are exhibited to our eyes, and which the *spectator* applies to himself \*. The

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*Jewish*

\* *Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,  
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus, et quæ  
Ipse sibi tradit spectator*—*Ars Poet.* v. 180.

*Jewish* prophets generally made use of some outward expressive *symbol* to impress a deep and awful sense of their message from God, on the minds of those to whom they were deputed. Thus *Jeremiah* by divine command publicly put a *Yoke* upon his neck \*—a most significative emblem, designed to *strike* all, who saw it, with the idea of *captivity* and *slavery*. Thus *Zedekiah*, when the kings of *Israel* and *Judah* were deliberating in public council about engaging the *Syrians*, made himself † *borns of iron*, and appearing before them, said : *Thus saith the Lord, with these shalt thou push the Syrians, 'till thou have consumed them*. Thus also, of another of the prophets, it is recorded, that when *Jeroboam* went out of *Jerusalem*, the prophet *Abijah* the *Skilomite* found him in the way : and he had clad himself with a new garment : and they two were alone in the field. And *Abijah* caught the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces. And he said to *Jeroboam*, take thee ten pieces : for thus saith the Lord the God of *Israel*, behold, I will *rend* the kingdom out of the hand of *Solomon*, and will give *ten* tribes to thee, 1 *Kings*, xi. 29-32‡. In like manner, when the disciples had been warmly contending among themselves, which of them should be advanced to the highest dignities in that grand and magnificent empire they vainly flattered themselves their Lord would shortly establish, in order most effectually to extinguish in their bo-

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\* *Jeremiah*, chap. xxvii. 2. † 1 *Kings*, chap. xxii. 11.

‡ See *Le Clerc* in loc.

foms the lust of power and domination, and in the strongest manner impress them with the indispensable necessity of humility and innocence, our Saviour took a *little child*—and placed it in the midst of them—then pointing to it, thus addressed himself to them: Let me, in the most solemn manner, assure you, that unless you renounce all temporal and ambitious views, and cultivate the harmless inoffensive innocence of this child, you will not be deemed the proper subjects of the Messiah's kingdom. This *symbolical* action would never be forgotten, and the *language* of it would strike and impress the mind more deeply than all the *verbal* precepts, than all the abstract *reasonings* and didactic *arguments* our Lord could possibly have employed to enforce these amiable virtues.— We have another most affecting and engaging instance of our Saviour's instructing by *actions*.

\* *Before* the paschal supper, the Evangelist says, Jesus rose up from table, stripped off his upper garment, and girded himself with a towel, like a servant—he then poured water into a basin, and began to wash his disciples feet, and to wipe them with the towel which he had tied about him. After he had performed this servile office, he asked them, if they knew the *instruction* he intended to convey to them by this *action*. You honour me, he then said to them, with the title of your instructor and master, and the appellation

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\* Not *supper being ended*, as in our version, but being *come*, when all things were ready, because we find them at supper *afterwards*. See Dr. Macknight in loc.



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 is just, and due to my character. If then I,  
 your exalted instructor and master, have demeaned  
 myself to wash your feet, you ought, in like man-  
 ner, to condescend to perform the humblest offices  
 one to another! What language could have en-  
 forced humility and mutual condescension so em-  
 phatically, as the language of this endearing ac-  
 tion\*. *Washing the feet* was an office that was  
 usually performed by the lowest slaves. Our  
 Saviour's stooping to this office, and performing  
 it on his disciples with such an amiable humili-  
 ation, must raise in their bosoms the strongest  
 emotions, must affect them with a more exquisite  
 sensibility of his condescension and love than any  
*words* could convey, and greatly tend to endear  
 and unite them to each other in the bonds of  
 Christian affection and mutual complacency, as  
 having all *equally* shared this engaging token of  
 submission, and been *equally* instructed by it to  
 resign all aspiring views, and to cherish and cul-  
 tivate

\* There is a *similar* instance of condescension in *Plutarch's*  
 life of *Pompey*. Ἰδὼν ὁ Φαώνιος οἰκῆτων ἀπορία τὸν Πομπήιον ἀρχομένον αὐτὸν ἀπολούειν, προσεδράμη καὶ ὑπέλουσε  
 καὶ συνήλειψε καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ἐκ τούτου περίεπυον καὶ θερα-  
 πείων, ὅσα ΔΕΣΠΟΤΑΣ ΔΟΥΤΟΙ ΜΕΧΡΙ ΝΙΨΕΩΣ  
 ΠΟΔΩΝ, καὶ δεῖπνον παρασκευῆς διέτελεσεν. *Plutarch*,  
 Ed. Steph. Gr. 8vo. p. 1203. So also in the life of *Phocion*,  
*Plutarch* tells us, that when the ambassadors waited upon  
 Phocion at his house. Ὁ Φωκίων αὐτὸς ἀνιμησῶς ὕδαρ ἐκ  
 τοῦ φρεατοῦ ἀπενίπτει τοὺς ποδας, ἐτι μάλλον ἐνεκείντο,  
 καὶ ἠγανακτοῦν. δεῖνον εἶναι λεγόντες εἰ φίλος ὦν τοῦ βα-  
 σιλέως οὕτω διαίτησεται πονηρῶς. *Plutarch. Phocion*.  
 vol. 3. p. 1376. editi. Steph. Græc. 8vo.

tivate an humble, lowly, unambitious spirit.— Of this method of teaching and impressing the mind by symbolical actions, we have frequent examples in the *Greek* and *Roman* writers. *Herodotus* tells us, that *Cyrus*, upon receiving the instructions that *Harpagus* had sent him, deliberated what method he could put in practice, as the most proper and effectual to induce the *Persians* to revolt. After anxiously revolving the subject, he fixed upon these measures as the most opportune. He gave orders for all the *Persians* to convene, and every man to bring with him an hatchet. Being assembled, he commanded them to clear a piece of ground of considerable extent within the limits of that day. This drudgery being finished, he ordered them to re-assemble the day following, on which he had provided a magnificent feast, and entertained them in the most sumptuous and splendid manner. The entertainment concluded, he asked which they preferred—the *festivity* of the *present*, or the *drudgery* of the *past*, day. Upon all declaring, there was no *comparison* between pleasure and pain, he addressed himself to them, and said, That so long as they were in subjection to the *Medes*, they would experience the servile labour and toil of *yesterday*; but if they would throw off the yoke, and follow him, he would for ever vindicate them into the liberty, plenty, and felicity, in which they were *now* regaling\*. Of instructing by *actions*, we have a noted exam-

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\* *Herodotus*. Clío. p. 282. vol. 1. *Glasgæ*. See also *Polyæni Stratagem*. lib. 7. p. 480. *Casauboni*.

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 ple in *Tarquín*, who cut off the heads of the tallest  
 poppies in his garden, by which he plainly indi-  
 cated his intention to his son, then at *Gabii*,  
 which was, to cut off the most powerful and distin-  
 guished of the citizens \*. *Epaminondas*, most ef-  
 fectually to stimulate the *Thebans* to attack the  
*Lacedemonians* with vigour and resolution, took a  
 large snake—publickly showed it the army—then  
 crushed its head before them all.—Then addressing  
 himself to them: See, how useless, said he, the  
 rest of the body is, when the head is but once com-  
 pletely bruised. Just so, if we can but crush the  
*Spartans*, who are at the head of our adversaries,  
 the rest of the body of their allies will become to-  
 tally insignificant. Fired with this representation,  
 says *Polyænus*, the *Thebans* rushed forward with  
 impetuosity, made a vigorous impression upon the  
*Lacedemonian* phalanx, routed it, and the whole  
 multitude of their auxiliaries fled †. But the most  
 celebrated example of instructing by *symbolical*  
*actions*, is the following, of the wise and brave  
*Sertorius*.—In order to deter his men from their  
 destructive resolution of attacking the main body  
 of the *Romans*, and to induce them to concur  
 with him in his design of engaging only small de-  
 tached parties, till the whole power should be gra-  
 dually reduced and annihilated, he practised this  
 expedient. He ordered, one day, all his troops  
 under arms—when they stood all marshalled and  
 arranged

\* See *Livii Histor. Rom. lib. 1. p. 73. Elzevir. & Po-  
 lyæni Stratagem. p. 552. Lugduni 1589.*

† Vide *Polyæni Stratagem. p. 122.*

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 arranged before him, waiting his commands, he brought out two horses—one extremely *lean* and *old*, the other *strong* and *stately*, and distinguished for a bushy and beautiful tail. By the *lean* one stood a very tall and robust man, by the *stately* one, a little diminutive figure, of a very mean and contemptible aspect. Upon a signal given to them, the strong man seized the tail of the old emaciated beast, to pull it off by dint of violence—labouring and striving to effect his purpose, but in vain, to the no small diversion of the spectators. The little mean-looking person picked out one single hair after another, till the whole was at last exhausted. *Sertorius* then addressing himself to the army, assured them, that in like manner, all their most *vigorous* efforts to conquer the *combined force* of *Rome* would be equally vain and fruitless; while, by attacking them in *single* detached separate bodies, they might, in the *end*, insensibly and gradually diminish and exhaust the *whole* collective system of their power\*.

#### S E C T. IV.

*Many passages from the Old Testament are cited by the Evangelists and Apostles, not as predictions, but as accommodations.*

**T**HE critical and intelligent reader of the New Testament should remember, that the writings of the *old* Jewish prophets, which abound

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\* See Plutarch's life of *Sertorius*, vol. 2. p. 1051. Ed. H. Stephan. Gr.

280 *Passages from the Old Testament.* [Ch. VIII.]  
in fine descriptions, poetical images, and sublime diction, were the *Classics* of the *later Jews*—and in *subsequent* ages, all their writers affected allusions to them, *borrowed* their images and descriptions, and very often *cited* their very words, when recording any event or circumstance that happened in the history of the persons whose lives they were relating, provided it was *similar* and *parallel* to one that occurred in the times, and was described in the books, of the antient prophets. It was a familiar idiom of the Jews—the *Talmud*, it is said, is replete with instances—when they quoted the writings of the Old Testament, to say, *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by such and such a prophet*, not intending to be understood, that such a particular passage in one of the sacred books was ever designed to be a *real prediction* of what they were *then* relating, but signifying only, that the words of the Old Testament might be properly adapted to express their meaning, and illustrate their ideas. They used the phrase, *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by such prophets*, when they only borrowed their language, to adorn and dignify their subject—when there was a *correspondence* and *parity* of circumstances between the events and transactions they were recording, and those which the antient sacred authors had recorded, and *their* words might be happily *accommodated* to the things and facts they were now celebrating. The writers of the New Testament, by birth, were *Jews*, and spoke and wrote in the *Jewish* idiom. Agreeably to the customary style  
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of their nation, they have used the common phraseology, *that it might be fulfilled*—not understanding, themselves, or ever designing to be understood, that such a passage was really *prophetic* of such an event—that such a sentence in an antient writer *then* received its *destined* accomplishment—that the words thus cited were a real *prediction* of that very individual circumstance they were relating—and that the prophet had solely this distant transaction and minute incident in his view when he uttered and wrote such expressions. But they very frequently use this mode of speaking, when no more is intended by such a quotation, than that the words of such an antient writer are happily *descriptive* of what was transacted in *their* days—might with *equal* propriety be adapted to characterize such a particular circumstance which *then* happened—that there was a *consimilarity* of cases and incidents—and that the expressive style and diction of the old inspired prophets were *as justly applicable* to the occurrences they *then* recorded, as they were suitable to denote those events and facts in their times which they had commemorated. To give a few examples.—The *Jews*, in *Isaiab's* time, were obstinate and refractory, averse to instruction, and indisposed to reformation and amendment of life. In our *Saviour's* time, they were *equally* obdurate and incorrigible, and all our *Redeemer's* earnest invitations to repentance, all the evidence he could exhibit, would not prevail with them to abandon their prejudices, and forsake their vices.—Here

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was a *parity* of circumstances.—The Jewish nation was obstinate and irreclaimable in our *Saviour's* time: they were obstinate and irreclaimable in *Isaiab's* time. So that what the *prophet* said of the inveterate prejudice and stubbornness of the *age* in which he lived, was *equally* applicable to the *age* in which our blessed Lord appeared. The Evangelists, therefore, in representing the contumacy and stupidity of the Jewish nation in their days, cite a passage from *Isaiab*—not as if that passage was written to describe the religious and moral state of *Judæa* at our Saviour's advent—had a prophetic reference solely to that *æra*—and was not *equally* true of the times in which the prophet lived—but they quote it, just as a *modern* writer quotes a passage from *Homer*, or *Virgil*, or *Tasso*, as happily illustrating his ideas, and painting, in strong and striking language, *similar* and *correspondent* circumstances. Our Lord, speaking of the unsurmountable prepossessions and perverseness of the *Jews* to whom he preached, says: *Seeing, they see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand*—that is—those who have been eye-witnesses of my miracles, have not been convinced; and those who have heard authentic accounts of them, have not been persuaded of their credibility, or been at all disposed to regard them as proofs of my divine mission and character—so that in them is fulfilled the prophecy of *Isaiab*—his words are perfectly applicable to the *present* age, and descriptive of their moral state and condition.—Hearing, ye shall  
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shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. This very same passage the Apostle *Paul* quotes, and applies to the invincible obstinacy of *those Jews* he sent for, upon his arrival at *Rome*, in order to lay before them the evidences of the *Christian* religion—not as though they had then, and then only, received their precise accomplishment, but as beautifully expressive of obduracy, and determined infidelity and impenitence.—The Prophet *Jeremiab*, describing the miseries of captivity, by a beautiful figure, and in a strain of true sublimity, represents *Rachel* as deploing the loss of her children—bathed in tears—piercing the air with loud lamentations—and indulging *inconsolable* melancholy. When *Herod* embued his hands in the blood of the *innocents* in *Bethlehem* and its adjacencies, how applicable were the *Propbet's* words to such a shocking scene, and how happily are they quoted by the Evangelist, to exhibit to his reader the mourning and lamentation this murderous tyrant had caused! They are a beautiful *quotation*, not a *prediction* of what then happened. And yet, upon the murder of these babes, the Evangelist says, according to the *Jewish* phraseology, when they *cited* scripture: *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by*  
*the*



284 *Passages from the Old Testament.* [Ch. VIII.  
*the prophet Jeremiah, in Rama there was a voice  
beard, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be  
comforted, because they are not.—One of the Evan-  
gelists observing, That fable or parable was the  
didactic form in which our Saviour chose to con-  
vey religious and moral instruction to his audience,  
and that all his public discourses abounded with  
moral allegories and figurative representations,  
says: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken  
by the prophet, I will open my mouth in parables,  
I will utter things which have been kept secret  
from the foundation of the world—not that the  
Evangelist intended to mean, that this passage was  
a prediction which originally referred to Christ,  
and received its accomplishment in his particular  
manner of instruction, but only that these words  
of the Psalmist might be properly cited, and applied  
to Jesus, I will utter parables, and disclose impor-  
tant things, unknown to former ages. What the  
Psalmist says of the Sun, St. Paul, in his epistle  
to the Romans, applies to the triumphant pro-  
gress of the gospel, and the diffusion of its sacred  
beams among mankind. Their line is gone out  
into all the earth, and their words to the end of the  
world—not that these words were an express pre-  
diction of the promulgation of the gospel, they  
are only an happy and beautiful quotation by the  
Apostle. Ye hypocrites, says our Lord, well did  
Isaiab prophesy of you, saying: This people draweth  
nigh to me with their lips, but their hearts are far  
from me.—The character of the people to whom  
our*

our Saviour was then speaking, exactly corresponded to the character of the people in the time of the prophet *Isaiab*—*both*, abandoned hypocrites, whose language and outward actions were at variance with their hearts—what *Isaiab* said of the dissimulation of the *Jews* in *his* age, was applicable to *them*.—This article might be easily extended, but I shall conclude it with laying before my reader the sentiments of *three* very learned and judicious Divines. “ It is to be considered, says Bishop *Kidder*, that a scripture may be said to be fulfilled several ways: v. g. *Properly*, in the *letter*, as when that which was foretold comes to pass; or again, when what was fulfilled in the *type*, is fulfilled again in the *antitype*. Or else, a scripture may be said to be fulfilled more *improperly*; v. g. by way of *accommodation*; as when a like event happens to any place or people, to what fell out some time before. The sorrow and the mourning that now fell upon the coasts of *Betlehem* and *Ramah*, was very bitter and grievous, and like that which is reported to have befallen those places, by *Jeremy*, upon another occasion: and then those words are made use of, by way of *allusion*, to express this sorrow by. The Evangelist does not say, *That it might be fulfilled*; but *then was fulfilled*; q. d. Such another scene of sorrow appeared then, upon the murder of the *Innocents*, as was that which *Jeremy* mentions upon another sad occasion. This is a way of speaking used in the New Testament. What the prophet *Isaiab* says of the hypocrites of  
his

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his time, *Isa.* xxix. 13. is applied by *Jesus* to those who were like them. *Ye hypocrites, well did Isaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.* These men were hypocrites, like those in the prophet's time, and therefore the words of the prophet are accommodable to *them*, though they were spoken of *other* men. Again, the words of the same prophet, which were spoken to those of his own time, are said to be fulfilled in those who lived in our Saviour's, and are accommodated to them. *In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiab,* says our Saviour, *Matth.* xiii. 14. compared with *Isai.* vi. 9. *St. Paul* applies the same words to the *Jews* of his time, and at the same time allows them to have been spoken of their fathers: *Acts* xxviii. 25. It were easy to give more instances to this purpose. Compare *Matth.* xiii. 34, 35. with *Psal.* lxxviii. 2. *Matth.* xxi. 13. with *Jer.* vii. 11. And this is a liberty to be allowed to, and that is *taken by*, all writers. *St. Matthew* was an *Hebrew*, and wrote, it is commonly believed, in the *Hebrew* tongue, and for the use of the *Hebrews*, and in their style and manner of writing. He must be a stranger to the *Hebrew* writers, that does not know, that nothing is *more common* among *them* than such accommodations of the text upon all occasions. They abound in such applications: I may say their *Midrashim* do very much *exceed* in them. The *Jews*, of all men in the world, have no cause to object against our  
Evangelist

Evangelist on this account: And this which I have said in the *last* place, I take to be alone a full answer to the Objection of the *Jews*. *Kidder's Demonstration of the Messias*, Part II. p. 215, 216.—“ I would have you consider with yourself, says *Dr. Nicholls*, whether or no several of these passages which you refer to, and others in the New Testament, that are quoted out of the Old, be not brought in by way of *allusion* or *accommodation*, rather than *prophecy*. Now, unless you were sure that all those places of the New Testament you are wont irreligiously to expose, cannot possibly be understood this way, you do a very great piece of injustice to these writers. For why should not *St. Matthew*, or *St. Paul*, quote a passage of *Isaiab*, or the *Psalms*, and apply it to another sense, as well as you or I make the like use of a verse of *Virgil* or *Ovid*. Suppose I should bespeak the Apostles, those first famous propagators of our Christian faith, in the words of *Virgil's* invocation of the Sun and Moon, *Virg.* 1 *Georg.*

— *Vos O clarissima mundi*

*Lumina!*—

You would not look upon this to be any great solecism. Now, why has not *St. Paul* the liberty to do the like, when he quotes a passage of the nineteenth *Psalms*, which is understood of the sun and moon, and applies it to the preaching of the Apostles? *But I say, have they not heard? yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world*, *Rom.* xv. 18.

So

So our Saviour makes use of *Isaiab's* words to the *Jews of old*, to the *Jews of his time*, *This people honouretb me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* Matt. xv. 8. *Isai.* xxix. 14. There is hardly any body will deny, but that these texts may fairly be accounted for by way of accommodation. And I see no good reason, but why several of the texts you have mentioned may be explained the same way. Suppose, I say, when St. *Matthew* quotes that text of *Hosea*, in his relation of Christ's coming back from *Egypt*, he had only a mind to use the prophet's words, *Out of Egypt have I called my son*, rather than in plain words to say, *And thus God's son came back out of Egypt*: you will not be able to make good the contrary against me. Nay, in what fitter words could the tragical effects of *Herod's* barbarous murder of the Infants be expressed, than those of the prophet which St. *Matthew* chose? *In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.* Yes, you will say, these passages cannot be quoted by way of allusion, because they are brought in with this clause, *That the scripture might be fulfilled*, which shews they are meant for prophecies. But I cannot think that the *Jews*, always when they used this phrase in quoting a text of scripture, thought that text was a prophecy of what it was applied to. I only take it to be an instance of the *religious way* of speaking, which the *Jews*, above all nations, used. For as they were wont

to attribute the common actions of life to God's doing, and entitle things great and remarkable to God, reflecting thereby an honour upon God himself; so I suppose they designed a respect to the scripture, by seeming to attribute a propheticness to every part of it which they quoted. Not that they thought every passage so alledged to be truly prophetic of what they accommodated it to, but only they made use of this honourable expression, to show their great regard to God's word. I doubt not but this phrase, *That the scripture might be fulfilled*, and the like, were used first in quoting real prophecies, but that this, as all other honourable expressions, by long use, sunk in its value, and was more vulgarly applied; so that *at last* it was given to scripture only accommodated. There are an hundred instances of this nature to be given in all languages: I shall instance but in one out of the Bible, which is very nigh of kin to this we are speaking of, and that is the signification of the word *Prophet*. In its first and ordinary meaning, we all know, that it signified an inspired messenger of God, and yet, in process of time, it came to denote poets, *Titus*, i. 12. and singers of Psalms, *1 Sam.* x. 10. *1 Cor.* xiv. 1. Now, if *Prophecy* could at last come to signify only *singing*, why might not the phrase, *fulfilling of scripture*, or *prophecy*, signify only *quotation*? *Nicholls's Conference with a Theist*, Part III. vol. 2. p. 10, 11, 12, 13. first edit. 1698.—Dr. Sykes, in discussing that quotation of St. *Matthew* from *Isaiab*, *A virgin shall*

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*be with child, and shall bring forth a son,* thus  
writes: "The Evangelist, in citing this passage,  
(which, as appears by the context, concerned a  
child which was to be born *before* the land should  
be forsaken by *Rezin* and *Pekab*, who then in-  
vaded *Judæa*, and over-ran it) only cited them  
as words of *Isaiab* remarkably agreeable to the  
miraculous birth of *Jesus*, and not as a prophecy  
of his birth. St. *Matthew*, observing the provi-  
dential disposition of things, and seeing the sur-  
prising and extraordinary birth of the *Messiah* in  
so wonderful a manner, expressed it thus, *All*  
*this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was*  
*spoken of the Lord by the prophet*: but yet he meant  
no more than an *accommodation* of the prophet's  
words to the case in hand: or, as *Bishop Kidder*  
expresses himself, after a long examination of this  
difficulty in his *Demonstration of the Messiah*,  
Part II. p. 310. "St. *Matthew* applies *the pro-*  
*phet's words to the wonderful birth of Jesus.*" The  
difficulty or objection against this interpretation,  
arises wholly from our unacquaintedness with the  
*Jewish* phraseology. The Evangelists were *He-*  
*brews*, and wrote as other *Hebrew* writers did.  
They did not make a language of their own,  
nor use a phraseology peculiar to themselves, but  
did as other *Hebrew* writers did, and followed  
their method. To understand them, therefore,  
we are not to judge of the sense and meaning of  
the *Evangelists*, from the common and ordinary  
sounds of words amongst themselves; but we  
must enter into the *Jewish* phraseology, and see  
what

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 what the *Jews* meant by such and such expressions, and upon what principles *they* reasoned. Their ways of speaking and of quoting, which can be learnt from *Jewish* writers only, must be looked into; and how unnatural soever they may seem to us, yet we must be determined by them, and only by them. Now it is evident from numberless examples, that the *Jewish* way of writing is exactly agreeable to that of the Evangelists; and the masters of the synagogue applied passages of the Old Testament in senses very remote from that of the original author. Every page of every *Rabbi* almost will supply us with instances of this kind: and as for the particular term, *fulfilled*, they very often meant no more by that, than the happening of a *similar* event, or an exact agreement, in particular circumstances, of latter things with former." Dr. Sykes's Essay upon the Truth of the Christian Religion, p. 214. 2d edit.

#### S E C T. V.

*The Greek Philosophy, in our Saviour's time, had spread itself among the Jews.*

**T**HIS appears from that curious query concerning the blind man, which the disciples addressed to our Lord for his solution.—*Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?* The *Platonic transmigration* of souls was a tenet maintained by the *Pbarisees*. According to this doctrine, all souls were created by the Deity at the original formation of all things, and



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 their residence was fixed in some of the celestial  
 regions. In this antecedent state, those who had  
 conformed to the rules of virtue, when the des-  
 tined period arrived that they should animate an  
 human body, were, in reward of their merit,  
 lodged in sound and healthy vehicles—those who  
 had been guilty of irregularities in their præ-  
 existent state, were, by the decree of *Jupiter*,  
 imprisoned and punished in disordered or defec-  
 tive bodies. This absurd and visionary notion  
 was prevalent among the *Jews*. *I was a witty*  
*child*, says the author of the *book of wisdom*,  
 chap. viii. 19, 20. *and had a good spirit; yea ra-*  
*ther, being good, I came into a body undefiled*—in  
 manifest allusion to the *Pythagorean metempsychosis*.  
 As many of those souls, says *Philo*, as are near  
 the earth, and fond of being embodied, descend,  
 in order to be connected to a mortal system\*.  
 The *Pharisees* believe, says *Josephus*, that every  
 soul is incorruptible, but that the souls alone of  
 the good pass into other bodies, for that the spirits  
 of the wicked are doomed to everlasting punish-  
 ment †. “But as to *lesser* crimes, says *Dr. Pri-*  
*deaux*, their opinion was, that they were punished  
 in

\* Τούτων των ψυχων, αι μεν κατασιν ενδεησομεναι  
 σωμασι θνητοις, οσαι προσγειοταται και φιλοσωματα.  
*Philo* περι του Θεοπεμπτες ειναι ονειρους. Vol. 1. p. 641.  
*Mangey.*

† Ψυχην δε πασαι μεν αφθαρτον, μεταβαινειν δε εις  
 ετερον σωμα την των αγαθων μονην, την δε των φαυλων  
 αιδιω τονωρια καταζεσθαι. *Joseph.* Bel. Jud. p. 1065.  
*Hudson.*

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in the bodies which the souls of those which next committed them were sent into; and according to this notion was it, that Christ's disciples asked him, in the case of the man that was born blind, *Who had sinned, this man or his parents*, that he should be born blind? for this plainly supposeth an antecedent state of being, otherwise it cannot be conceived, that a man could sin before he was born." \*

S E C T. VI.

*Jesus had a regard to historical propriety in the incidental circumstances of some of his parables.*

**T**HE scene of that most beautiful and instructive parable of the good *Samaritan*, who, with such amiable tenderness and humanity, relieved the unhappy *Jew*, who was robbed, and lay weltering in his blood, is with great propriety placed in that dangerous road which lay between *Jerusalem* and *Jericho*. For from the testimony of *Josephus*, it appears, that not only *Judea* was at that time most miserably infested and over-run with robbers and ruffians, who committed the last excesses; but it also appears, that *this road* in particular, in which our Lord *seigns* this robbery and intended murder to have been perpetrated, was deplorably harrassed with these banditti—for it was favourable to their villanies, as it lay through wild and dreary solitudes. On account of these frequent robberies and murders, it was,

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that

\* *Prideaux's Connection*, vol. 2. p. 340. Eighth Edit.

294 *Jesus' regard to historical propriety.* [Ch. VIII. that *Jerom* tells us it was called, *The bloody way* \*. The Remark of Dr. *Lightfoot* is worth transcribing. "There was no road, says he, in all the land of *Israel*, more frequented than this between *Jerusalem* and *Jericho*, both on account of its leading to *Peræa*, but especially on account of the *Classes* or *Stations* of the priests, levites, and *Israelites*, which were fixed in *Jericho* equally as in *Jerusalem* †—hence it is, that in the parable, mention is made of a *priest* and a *levite* travelling this road.—According to *modern* customs, what can be a stranger assertion than what occurs, *Luke* xix. 12. A certain nobleman went into a *far* country, to *receive* for himself a *kingdom*, and to *return*!—But this was the case in *Judæa*. Those, who by *succession* or *interest*, had pretensions to the kingdom of *Judæa*, travelled to *Rome* to have it confirmed to them by the *Emperor* and *Senate* ‡. *Archelaus*, the son and successor of *Herod the Great*, did this—and our Saviour seems to have had this very incident in view, when he framed this striking parable. For in the fable it is said, that his *citizens bated him*, and *sent a messenger after him*, saying, *We will not have this man to reign over us*.—Exactly the case of *Archelaus*—for after his departure for *Italy*, the *Jews* dispatched

\* *Collis erat Adomim dictus à cruore viatorum ibi effuso.* Apud *Poli* Synopf. ad loc.

† See *Lightfoot's* *Horæ Hebraicæ*. ad loc.

‡ Πλει δε κατά τουτον τον καιρον επι Ρωμης και Αντιπας Ηρωδου μεν παις επι αντιποινησει της αρχης. *Josephi* Antiq. Jud. lib. 17. p. 774. *Hudson*.

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patched ambassadours to Rome, to accuse him to the Emperor. But, notwithstanding all their interest and their clamours, and contrary to their sanguine expectations, having received the kingdom, at his return he inflicted condign punishment on his adversaries, and took ample revenge on those who would not have had him to reign over them\*. Every historical circumstance relative to this transaction, is here beautifully interwoven by our Saviour into this instructive parable. The learned and ingenious *Le Clerc* hath, with his usual sagacity, minutely remarked these particulars, and beautifully illustrated them. The reader who has not seen them, will be pleased with the following observations of this judicious Commentator.

“ Christus hanc suam parabolam desumpsit ex more Regum ejus ævi, qui beneficio Imperatorum regnabant, potius quam jure natalium, quales ab Herode Magno in Judæa fuerant. Non poterant diadema sumere, nisi jussu eorum qui Romæ rerum potiebantur. Herodes ille longinquum iter suscepit, ut regnum Judææ ab Antonio impetraret, nec frustra; ivit enim ex Judæa Romam, ut docet *Josephus* Ant. Jud. lib. xiv. cap. 25, 26. atque inde την βασιλειαν παραλαβων accepto regno, in Judæam rediit. Iterum iter suscepit, ut sibi à Cæsare regnum confirmaretur, ut idem Historicus docet, lib. xiv. cap. 10. Idem successores ejus facere coacti sunt, quod ab eodem scriptore discere est. Vide lib. xvii. cap. 13. Contra hosce

U 4

legationes

\* *Josephus* An. Jud. lib. 17. p. 774, 775, 776, 783, 785, 788. *Hudson*.

legationes interdum à Judæis Romam missæ, ut ne regnum illis conferretur, aut etiam auferretur. Sic Archelaum accusarunt Judæi, apud Cæsarem, Romæ per legatos. Vide cap xi. & xv. ejus libri. Hinc intelligimus rationem, ob quam ita parabola concepta est. Archelaus, exempli causâ, erat homo ευγενης nobilis, natus quippe ab Herode. Idem abiit in regionem longinquam (in Italiam) accipere sibi regnum (Judææ) et reverti in Judæam. Cives vero, qui eum oderant, miserunt legationem post illum, dicentes (apud Cæsarem) nolumus hunc regnare super nos; quod non potuerunt tamen impetrare. Itaque rediit, accepto regno, aut εθναρχειαν παραλαβων, ut loquitur *Josephus*. Deinde de inimicis, qui noluerant eum regnare super se, gravem ultionem sumsit." *Clericus* in Luc. xix. 12.

## S E C T. VII.

*The Heathens employed spies to inspect the conduct of the primitive Christians.*

**W**HEN Christianity was first published, and a new sect, who were styled *Christians*, rose up, and were daily augmenting their numbers, the *Jews* and *Heathens* took the alarm. The *Jews* exerted all their power and influence to exterminate the rising heresy from the world—and in every town, to which the *Apostles* travelled to plant the Christian religion, excited most furious tumults and insurrections against them. The rage and resentment of this bigoted and choleric nation instigated them to the last excesses of open violence and persecution. The *Heathens* also, when

when they found that this novel religion meditated the ruin of their established worship, and aimed to persuade men, that the Deities, whom they adored, were fictitious and imaginary beings, immediately joined with the *Jews* in clamouring HERESY, with all the outrage and fury that superstition can inspire—and at *Ephesus*, in particular, when they found their religion struck at, the whole city, with one voice, for the space of two hours, cried out: *Great is Diana of the Ephesians!* When they found that this religion baffled all their open efforts to suppress and extirpate it, and that the harvest of its converts was continually encreasing, notwithstanding all the penal evils they could inflict on its professors, they descended to the low abject arts of secretly undermining it by calumny and detraction. Accordingly they suborned spies, narrowly to inspect their morals—with a view to ruin their *public* reputation, if they could detect any thing in them indecent and licentious. These persons, thus taught and instructed, promiscuously mixed with the Christians, entered their assemblies, and scrutinized their conduct with a vigilance that nothing could escape—ever insidiously intent to descry the least impropriety and indecorum in any one's behaviour, and ready to pick up with transport any objection of this kind, to expose it, and blast its credit in the world. This appears from *St. Paul's* direction to the *Christian* women in the church of *Corinth*—*not to preach or to prophesy* in that society *with their heads uncovered*, but to be veiled, that they

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they might afford no occasion to the Heathen spies to censure their conduct, as indecent and indelicate. *For this cause ought the woman to have a veil on her head, because of the angels*—or, as it ought to have been translated, because of the messengers, or spies\*—whom their Pagan adversaries sent to observe the Christians, and to detect and expose any faults and imprudences they might happily discover. This circumstance, the ever-wakeful vigilance of the Heathens to descry any thing criminal and immoral in their conduct, in order to calumniate and vilify their religion, occasioned many importunate and pathetic admonitions from the Apostles to the primitive Christians, *to abstain from all appearance of evil—to walk honestly towards them who were without, that is, out of the pale of the church—to give no occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully—to watch over their conduct with an unremitting vigilance, that those of the contrary party might be ashamed, having no evil justly to say of them, or*  
publickly

\* This is the meaning of *αγγελος* in almost every Greek writer, particularly in *Æschylus*, *Sophocles* and *Euripides*. *Αγγελος* signifies messenger in *AEs* xii. 15. And as *Peter* knocked at the door of the gate, a damsel came to hearken, named *Rhoda*. And when she knew *Peter's* voice, she opened not the gate for gladness, but ran in, and told how *Peter* stood before the gate. And they said to her, Thou art mad. But she constantly affirmed, that it was even so. Then said they, *It is his angel*. A strange version! It ought to have been rendered, *It is a messenger from him*. The spies, whom *Josuea* sent, are called by St. *James*, *αγγελους*, *James* ii. 25.

publicly alledge against them. Hence St. Peter thus exhorts the Christians: *Be sober, be vigilant, for your adversary, the false accuser, goes about like a raging lion, in solicitous quest of any of you whose reputation he might tear in pieces.* Thus also St. James: *Resist the false accuser*—by a life agreeable to the gospel, defeat his designs to calumniate and traduce your characters—and when he sees nothing criminal in you, *he will fly from you,* and for ever desist from his insidious attempts to fix a note of infamy on your virtue. When the eyes of a malignant, censorious world, were all turned upon the Christians, when they were disposed to credit every calumny that was fixed upon them, how \* absurd and impossible soever; and when not merely the sword of the *magistrate*, abetted by the *hierarchy*, was unsheathed against them, but *spies* were continually penetrating into their *public* assemblies and *private* meetings, to discover any thing obnoxious and reprehensible in their worship or conduct, it was peculiarly incumbent upon them to maintain an inviolable sanctity of manners, and to make it their study to furnish no occasion to their adversaries, by any one *open* or *secret* immorality, either to asperse their *character*, or calumniate their *religion* †.

## S E C T.

\* As for example, of eating children, of worshipping an *As*, of worshipping the *τὰ αἰδωιά*, of sacrificing infants, of sodomitical practices, &c. See *Minnicius Felix*, p. 55, 56, 57, 58. *Davis*: and *Justin Martyr*, *Athenagoras*, *Tertullian*, &c.

† Hence St. *Paul*, among other directions to *Timothy* about



## S E C T. VIII.

*Of the meaning of that phrase, Quench not the Spirit,*

**I**N the account we have of the effusion of the holy spirit upon the Apostles, as they were all assembled together on the day of *Pentecost*, it is said, That suddenly there rushed from the sky a vehement sound, like the loud blast of a violent rushing wind, which broke over, and occupied the whole house in which they were convened—they then saw a *flame* burst into the room, whose broken and divided particles flashed over the heads of the apostles \*, in the form, as it were, of fiery tongues. Now was fulfilled the signal prediction of *John the baptist*, that Christ would baptize his followers with the *holy ghost, and with fire*. Probably there was the same phenomenon at our Lord's baptism—a *lambent flame* darting from heaven, and *resting upon him*, Its descent being

compared about the conduct and character of a *bishop* or *pastor*, says, that he who sustains this sacred office, must not be a *novice*, a raw, ignorant, illiterate person, lest being inflated with insolence and pride, he fall into the condemnation of the calumniator, expose himself to the censures of those who are eager to pick up any thing to revile the Christian religion, and reproach its professors. Moreover, says he, he must have a good report of them which are without, lest he fall into the reproach and snare of the slanderer; that is, he ought to be a person, whose amiable virtuous character is attested by unconverted heathens, lest, otherwise, he should give too much occasion to the satyr and reproaches of the enemies of Christianity. 1 *Tim.* ch. iii. 6, 7.

\* This is Dr. *Middleton's* interpretation, and seems to be very accurate and just.

compared to the *rapidity of a dove*, is only a \* *simile* used by the Evangelists—not that it exhibited to the spectators the *real form and shape* of a dove. These spiritual gifts and miraculous powers being *originally* imparted, *probably* to our Lord, most *certainly* to the apostles, under the symbol and appearance of *fire*, the sacred writers not infrequently speak of them under *this* image. For example, *Quench not the spirit*, do nothing to extinguish this sacred fire. *Stir up* the gift of God which is in thee, by the putting on of my hands. From which texts it is evident, that this holy flame might *laughish*, and become *extinct*, and might be *re-kindled* and *re-invigorated*. It manifestly appears, that the miraculous powers and endowments, which were communicated by the apostles to the primitive Christians, the gift of prophecy, of speaking a variety of languages, of effecting miraculous cures, did not *necessarily* reside in those who received and exercised them, in their pristine vigour, independently of their care and concern to cherish them; but through supine negligence and remissness, might grow languid, and die; or, through application and improvement, be enlivened and animated. Immorality would quench this holy fire. If they were either stupidly insensible of its value, or were inflated with pride on account of such an acquisition, or if they absented themselves from christian worship, or when engaged in the solemnities of it were ostentatiously prompt-

ed

\* Vide §. 14.

ed to exercise it in a disorderly and irregular manner—by *such* a conduct they necessarily damped its flame, and criminally contributed to its total extinction. On the contrary, by *reading, meditation, and prayer*, by holy and devout exercises, and a life worthy the purity and dignity of their religion, they maintained these gifts in their original energy and exercise, and preserved them in their full vigour and animation, Sect. Tim. iv. 13, 14. By this virtuous discipline they always had it in their power to re-incite and invigorate these supernatural endowments, when through any relaxation or remission of it they were weakened—hence St. Paul exhorteth *Timothy* to *stir up* the gift of God which had been imparted to him, or as that most elegant and expressive *Greek* word signifies, to *rekindle it into life, to blow it again into a flame* \*. And from the case of *Timothy* it appears

† Αναζωπυρειν, 2 Tim. i. 6. I have collected the following passages, where this expressive word is used by other Greek writers, in order to illustrate this place. Ως γαρ οφθαλμῷ χροα προσφορῶν, ἥς το ανθρον αμα και τερπαν αναζωπυρει και τρεφει την ψην. *Plutarch*. Pericles. Vol. 1. p. 277. *Stephan*. Gr. 8vo. Προς εκεινον ηξιουν τρεπεσθαι τον αρχαιον ανταγωνισην, αυθις αναζωπυρουντα. They thought proper to turn to their old *antagonist*, now again *bursting into a flame*. Vol. 2. *Life of Pompey*, p. 1170. Ωσπερ εκ λειποθυμιας αυτου μαραινομενην την δυναμιν, αρχη νεα παλιν αναζωπυρουντας και αναλασαντος, *ibid*. p. 1179. Εκεινους ο μιν Κατων ορωμενος ανεζωπυρει και διεθερμαιινεν. *Plutarch* Cato Junior, Vol. 3. p. 1447. *Stephan*.

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 appears also that these spiritual gifts might thro' timidity and dispiritedness be rendered languid—for after the Apostle had urged him to *stir up the gift of God*; he adds, for God hath not given us the spirit of *fear*—intimating, that the gloomy fears and apprehensions he cherished, arising, *probably*, from the opposition he met with from the *judaizers*, had contributed to debilitate, and injure those sacred gifts he had received.

S E C T. IX.

*Of the person St. Paul intended by that description,  
 The prince of the power of the air.*

**T**HE Apostle *Paul* writing to the *Ephesian* Christians, thus describes the deplorable state of *heathenism*, out of which they had emerged. *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.* But whom does the Apostle mean by *the prince of the power of the air*?—the *devil*, to be sure, say all the *Commentators*. Take a specimen of their annotations on the place. *The prince of the power of the air.* *Satan*, says *Zanchæus*,  
 who

phan. Gr. 8vo. Δια μικρας αιτιας πολημου προφασεισ αναζωπυρουσιν εμφυλιου. *Dion Halicar.* Lib. 7. p. 442. *Hudson.* Αναζωπυρσιν εχθρας, p. 527. Τασ πολιτικασ εχθρας αναζωπυρειν, p. 531. See also Cl. Roman. § 27. *Ignatius.* Oxon. p. 40. Cl. Alex. p. 73. 152. Paris 1629.

who is the sovereign of all those powers—this region was given him for his dominions before his rebellion, nor was it taken from him on account of it. *Aerem*, says *Erasmus*, intelligit caliginosum nobis proximum, vel hanc infimam orbis partem, in quâ solâ regnat ille, non ut dominus, sed ut tyrannus, et non nisi vitio nostro potens. Says the learned *Mead*, I believe with the Jews that the devils were not thrust into *hell*, but inhabit the *air*. The devils, says *Zanchæus* again, dwell and tyrannize in the air, from whence they observe us, tempt us, invade us, raise storms, &c. There are many kinds of dæmons, says *Grotius*, *terrestrial* and *aerial*, the *terrestrial* suggest gross sensual desires, the *aerial*, pride, revenge, vain-glory, idolatry. The *prince of the power of the air* is the chieftain of all these *aerial* powers. In these words, says Mr. *Locke*, *St. Paul* points out the *devil*, the prince of the revolted part of the creation, and head of that kingdom which stood in opposition to, and was at war with the kingdom of Jesus Christ. *Dr. Doddridge's* explication of the place is full of shocking ideas. A course, says that *great* and *good* man, so detestably evil, that I may properly say of it, that it was just according to the desire, instigation, and will of *the prince of the power of the air*, that wicked spirit who commands the legions of fallen angels, that by divine permission range in the air, and fly from place to place in pursuit of their pernicious purpose of corrupting and destroying mankind."

But

SECT. IX.] *The prince of the power of the air.* 305

But this idea of the devil, as the prince and potentate of the immense dominions of the air, and chieftain of all the ethereal expanse, is not once exhibited or intimated in any other passage of scripture. The scripture is so far from representing *Satan* as the god and governor of the air, that it constantly represents him in a state of confinement for his apostacy and rebellion against God, reserved in chains under darkness against the judgment of the great day. So that instead of expatiating in the boundless fields of air, and shedding his woes upon miserable mortals, he and his accomplices are described by the apostle *Peter*, as precipitated into the \* *Tartarean* regions, bound in adamantine fetters, and to continue there in custody 'till the final judgment. Besides, the *heathens* are here represented by the Apostle, as walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. But the *heathens* never worshipped the devil—nor can it be supposed that the children of disobedience, or those of the *heathens*, who were determined to persist in their infidelity and rejection of the gospel, were actuated and instigated to this invincible obstinacy and stubbornness, by the devil, whose influence pervaded the air that surrounded them, who had immediate access to

\* Ζειραις ζοφου ταρταρωσας, παρεδωκεν εις κρισιν τετηρημενους. 2 Peter. Chap. ii. 4. See also Jude. 6. Εις κριστιν μεγαλης ημερας δεσμοις αιδιοις υπο ψοφου τετηρηκεν.

306 *The prince of the power of the air.* [Ch. VIII.]  
their minds, and who then *worked in* them, and  
at pleasure, controuled and actuated them. I  
make no doubt, but by *the prince of the power of  
the air* the apostle meant *Jupiter*, the supreme  
God of the heathens, whom both *Greeks* and  
*Romans* revered as the universal sovereign, and  
to whom all the pagans addressed their profound-  
est adorations. All their writers describe him as  
*the prince of the power of the air*, and as the su-  
preme president of the *etherial* region. At the  
original distribution of the universe, *Hades* was  
allotted to *Pluto*, the *Sea* to *Neptune*, the *Sky* to  
*Jupiter*. St. Paul was well acquainted with the  
*Greek* writers, and with the heathen worship and  
customs—he knew that *this* was the *usual* appel-  
lation of their supreme deity, and he seems here  
to apply it, by way of contempt, to that *imagi-  
nary* being the *Ephesian* christians had *once* adored,  
and all the *heathens* now worshipped. And to  
render his meaning the more precise and deter-  
minate, he adds, that this spirit now worketh in  
the children of disobedience, the unbelieving  
*heathens* were inflexibly attached to the worship  
of this fictitious *Divinity*, they were invincibly  
prejudiced in favour of that grand object of their  
reverence, which their forefathers for many se-  
ries of ages had religiously venerated, and such  
was their superstitious and sanguine devotedness  
to their *JUPITER*, that nothing could prevail  
with them to abandon his worship, and to alie-  
nate from him those honours, their ancestors  
and themselves had ever devoutly paid him.

Sect. IX.] *Of the territory meant by Asia.* 307

The *Classics* are replete with instances, where this title, here used by the Apostle, is applied to *Jupiter*. The passages in the margin are but a small selection\*.

S E C T. X.

*Of the Territory meant by Asia in the New Testament.*

**N**OTHING can be added, at least by me, to what the learned authors of the *Universal History*, and that accurate geographer *Cellarius*, have written on this subject, whose words I shall

\* Νεφεληγερετα Ζεϋς, *Cloud-collecting Jupiter*, occurs in almost every page of the *Iliad* and *Odyssy*. Χ'ω Ζεϋς αλλοκα μεν πελει αιθριος, αλλοκα δ' υει. *Theocritus*, *Idyl.* 4. vs. 43. Δυχνον ερωτος αγαλμα, τον ωφελεν αιθεριος Ζεϋς. *Musæi Hero et Leander*, vs. 8. Οτε και Διος ασερωπος Ανεχορευσεν αιθρη. *Euripidis Jon.* vs. 1078. 1079. Εκ διοθεσ πνοιαι, *Apollon, Rhod.* *Argon.* Lib. 3. 995.—Το δε μυριον εκ Διος υδωρ, vs. 1123. Διος ασετον ομηρησαντος. Lib. 3. vs. 1398. Edit. Hoelzin. Lug. Bat. 1641. Manet sub Jove frigido venator. *Horat. Carm.* Lib. 1. Ode, 1. vs. 25. Et positas ut glaciēt nives puro numine Jupiter. *Carm.* Lib. 3. Ode 10. 6. 7. Istic est is *Jupiter*, quem Græci vocant *aera*. *Varro ex Ennio*. — Locique Ferre diu nequiere Jovem. *Ovidii Metam.* Lib. 13. 707. Tum pater omnipotens foecundis imbribus æther Conjugis in gremium lætæ descendit.—*Virgil.* *Georg.* vs. 2. 325. Ζεϋς δ' ελαχ' ουρανον ευρυν εν αιθερι και νεφελησι. *Iliad* O. v. 192. Διανειμασθαι, ως λογος, Δια μεν τον αιθερα. Ποσειδωνα δε τον ευθον. και Πλουτεα την καθ' αδα μοιραν λαχειν. *Justin. Martyr.* *Apologia* 2. p. 138. Oxon. 1703. Οι μεν γαρ αερα διφυη, αρσενοθηλυν του Δια λεγουσιν. *Athenag.* p. 94. Oxon. 1682. Περι δε του Διος, ει μεν ανηρ εσι. idem. p. 97. Ζηνα μεν τον αιθερα. *Hermiæ irritio Gentilium Philosophorum*, p. 178. Paris 1636.



308 *Of the territory meant by Asia.* [Ch. VIII,  
therefore transcribe: "The different and various acceptations of the word *Asia*, even in its strictest sense, has created a great deal of confusion among writers, and often led the unwary readers into considerable mistakes. To obviate these inconveniencies, the incomparable bishop *Usher* \* advises those, who are to give any account of *Asia*, to begin with explaining the various acceptations of the word, without which it is impossible to understand the ancient historians or geographers. - He looks upon this as one of the most difficult points in history, there being a seeming contradiction between the sacred and profane writers, as to the provinces comprehended under the name of *Asia*, which cannot be reconciled without a very careful distinction of times and places. In reading the antient historians or geographers, we frequently meet with the following terms, viz. The *Greater* and *Lesser Asia*, *Asia Proper*, or *Asia* properly so called, the *Lydian Asia*, the *Proconsular Asia*, the *Asiatic* Diocesis. That vast continent, which was known to the *Greeks* and *Romans*, under the name of *Asia*, was divided by the antient geographers, first, into the *Greater* and *Lesser Asia*. The *Lesser*, commonly termed *Asia Minor*, comprehended a great many provinces, but that which included *Phrygia*, *Mysia*, *Caria*, and *Lydia*, was named *Asia Propria*, or *Asia* properly so

\* In his geographical and historical disquisition touching *Asia* properly so called.

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 so called, as is plain from *Tully*. [See his Orat. pro *Flacco*] Where it is to be observed, that *Tully*, in enumerating the regions contained in *Asia Propria*, makes no mention of *Æolis* or *Ionia*, though undoubtedly parts of *Asia Propria*, because they were comprehended partly in *Lydia*, and partly in *Mysia*. Beside, the inland country, commonly known by that name, contained also the adjoining countries, both of *Ionia*, lying on the sea-side, between the rivers *Hermus* and *Meander*, and of *Æolis*, extending from *Hermus* to the river *Caicus*, according to *Ptolemy*, or according to *Strabo*, to the promontory *Leetum*, the antient boundary between *Troas* and the sea-coast of the *Greater Mysia*. The remaining parts of *Æolis* and *Ionia* are by *Pliny*, *Strabo*, *Hellanicus* and *Scylax*, placed in *Mysia*; nay *Mysia* itself, after the *Æolians* possessed themselves of it, was commonly called *Æolis*, which *Stephanus* not being aware of, makes *Affos* of *Æolis*, a different city from *Affos* of *Mysia* near *Antandrus*. From what we have said it is plain, that *Asia Propria* comprehended *Phrygia*, *Mysia*, *Lydia*, *Caria*, *Æolis* and *Ionia*. This tract was bounded, according to *Ptolemy*, on the north by *Bitthynia* and *Pontus*, extending from *Galatia* to *Propontis*, on the east by *Galatia*, *Pamphylia* and *Lycia*, on the south by part of *Lycia* and the *Rhodian* sea, on the west by the *Hellepont*, by the *Ægean*, *Icarian*, and *Myrtoan* seas. It lies between the thirty-fifth and forty-first degree of

310 *Of the territory meant by Asia.* [Ch. VIII.  
north-latitude, and extends in longitude from  
fifty-five to sixty-two degrees.

As *Asia Propria* is but a part of *Asia Minor*,  
so the *Lydian Asia*, is only a part of *Asia Pro-*  
*pria.* *Asia* in this acceptation comprehends *Ly-*  
*dia, Æolis* and *Ionia*, according to the descrip-  
tion we have already given of it, and is that  
*Asia*, whereof mention is made in the *Acts* and  
St. *John's* revelation. In the former we read the  
following account of St. *Paul's* journey. *When*  
*they had gone throughout Phrygia, and the region*  
*of Galatia, and were forbidden of the holy Ghost to*  
*preach the word in Asia, after they were come to*  
*Myfia they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the spi-*  
*rit suffered them not. And they passing by Myfia*  
*came down to Troas.* Where it is to be observed,  
that the Greater *Phrygia*, through which they  
passed into *Galatia, Myfia Olympena* bordering  
upon *Bithynia*, and *Hellespont* where *Troas* was  
situate, though provinces of *Asia* properly so  
called, are yet in express terms distinguished  
from the proper *Asia* of the *Romans*; as is like-  
wise *Caria*, by what we read elsewhere in the  
same book. As these cities and countries did  
not belong to the *Lydian Asia*, so what remains  
of *Asia Propria*, together with the seven churches  
mentioned in the revelation, were properly *Lydia*,  
or the *Lydian Asia.* In the first place, *Pergamus*  
is placed by *Xenophon* in *Lydia*, and also by *Aris-*  
*totle.* The same *Aristotle* tells us, that *Smyrna*  
was at first possessed by the *Lydians*, and *Scylax*  
*Coryandensis* reckons it among the cities of *Lydia*,

Sect. IX.] *Of the territory meant by Asia.* 311  
as also *Ephesus*, wherein he agrees with *Herodotus*,  
*Sardis*, *Philadelpbia*, are reckoned by *Ptolemy* a-  
mong the cities of *Lydia*, as is *Laodicea* by *Ste-*  
*phanus*.

The Proconsular *Asia*, (so called, because it was  
governed by a Proconsul) according to the di-  
stribution of the provinces of the Empire made  
by *Augustus*, comprehended the following coun-  
tries, viz. *Lydia*, *Ionia*, *Caria*, *Mysia*, *Pbrygia*,  
and the proconsular *Hellepont*. And this is *Pto-*  
*lomy's Asia Propria*. By the same emperor, *Pontus*  
and *Bitbynthia* were made a Prætorian province, and  
*Asia* consular, containing all that part of *Asia*  
which lay on this side the river *Halys* and mount  
*Taurus*. In the time of *Constantine the Great*, the  
Proconsular *Asia* was much abridged, and a di-  
stinction brought in between the Proconsular *Asia*  
and the *Asiatic* Diocese; the one being governed  
by the Proconsul of *Asia*, and the other by the  
Vicarius or Lieutenant of *Asia*. The Proconsular  
*Asia*, according to the description which *Eusebius*  
gives us of it, seems to have been much the same  
with the *Lydian Asia* above mentioned. In the  
reign of *Theodosius the Elder*, who succeeded *Va-*  
*lens*, the consular *Hellepont* was taken from the  
Vicarius of *Asia*, and added to the Proconsular  
*Asia*; but under *Arcadius*, the Proconsular *Asia*  
was abridged of all the inland part of *Lydia*.  
And this is the reason why *Palladius* makes a di-  
stinction between the bishops of *Lydia* and those of  
*Asia*. However, the southern part of *Lydia*, ly-  
ing between the *Mæander* and *Cajster*, and the

312 *Of the territory meant by Asia.* [Chap. VIII.  
maritime provinces from *Ephesus* to *Asia*, and  
the promontory *Leſtum*, were left to the Procon-  
ſular *Asia*.

The *Aſiatic* Dioceſe is ſometimes taken in a  
more ſtrict ſenſe, as diſtinct from the Proconſular  
*Asia*, and the provinces under the juriſdiction of  
the Proconſul, and ſometimes in a more extenſive  
ſenſe, as comprehending alſo the Proconſular  
*Asia*. According to this acceptation, all *Asia*, in  
the reign of *Theodoſius* the Younger, conſiſted of  
eleven provinces, three whereof were under the  
juriſdiction of the Proconſul of *Asia*, viz. the Pro-  
conſular *Proper*, which he governed by himſelf;  
the Conſular *Helleſpont*, and that of *Rhodes*, with  
the other iſlands called *Cyclades*, which were firſt  
made a province by *Veſpaſian*, and placed under  
a preſident: eight were under the Vicarius or Lieu-  
tenant of *Asia*, viz. *Lydia*, *Caria*, *Phrygia*, *Sal-  
utaris*, *Phrygia Paſatiana*, *Pamphylia*, *Lycia*,  
*Lycaonia*, and *Piſidia*; theſe eight made up what  
was properly called the *Aſiatic* Dioceſis. Theſe  
are the *Terms* we moſt commonly meet with in  
reading the antient hiſtorians and geographers,  
for the explanation of which we are chiefly in-  
debted to the learned biſhop *Uſher*, who thought  
it well worth his while to examine the various ac-  
ceptations of *Asia Proper* in a particular \* trea-  
tiſe.” *Univerſal Hiſt.* vol. 5. p. 484. 8vo. *Dublin*.  
In an accurate diſſertation on the ſame ſubject,  
*Cellarius* thus writes: “Atque hinc diverſæ no-  
tiones  
\* See *Uſher*'s geographical and hiſtorical diſquiſition of  
*Asia*, properly ſo called.

Sect. XI.] *Particular circumstances, &c.* 313  
 tiones vocis Asiæ oriuntur, ut *latissima* tertiam  
 orbis terrarum continentem sonet, Europæ ab  
 ortu oppositam : *latior* magnam peninsulam inter  
 Ponticum et Mediterraneum mare : *lata* Asiam  
 eis Tauram, vel intra eum montem. Deinde  
*strictè* est provincia proconsularis : *strictius* media  
 pars illius provinciæ, circa Ephesum et Lydiam  
 propriam : *strictissimè* Homericæ notione, parvus  
 tractus ad Caystrum fluvium. Sacris scriptoribus  
 significatio illa placuit, quam *strictiorem* modo  
 diximus, uti ex iis, quæ variè adhuc dicta sunt,  
 elucet." *Cellarii Dissert. de Sept. Eccl. Asiæ, §. 9.*

#### S E C T. XI.

*Particular circumstances relative to place and people, ought to be accurately noticed, in reading the various writers of the New Testament.*

**I**N the *New Testament*, there is a variety of  
 compositions inscribed and addressed to *vari-*  
*ous* people residing in *different* towns and countries.  
 The circumstances of *that* people, to whom these  
 epistolary admonitions were transmitted, and the  
*customs* and *usages*, or other *remarkable* things,  
 which distinguished *such* and *such* a place, are to  
 be minutely and accurately marked. Previous  
 to our critical examination of *such* and *such* an  
 epistle, sent to *Rome*, to *Corinth*, to *Ephesus*, we  
 should ask ourselves, What *customs* were prevalent  
 in these *places*—for *what* *such* a town was princi-  
 pally celebrated—and what *peculiarly* ennobled  
 and signalized *such* a *city*—because in *writings*  
 addressed

314 *Particular circumstances, &c.* [Chap. VIII.  
addressed to the inhabitants of such renowned  
places, there must be not infrequent allusions to  
these *distinguishing* circumstances. This will il-  
lustrate many passages in these antient books, and  
place them in a most beautiful and striking point  
of view. In such figurative *allusions* consists a con-  
siderable part of the elegance, and of the effect of  
fine writing; for not merely do they soothe and  
charm the imagination of the reader, but they  
infix the deepest impressions on his mind and  
memory. For example: We find an Epistle in-  
scribed to the *Romans*. Antecedently to our at-  
tentive and critical perusal of it, let us consider  
what *customs* eminently distinguished the *Romans*.—  
Now, in their historians we find very frequent  
mention of *Adoption*—it almost occurs in every  
page. Their poets are full of it—and it is the  
perpetual object of the ridicule and banter of  
their *Satyrists*. Families of distinction were con-  
tinually settling mutual *adoptions*—and they were  
ratified with scrupulous and most solemn forma-  
lity. No custom more prevalent at *Rome*.—It  
was regarded as the cement of indissoluble friend-  
ship and union among families. *St. Paul* knew  
this; and in his epistle to the *Romans*, makes  
many beautiful allusions to it. It is a proof of  
the fine genius and excellent judgment of the  
Apostle, that in writing to *this* people, among  
whom this custom was so predominant, he should  
take occasion from it to speak to them of the dis-  
tinguished privilege of being *adopted* into *God's*  
*family*, and the signal happiness of being consti-  
tuted

tuted the *heirs* of God, and *joint-heirs* with Christ Jesus, of an *heavenly inheritance*. The *Romans* would perfectly understand him—and his words would have all their effect upon their minds, when he told them, that they had not received the spirit of *bondage* again to *fear*, but that they had, through the benignity of God in the gospel dispensation, received the spirit of *adoption*, and could, with liberal and filial confidence, cry out, *Abba, father*.—In like manner, before we descend to a critical examen of the Epistles to the *Corinthians*, it will be proper to reflect, what *Corinth* was celebrated for, and what principally distinguished that renowned city.—Now, most antient writers make mention of its abandoned luxury and effeminacy, and in their historical monuments eternize its profligacy, voluptuousness and debauchery. *Euripides* \* calls it *the city of Venus*. And *Strabo* says, that the temple of *Venus* was so opulent, as, in honour of the *Goddeſs*, to maintain above a *thousand* prostitutes, whom both sexes joined in dedicating to her †. Hence we see with what *peculiar* propriety it is, that *St. Paul*, writing to the *Corinthians*, uses every argument and persuasive to deter them from debauchery, and to guard them against the sensuality

\* Ακρον Κορινθον Ιερον οχθον πολιν Αφροδιτας. *Euripides* apud *Strabonem*, p. 379. *Paris* 1620.

† Το, τε της Αφροδιτης Ιερον ουτω πλουσιον υπηρξεν, ωσε πλειους η χιλιας Ιεροδουλους ενεκτητο εταιρας, ας ανετιθησαν τη Θεω και ανδρες και γυναικες. *Strabo*, l. 8. p. 378.



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fuality and licentiousness of the place in which they lived. He again and again declaims against libidinous indulgences. — Every page is full of the most warm and pathetic admonitions, to fly these fatal excesses; and his epistles to *this people*, more than all his other writings, abound with remonstrances against lust and dissoluteness—for the Apostle knew, that the Goddess of pleasure reigned at *Corinth*, that it was a scene of almost universal riot and revel, and he wisely adapted his instructions to the genius and manners of its inhabitants.—We learn also from *history*, that the *Isthmian* games were celebrated in the vicinity of *Corinth*. These were solemnized every *fifth* year in honour of *Neptune*, and a vast concourse of people from all *Greece*, on *this* occasion, assembled at the *Isthmus*, on which *Corinth* was situated. At these games great numbers of *Combatants*, who were previously prepared by a regular and strict regimen, for this arduous contention, entered the lists, and generously vied with each other, in various exercises, for the envied palm. With what an elegant and beautiful propriety is it then, that the *Apostle* addresses the *Corinthians*, in whose neighbourhood these games were solemnized, in the following terms. *Know ye not, that they who run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain; and every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run,*  
*not*

not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away. These are all *agonistic* terms, beautifully applied to our vigorous contention in the *Christian race*—and such an address to the *Corinthians* was quite in character, and properly introduced with *Know ye not*, for every citizen in *Corinth* was perfectly acquainted with every minute circumstance of this most splendid and pompous solemnity.—With regard to the Epistle to the *Ephesians* also, we know that the *temple of Diana* at *Ephesus* was one of the most superb and magnificent edifices the world ever saw. Antient authors are lavish in their descriptions of the grandeur and stateliness of the pile, and the various decorations and embellishments that distinguished it. How elegantly allusive and finely conceived, therefore, is the following figurative address to the *Ephesians*, of which every one of them must *peculiarly* feel the striking force and moment: Ye are *built* upon the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the *chief corner stone*; in whom all the *building, fitly framed together*, groweth unto an HOLY TEMPLE in the Lord; in whom ye also are *builded together*, for an HABITATION OF GOD, through the spirit. The imagery is taken from their *temple*, and is not only distinguishingly proper, considering their *local* situation, but hath, moreover, a singular elegance and sublimity, as a  
*metaphorical*

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*metaphorical* description of the *Christian Church*, which, in allusion to a *temple*, is here represented, as having the Apostles and Prophets for its *foundation*, Jesus Christ for the *chief corner stone*, and the *structure*, as consisting of *various* parts, but *combined* into one harmonious and magnificent *fabric*, sacred to God, and inhabited and possessed with the fulness of the Divinity.

A C H R O -

No. I. *A Chronological TABLE of the sacred books of the New Testament, according to Dr. Lardner.*

BOOKS.	P L A C E .	Year of CHRIST.
Matthew	<i>Judæa, or near it</i>	About - - 64
Mark	<i>Rome - - -</i>	- - - 64
Luke	<i>Greece - - -</i>	- - 63 or 64
John	<i>Ephesus - - -</i>	- - - 68
Acts	<i>Greece - - -</i>	- - 63 or 64
Romans	<i>Corinth - - -</i>	About <i>February</i> 58
1 Corinth.	<i>Ephesus - - -</i>	Beginning of 56
2 Corinth.	<i>Macedonia - - -</i>	About <i>October</i> 57
Galatians	<i>Corinth, or Ephesus</i>	{ Near the end of 52   or beginning of 53
Ephesians	<i>Rome - - -</i>	About <i>April</i> 61
Philippians	<i>Rome - - -</i>	Before the end of 62
Colossians	<i>Rome - - -</i>	Before the end of 62
1 Theſſalon.	<i>Corinth - - -</i>	- - - 52
2 Theſſalon.	<i>Corinth - - -</i>	- - - 52
1 Timothy	<i>Macedonia - - -</i>	- - - 56
2 Timothy	<i>Rome - - -</i>	About <i>May</i> 61
Titus	<i>Macedonia, or near it</i>	Before the end of 56
Philemon	<i>Rome - - -</i>	Before the end of 62
Hebrews	<i>Rome, or Italy -</i>	In the spring of 63
James	<i>Judæa - - -</i>	61, or beginning of 62
1 Peter	<i>Rome - - -</i>	- - - 64
2 Peter	<i>Rome - - -</i>	- - - 64
John 1st Ep.	<i>Ephesus - - -</i>	About - - 80
— 2d Ep.	<i>Ephesus - - -</i>	Between 80 & 90
— 3d Ep.	<i>Ephesus - - -</i>	Between 80 & 90
Jude	<i>Unknown - - -</i>	- - 64 or 65
Revelation	<i>Patmos, or Ephesus</i>	- - 95 or 96

No. II. *A Chronological TABLE of the Evangelists, according to Dr. Henry Owen.*

Matthew	<i>Jerusalem -</i>	Year of CHRIST 38
Luke -	<i>Corinth - -</i>	- - - - 53
Mark -	<i>Rome - - -</i>	- - - - 63
John -	<i>Ephesus - -</i>	- - - - 60

## No. III. A TABLE of St. Paul's apostolic Journeys.

<i>The first Journey begins in the year of Christ 44, and ends 48.</i>		
Antioch in Syria	Iconium	Attalia
Seleucia	Lystra	Antioch in Syria
Salamis	Derbe	Phœnicia
Paphos	Lystra	Samaria
Perga in Pam- phylia	Iconium	Jerusalem
Antioch in Pisidia	Pisidia	Antioch in Syria
	Perga	
<i>The second Journey begins A. D. 50, and ends 54.</i>		
Rest of Syria	Samothracia	Athens
Cilicia	Neapolis	Corinth
Derbe	Philippi	Cenchrea
Lystra	Amphipolis	Ephesus
Iconium	Apollonia	Cæsarea
Phrygia	Thessalonica	Jerusalem
Galatia	Beroea	Antioch in Syria
Troas		
<i>The third Journey begins A. D. 54, and ends 58.</i>		
Galatia	Philippi	Coos island
Phrygia	Troas	Rhodes island
Ephesus	Affos	Patara in Lycia
Troas	Mitylene island	Tyre
Macedonia	Chios island	Ptolemais
Greece	Samos island	Cæsarea
Corinth	Trogyllium	Jerusalem
Macedonia	Miletus in Asia	
<i>The fourth Journey begins A. D. 60, and ends 64.</i>		
Antipatris	Melite island	Rome
Cæsarea	Syracuse	Italy
Sidon	Rhegium	Spain only intended
Myra	Puteoli	Crete
Near Salmone	Appii Forum	Jerusalem
Fair Havens	Three Taverns	Antioch in Syria
<i>The fifth Journey begins A. D. 64, and ends 68.</i>		
Colosse	Corinth	Miletum in Crete
Philippi	Troas	Rome
Nicopolis in Epirus		

No. IV. TABLES, to show that St. MARK probably copied St. MATTHEW.

MARK xiv. 26—46.

Και υμνησαντες ἐξήλθον εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ελαιῶν.

Και λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς ὅτι πάντες σκανδαλισθήσεσθε ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ. ὅτι γεγραπταί, Πάταξω τὸν ποιμένα, καὶ διασκορπισθήσεται τὰ πρόβατα τῆς ποιμνῆς

Ἀλλὰ μετὰ τὸ ἐγερθῆναι με, πρᾶξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν.

Ὁ δὲ Πέτρος εἶπεν αὐτῷ.

Καὶ εἰ πάντες σκανδαλισθῶσονται, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐγώ.

Καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἄμην λέγω σοὶ ὅτι σημερον, ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ, πρὶν δις ἀλεκτορα φωνῆσαι, τρίς ἀπαρνήσῃ με.

Ὁ δὲ ἐκ περισσοῦ ἐλέγε μάλλον, Ἐὰν με δεῖ συναποθανεῖν σοὶ, οὐ μὴ σε ἀπαρνήσομαι. Ὡσαύτως δὲ καὶ πάντες ἐλέγον.

Καὶ ἐρχόνται εἰς χωρίον, οὗ τὸ ὄνομα Γεθσημανῆ, καὶ λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ, Καθίσατε ὧδε, ἕως προσευξάμαι.

Καὶ παραλαμβάνει τὸν Πέτρον, καὶ τὸν Ἰακώβον καὶ Ἰωάννην μετ' αὐτοῦ. καὶ ᾤχετο ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδήμονεῖν\*.

MATTH. xxvi. 30—50.

Καὶ υμνησαντες ἐξήλθον εἰς τὸ ὄρος τῶν ελαιῶν.

Καὶ λέγει αὐτοῖς ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Πάντες ὑμεῖς σκανδαλισθήσεσθε ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐν τῇ νυκτὶ ταύτῃ. γεγραπταί γὰρ, Πάταξω τὸν ποιμένα, καὶ διασκορπισθήσεται τὰ πρόβατα τῆς ποιμνῆς.

Μετὰ δὲ τὸ ἐγερθῆναι με, πρᾶξω ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν.

Ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ ὁ Πέτρος εἶπεν αὐτῷ, Εἰ καὶ πάντες σκανδαλισθῶσονται ἐν σοὶ, ἐγὼ οὐδέποτε σκανδαλισθῶσμαι.

Ἐῖπεν αὐτῷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς, Ἄμην λέγω σοὶ, ὅτι ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ νυκτὶ, πρὶν ἀλεκτορα φωνῆσαι, τρίς ἀπαρνήσῃ με.

Λέγει αὐτῷ ὁ Πέτρος, Καὶ δεῖ με συν σοὶ ἀποθανεῖν, οὐ μὴ σε ἀπαρνήσομαι. Ὡμοίως δὲ καὶ πάντες οἱ μαθηταὶ εἶπον.

Τότε ἐρχεται μετ' αὐτῶν ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς χωρίον λεγόμενον Γεθσημανῆ. καὶ λέγει τοῖς μαθηταῖς, Καθίσατε αὐτοῦ, ἕως οὗ ἀπελθῶν προσευξάμαι ἐκεῖ.

Καὶ παραλάβων τὸν Πέτρον, καὶ τοὺς δύο υἱοὺς Ζεβεδαιοῦ ᾤχετο λυπεῖσθαι καὶ ἀδήμονεῖν\*.

Y MATTH.

\* If the reader will be pleased to collate these two Evangelists through the rest of their respective chapters, he will find all the marks of a pretty close transcription. Dr. Owen, in his Observations on the Four Gospels, exhibits several more specimens, to evince, that both Mark and Luke copied Matthew.

NO. V. A TABLE, to shew, that probably LUKE,  
when he wrote, had MATTHEW's gospel before him.

ΜΑΤΘ. Ch. iii. 3.

Φωνη βωωντος εν τη ερημω.  
Ετοιμασατε την οδον Κυριου,  
ευθειας ποιεите τας τριβους  
αυτου.

Γεννηματα εχιδνων, τις  
υπεδειξεν υμιν φυγειν απο της  
μελλουσης οργης;

Ποιησατε ουν καρπον αξιου  
της μετανοιας.

Και μη δοξητε λεγειν εν  
εαυτοις, Πατερα εχομεν του  
Αβρααμ. λεγω γαρ υμιν οτι  
δυναται Θεος εκ των λιθων  
τουτων εγειραι τεκνα τη  
Αβρααμ.

Ηδη δε και η αξινη προς  
την ριζαν των δενδρων κειται.  
παν ουν δενδρον μη ποιουν  
καρπον καλον, εκκοπτεται  
και εις πυρ βαλλεται.

Εγω μεν βαπτισω υμας εν  
υδατι εις μετανοιαν. ο δε οπι-  
στωμου ερχομενος, ισχυροτε-  
ρος μου εστιν, ου ουκ ειμι ικα-  
νος τα υποδηματα βασαι.  
Αυτος υμας βαπτισει εν πνευ-  
ματι αγιω και πυρι.

Ου το πτυον εν τη χειρι  
αυτου, και διακαθαριει τον α-  
λωνα αυτου, και συναξει τον  
σιτον αυτου εις την αποθη-  
κην, το δε αχυρον κατακαυσει  
πυρι ασβεσω.

LUKE, Ch. iii. 4—6.

Φωνη βωωντος εν τη ερημω.  
Ετοιμασατε την οδον Κυριου,  
ευθειας ποιεите τας τριβους  
αυτου.

Γεννηματα εχιδνων, τις  
υπεδειξεν υμιν φυγειν απο της  
μελλουσης οργης;

Ποιησατε ουν καρπος αξιους  
της μετανοιας.

Και μη αρησθε λεγειν εν  
εαυτοις, Πατερα εχομεν του  
Αβρααμ. λεγω γαρ υμιν οτι  
δυναται Θεος εκ των λιθων  
τουτων εγειραι τεκνα τη  
Αβρααμ.

Ηδη δε και η αξινη προς  
την ριζαν των δενδρων κειται.  
παν ουν δενδρον μη ποιουν  
καρπον καλον εκκοπτεται,  
και εις πυρ βαλλεται.

Εγω μεν υδατι βαπτισω  
υμας. ερχεται δε ο ισ-  
χυροτερος μου, ου ουκ ειμι  
ικανος λυσαι τον ιμαντα των  
υποδηματων αυτου. Αυτος  
υμας βαπτισει εν πνευματι  
αγιω και πυρι.

Ου το πτυον εν τη χειρι  
αυτου, και διακαθαριει τον α-  
λωνα αυτου, και συναξει τον  
σιτον εις την αποθηκην αυτη,  
το δε αχυρον κατακαυσει  
πυρι ασβεσω.

See several more examples of this kind in Dr. Henry Owen's  
Observations.

No. VI\*. A TABLE, exhibiting the Chronology of  
Our SAVIOUR'S Life.

Years of CHRIST'S Life.	Julian Period,	Olympiads.	Years of Rome.	Times of Passover.
1	4709	193 4	749	March 23.
2	4710	194 1	750	April 12.
3	4711	- - 2	751	April 4.
4	4712	- - 3	752	April 24.
5	4713	- - 4	753	April 7.
6	4714	195 1	754	March 31.
7	4715	- - 2	755	April 20.
8	4716	- - 3	756	April 5.
9	4717	- - 4	757	March 27.
10	4718	196 1	758	April 16.
11	4719	- - 2	759	April 1.
12	4720	- - 3	760	April 2.
13	4721	- - 4	761	April 12.
14	4722	197 1	762	March 28.
15	4723	- - 2	763	April 17.
16	4724	- - 3	764	April 9.
17	4725	- - 4	765	March 31.
18	4726	198 1	766	April 13.
19	4727	- - 2	767	April 5.
20	4728	- - 3	768	March 28.
21	4729	- - 4	769	April 16.
22	4730	199 1	770	April 1.
23	4731	- - 2	771	April 21.
24	4732	- - 3	772	April 6.
25	4733	- - 4	773	March 28.
26	4734	200 1	774	April 17.
27	4735	- - 2	775	April 9.
28	4736	- - 3	776	March 25.
29	4737	- - 4	777	April 13.
30	4738	201 1	778	April 1.
31	4739	- - 2	779	March 25.
32	4740	- - 3	780	April 10.
33	4741	- - 4	781	April 1.
34	4742	202 1	782	March 21.

Y 2.

No. VII\*.

\* The five following useful Tables are extracted, with a few alterations, from the ingenious Mr. *Wait's* Gospel History, printed at *Edinburgh*, 1765; a work not so generally known as its distinguished merit deserves.



No. III. A TABLE, exhibiting the important events  
in Profane History during the Life of CHRIST.

Years of Christ's life.

- 1 **A** Plot of Antipater against his father Herod is discovered.
- 2 Antipater is convicted before Quintilius Varus, and put to death.
- 3 Herod dies. Archelaus succeeds him in the government of Judæa.
- 4 This year begins the Christian æra.
- 5 Caius Cæsar, grandson to Augustus, passes through Jerusalem to march against the Armenians.
- 7 Tiberius is recalled from Rhodes, and returns to Rome.
- 8 Caius Cæsar dies after his return from Armenia.
- 9 Augustus, on the death of his two grandsons, adopts Tiberius.
- 12 Archelaus is accused before Augustus for his mal-administration.  
He is banished to Lions in Gaul. Coponius is made procurator of Judæa.
- 15 Marcus Ambivius is made procurator of Judæa. Salome, the sister of Herod, dies.
- 17 Tiberius is admitted into the government with Augustus.
- 18 Annius Rufus is made procurator of Judæa.
- 19 Augustus Cæsar dies. Tiberius succeeds him.
- 20 Valerius Gratus is made procurator of Judæa.
- 22 Germanicus, the adopted son of Tiberius, is sent to quell disturbances in the east.
- 23 Germanicus reduces Cappadocia and Comagene into the form of Roman provinces.
- 24 Germanicus is poisoned at Antioch by Piso president of Syria.
- 25 Piso being accused of this murder, killed himself.
- 28 Valerius Gratus removes Annas from being high-priest, and gives the office to Ismael, son of Fabas.
- 29 Eleazar, the son of Annas, is made high-priest.
- 30 Simon, the son of Camith, is made high-priest, in place of Eleazar. Caiaphas succeeds him.
- 31 Pontius Pilate is made procurator of Judæa.
- 32 Herod puts to death John the Baptist.
- 34 Pontius Pilate condemns Jesus to be crucified.

No. VIII. *The DISCOURSES of JESUS arranged  
in a chronological order.*

	PLACES.
<b>C</b> onversation with Nicodemus, - - -	Jerusalem.
Conversation with the woman of Samaria, - - -	Sychar.
Discourse in the synagogue of Nazareth, - - -	Nazareth.
Sermon upon the Mount, - - -	Nazareth.
Instructions to the Apostles, - - -	Galilee.
Denunciations against Chorazin, &c. - - -	Galilee.
Discourse on occasion of healing the infirm man at Bethesda, - - -	Jerusalem.
Discourse concerning the disciples plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath, - - -	Judæa.
Refutation of his working miracles by the agency of Belzebug, - - -	Capernaum.
Discourse on the bread of life, - - -	Capernaum.
Discourse about internal purity, - - -	Capernaum.
Discourse against giving or taking offence, and concerning forgiveness of injuries, - - -	Capernaum.
Discourse at the feast of tabernacles, - - -	Jerusalem.
Discourse on occasion of the woman taken in adultery, - - -	Jerusalem.
Discourse concerning the sheep, - - -	Jerusalem.
Denunciations against the Scribes and Pha- risees, - - -	Peræa.
Discourse concerning humility and prudence, - - -	Galilee.
Directions how to attain heaven, - - -	Peræa.
Discourse concerning his sufferings, - - -	Jerusalem.
Denunciations against the Pharisees, - - -	Jerusalem.
Prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, - - -	Jerusalem.
The consolatory discourse, - - -	Jerusalem.
Discourse as he went to Gethsemane, - - -	Jerusalem.
Discourse to the disciples before his ascen- sion, - - -	Jerusalem.

