



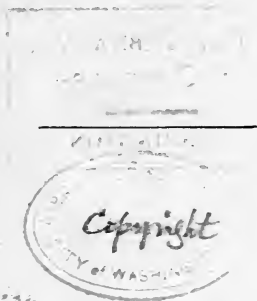




THE

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

BY
John Leadley
J. L. D A G G.



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P R E F A C E.

THIS volume aims to exhibit the evidences of Christianity in a clear and comprehensive view, and in the order best adapted to produce conviction in common minds. It directs the first and chief attention to the Bible, investigates its character, and obtains proof of its divine origin, first from obvious and well-known facts, and afterwards from less accessible sources of information.

Many able writers on the subject give the first and chief place to the historical evidences, and regard the other evidences as merely subsidiary. The historical evidences require for their full development a laborious search into the records and monuments of antiquity. Few men have the opportunity and ability to perform this labor. Hence the student of the evidences feels com-

pelled to receive his proofs at second hand, and to content himself with a degree of conviction inferior to that which would result from personal investigation.

In arranging the historical evidences, it has been usual to begin with establishing the authenticity of the Scripture books, and on this to found the argument for their credibility. This method is liable to a grave objection, on account of the obscurity that rests on the authorship of some of the books. The foundation of the argument ought to be undoubted truth, in order that the conclusion may be received with unhesitating and unwavering faith.

The method adopted in this work, founds the first arguments on facts of which all men of ordinary information have knowledge. It begins with noticing some prominent singularities of the Bible, discoverable by common observation, and the aid of commonly received history; and these it notices, not so much for the sake of argument, as of inducement to enter on the study with earnestness. We judge of a man's character by what he does; and the method here adopted begins the inquiry into the character of the Bible, by an examination of what it has done in the

world. The first direct argument for the divinity of its origin is founded on its beneficial effects. After having contemplated the streams of blessings which flow from the Bible, our attention is next directed to an examination of the source from which they emanate. We open the book itself, and find that it teaches a perfect rule of morality, illustrated by a perfect example; and also a system of doctrine which cannot be of human origin. From these facts the divine origin of the book is established, by arguments with which every reader's mind may directly grapple. All these subjects are disposed of before the history contained in the Bible is considered; and then no higher respect is demanded for its historical truthfulness, than is due to other well-received works of ancient history; but its right to this degree of confidence is established by an amount of testimony which cannot be adduced in favor of any other historical record of antiquity. To make good so low a claim to credibility is very far short of what is due to the sacred historians; yet it suffices for the argument at this point of its progress, since it fully prepares for the next two chapters, which treat of prophecy and miracles. These two chapters complete the

entire argument, which is cumulative, and consists of five independent arguments, drawn from the effects of the Bible, its morality, its doctrines, its prophecies, and its miracles. These five arguments are presented separately in Chapters II., III., IV., VI., and VII., to which the other five chapters of the work are subsidiary.

The tenth chapter, which shows the harmony between revelation and science, is chiefly designed to preserve the minds of young students from the scepticism which an imperfect knowledge of science is liable to engender.

In presenting the historical evidences, I have made free use of Lardner's work on the Credibility of the Gospel History, which is so valuable that no one who is ignorant of the results of his labors, can be said to have thoroughly studied the evidences of Christianity. In stating the argument, I have preferred not to encumber it with long citations of testimonies; but have thought it better to place these separately in an appendix, in which all the most important testimonies that Lardner's labors have brought to light, are exhibited in some form. Sometimes the whole testimony is given in Lardner's translation of the original author's words; at other times such

extracts are made as sufficiently indicate the character and purport of the testimony, and in the remaining cases the substance of the testimony is given, generally in Lardner's words. The reader who has not access to Lardner's great work, or time to read it, will here find presented to him in the compass of a few sections, the substantial results of that learned author's researches. Much other matter will be found in the appendix, rendering it a store-house of valuable information, to which the student may refer for facts to confirm his faith.

In looking over the following pages it will be seen that, though the references to Scripture are numerous, but few passages from the sacred volume are quoted at length. Regard to brevity rendered this omission necessary. Since in many cases the argument cannot be understood without a careful study of the Scriptures referred to, the reader who is not well acquainted with the Bible, will find it necessary to keep the holy volume near him for the sake of constant appeal to it. For the labor of finding and studying the passages, he will be more than compensated, by the habit of searching the Scriptures, and by the

increased familiarity which he will acquire with divine truth.

How far the method of discussion here adopted may be approved by others, I know not; but it is that in which my own mind approaches and contemplates the subject with the highest satisfaction. In prosecuting the investigation after this method, I see with my own eyes; and after having completed it, my own feet feel the ground firm beneath me. We are all passing, one by one, to a world which human intelligence has never explored, and of which the Bible gives the only information that we can obtain. In illuminating our way to that world, the Bible, like the sun in the heavens, so shines upon us that it reveals its character by its own light; and every one who will, may with his own vision, walk by this light, without trusting a fellow-traveller to lead him by the hand. May the glorious effulgence of divine truth emanating from the Bible, banish all darkness of ignorance or doubt from the mind of every reader, and guide his steps in the way of peace and holiness to life eternal!

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EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

INTRODUCTION.

CHRISTIANITY IS THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE.

CHRISTIANITY is the religion which is taught in the Bible. This well-known book consists of two parts, the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament, taken by itself, contains the religion of the Jews, which is identical in part with that of Christians. The New Testament supplies all in which Christianity differs from Judaism; and therefore the entire Bible fully exhibits the Christian system.

The Evidences of Christianity are the proofs that the Bible possesses the authority of God, binding men to believe the doctrines which it teaches, and perform the duties which it enjoins. These proofs are abundant and conclusive; and the study of them forms an important part of popular education, claiming the careful attention of every one who desires to be proficient in useful knowledge.

In studying the evidences of Christianity, we have need to employ our intellectual powers, as in the study of all other science. Our holy religion, though requiring

faith, is not built on it exclusively, and does not reject appeals to reason, as if unfit to endure such a test. On the contrary, it challenges investigation, and requires its advocates to be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh a *reason* of the hope that is in them.¹ On the testimony of parents, children believe facts which their own senses have not observed, and truths which their own reason has not discovered; and this exercise of faith does not in the least contravene reason, or interfere with the proper use of it. In like manner, faith in the testimony of God our Heavenly Father neither supersedes nor discourages the exercise of reason. The question whether the Bible comes to us with evidences of Divine origin and authority, falls properly under the investigation of reason; and men do not sin against God, when they examine this question as rational beings. To reject God's word when he speaks to us, or to close the eyes against the proofs that it is God who speaks, is offensive to the Supreme Majesty. Hence reverence for God requires a careful study of the Christian evidences.

Apart from all regard to the authority of God, we act inconsistently with our nature as rational beings, if we forbear to inquire into the origin and character of the Bible. The book exists in the world, and the high respect which it has received, and the great influence which has emanated from it in forming the characters of men, and controlling their actions, render it a proper object of rational curiosity. If we worthily employ our intellectual powers in observing the phenomena of nature, and searching into their causes, it no less becomes us, as intelligent beings, to inquire whence

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 15.

came the Bible, and what is the secret of its mysterious power.

The moral endowments of man's nature constitute his highest excellence. In these, more than in anything else, his likeness to God appears; and on these the well-being of individuals and of society chiefly depends. To man's moral nature the Bible is addressed. It is not a work of science intended for the improvement of the intellect only, but it presents laws to regulate the heart and life, and motives to induce obedience to these laws. It claims that its laws are the highest standard of duty, and its motives the strongest that omnipotent love can present. These claims it becomes us, as moral beings, to examine: and, in a matter which so intimately concerns the highest excellence of our nature, we are false to ourselves, if we decline to make the investigation.

The immortality of the soul is a doctrine of natural religion; but natural religion cannot teach us what enjoyments or sufferings await us in the future state. How vast must be the interests which it comprehends! How infinitely must they transcend in value all that is most dearly prized, in this world of fleeting show! Yet all these interests lie in a region which no human eye has ever explored. What they are, and how to secure them, unaided reason cannot discover. We labor to look through the darkness which hides the future world from our view; but we labor in vain, till we receive light from the Bible; for life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel.¹ This book describes an inheritance reserved in the heavenly land for all the followers of Christ, and conveys to them

¹ 2 Tim. i. 10.

a duly authenticated title to this vast estate. To study the evidences of Christianity, is to examine the seals which authenticate this title; and he who is unwilling to make this examination, or who takes but little pleasure in it, shows that his heart and his treasure are not in heaven, and proves himself unworthy of eternal life.

CHAPTER I.

PROMINENT SINGULARITIES OF THE BIBLE.

ON a cursory view of the Bible, some peculiarities strike the mind, producing an effect like the first impressions in forming acquaintance with a stranger. The peculiarities which deserve notice are not in the external appearance. Sometimes the sacred volume is one of the most highly ornamented in the library; at other times it appears in coarse binding, and printed with obscure type on rough paper; but, whatever may be its external dress, it is still the Bible, possessing that internal excellence which distinguishes it from all other books, and constitutes its true value.

To a childish fancy it may seem desirable that the Bible should be distinguished by some outward sign, such as an atmosphere of glory surrounding it, like that which is sometimes seen in paintings and engravings around the head of our Redeemer. Such a sign would distinguish it effectually from all other books in the library; but would it prove the book to be divine? The glory would adhere to the paper, the printing, or the binding; and it would at least be doubtful, whether the honor divinely conferred did not fall on the paper-maker, printer, or binder, rather than on the prophets and apostles by whom the book was written. The true glory of the Bible belongs to its internal substance, the words which it contains, or rather the thoughts which these words express.

In the following chapters the character of the Bible

will be carefully investigated, and its distinguishing excellences will be brought to view; but in the present chapter our attention will be directed to a few prominent singularities which strike the mind without any laborious investigation. They are the peculiarities which produce our first impressions, on looking at the book in the light which is thrown upon it by facts generally admitted, and opinions generally prevalent among men of ordinary information. We shall not stop to inquire at length into the evidence of these facts and opinions. Such thoroughness will be necessary in the chapters following. It is wise to submit our first impressions to subsequent scrutiny for correction or confirmation; but first impressions have their importance as inducements to seek a more thorough acquaintance. So the prominent singularities noticed in the present chapter will, it is hoped, prepare the way for a more earnest and profitable study of the subjects which are discussed in the chapters ensuing. To an intelligent mind they may serve to distinguish the Bible as effectually, and ought as effectually to attract attention to it, as would a blaze of glory miraculously emanating from its material substance.

SECTION I. ANTIQUITY.

THE BIBLE IS IN GREAT PART THE OLDEST BOOK IN THE WORLD.

The Bible consists of many separate works, written at different times during a period of nearly 1600 years. The Old Testament, which constitutes far the larger part of the volume, was written during the first 1000 years of this period; and the very language in which it was written ceased to be in com-

mon use, from the time of the seventy years' captivity of the Israelites in Babylon. Babylon has long lain in ruins; and, far back beyond the period of her final overthrow, we look through the years of her gradual decline, to the days of her highest glory, when Nebuchadnezzar, the conqueror of the Jews, proudly exclaimed, "Is not this great Babylon which I have built?" At this time Rome was in its infancy, and, except the poets Hesiod and Homer, not one of the Greek and Roman authors whose writings form our libraries of ancient literature, had then lived. But long before the age of these writers Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible. Herodotus, who is styled the father of history, lived about 1000 years after Moses; and, though the Greek poets Hesiod and Homer lived before Herodotus, they were long posterior to Moses.

We admit that a deeper search into antiquity discloses the fact that there were writers more ancient than even Homer and Hesiod. The earliest of whom we have any account, was the Phœnician historian Sanchoniathon; yet even he was long posterior to Moses. Porphyry, a learned heathen writer of the third century, has determined the comparative dates of these two most ancient writers, by informing us that Sanchoniathon received materials for his history from persons who lived "near to the time of Moses" (57 *b*). Of the work attributed to this ancient author, only a few fragments now remain; and some men learned in antiquity seriously doubt whether the whole work was not a forgery of a comparatively modern period (74 *a*). Yet the genuine writings of Moses, though more ancient, are still extant, and in common use. Malachi, the last of the Old Testament writers, was contemporary with Herodotus: and hence the whole of the Old Testament

was completed, when profane history may be said with propriety to have been just beginning.

The antiquity of the Bible does not of itself prove that its origin was divine. Of all merely human productions, some one must be the oldest; and, because the Bible is the oldest of books, it does not follow that it has higher claims to divine authority, than books of less antiquity. But the fact that the Bible is separated from all other books by its antiquity constitutes a singularity which invites inquiry into its authorship, and at least gives room for the supposition, that it may be a book prepared by the Father of the human family for the benefit of his offspring, before they themselves were skilled to make books.

The most ancient of human writings were designed chiefly for amusement; and the profit of the readers, even for the present life, scarcely entered into the plans of the authors. Their works in this respect resemble the amusements of children, rather than the sober instructions of aged parents, intent mainly on promoting the welfare of the family. The Bible, on the other hand, was manifestly not designed for amusement, but from the very beginning it gives instructions affecting our highest interests. The character of its instructions combines with its antiquity, to claim for it our profoundest regard. Foolish children may be so intent on their youthful amusements as to contemn the lessons of parental wisdom. Of equal folly are they guilty who are filled with delight by the study of Hesiod and Homer, and other works of classic antiquity, but turn away with disgust from the sober teachings of the Bible.

SECTION II. NATIONALITY.

THE HEBREW NATION HAS GIVEN THE RELIGION OF THE BIBLE TO THE WORLD, AND HAS EXISTED FOR THIS PURPOSE.

All the writers of the Bible were men of the Hebrew nation. This is true even with respect to the New Testament, of which the penmen, though Christians, were also Jews; except Luke, who wrote under the direction of Paul, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. They regarded Christianity not as a heresy, but as the true faith inculcated in the Old Testament, enlarged by new revelations from God. Paul said: "After the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets."¹

The nation of Israel was singular in the earth. It was said concerning it, "Lo! the people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."² Their peculiar usages separated them from all other people; and, though for eighteen hundred years they have been scattered among the nations of the earth, they still remain distinct. In their present dispersion the Jews are distinguished everywhere from the people of the nations where they are found; and in the light of history we see them, in all past ages, distinct and peculiar.

What has been the grand peculiarity of this singular people? It is not that they have excelled in arts or arms, or occupied the largest territory, or numbered the largest population. The boast of this people is, that they have

¹ Acts, xxiv. 14.

² Num. xxiii. 9.

given religion to mankind. In past ages, when polytheism prevailed in all other nations, and the wisest and most refined of the heathens worshipped abominable deities, among the Hebrews was preserved the knowledge of the one true God, and through them the world has obtained the knowledge of the true religion. This is the grand peculiarity of the nation.

The religion which the Hebrews have taught mankind is contained in the Bible. This most ancient of books was committed to them, and they were taught to prize it as their peculiar glory. They regarded themselves as far more blessed than the heathen, who knew not the statutes and judgments of God. "He showeth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel. He hath not dealt so with any nation, and as for his judgments, they have not known them,"¹ and their wisest and best men accounted the law of God more to be desired than gold, "Yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb,"² and made it the subject of their meditation. This singular book was from its remote origin committed to the keeping of this singular people; and singularly preserved as they are at the present time among the nations of the earth, they carry with them, wherever they go, that part of the sacred writings which they have received from their ancestors, and preserve it with the utmost care.

Natural religion should be learned, as well from the providence which governs the world, as from the creation which originated it; and in both we may observe manifestations of contrivance and wisdom. Let natural religion inquire, for what purpose was the Hebrew na-

¹ Psalms, cxlvii. 19, 20.

² Psalms, xix. 10.

tion brought into being? Why does it stand forth so singular among the nations of the earth, and why has it been so singularly preserved? The grand peculiarity of the nation has been the religion which makes known the God that created the world, and overrules the affairs of all nations; and the student of providence may clearly see a divine contrivance in the connection of this singular nation with their singular religion, and the singular book in which this religion is contained. If there is a God who governs the world, he must be the God of the Hebrews and the God of the Bible.

When we open the singular book which the Hebrew nation has given to the world, we find that its teachings confirm the deductions of natural religion with respect to the purpose for which the Hebrew nation has existed. It was promised to their great ancestor, Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."¹ Their temple was to be a house of prayer for all people,² and it was predicted by their prophets that all nations should become the worshippers of their God, and be blessed in submitting to him."³ The holy book sufficiently explains the wonderful preservation of the Jews in their present dispersion, as a peculiar dispensation of God with respect to them, and as a part of a grand purpose that his name is to be made known through them to all the inhabitants of the earth. The Bible and the providence of God harmonize with and explain each other; and the natural if not unavoidable inference is, that they have the same author.

¹ Gen. xxii. 18.

² Isaiah, lvi. 7.

³ Isaiah, ii. 1-3. Psalms, xxii. 27.

SECTION III. RESPECT OBTAINED.

THE BIBLE HAS OBTAINED THE HIGHEST RESPECT FROM MULTITUDES OF THE WISEST AND BEST MEN ; AND HAS BEEN HELD SACRED BY THEM AS A REVELATION FROM HEAVEN.

In our Christian country no man is ignorant of the respect which the Bible receives. In every city and village through the land congregations of intelligent men and women listen with devout attention to the reading of the revered book, and receive its instructions as if the words were uttered in their ears by the immediate voice of God. In the cottage of the peasant, the Bible on the stand is the great book of the family ; in the courts of justice, and halls of legislation, its authority is acknowledged ; and the great majority of those who are pre-eminent for intelligence and virtue zealously and in good faith unite with the less informed multitude to render homage to the Bible. This singularity of the book can escape the notice of no observer.

The respect paid to the Bible is not confined to the men of the present generation. The past age honored it equally. The great minds of Milton, Newton, and Locke bowed before its authority ; and in the long succession of clerical men, who have devoted their lives to the study and exposition of the sacred volume, thousands may be mentioned distinguished for superior genius, profound research, and unimpeachable integrity. No other book has received such honor.

The respect paid to the Bible extends back to its origin in remote antiquity. In the earliest, as well as the latest ages, it has been honored by the wisest and best of men. Moses, the first of the sacred writers,

exceeded all the great men of ancient times as a law-giver and political leader; but in all the records which he has made of himself and his deeds, we see him merely as the servant and amanuensis of Jehovah. He exhibits himself as a frail and erring man; and teaches us to honor the God whom he served, and the revelation from God which he, by divine command, committed to writing. After Moses came the judges, prophets, and kings of Israel, who rendered like reverence to the sacred writings. Among these men were many who had no equals in their generation, and of whom the world was not worthy; and all these gave the full homage of their understanding and hearts to the Bible.

The respect paid to the Bible in ancient times was not the result of novelty, because it has remained unimpaired to the present time, when the novelty has passed away. Nor can the respect which it received from the ancients be attributed to their ignorance and superstition, since it has continued undiminished while the light of science and philosophy has advanced to its present noonday splendor.

The Bible has not obtained the respect which it has received through carelessness in the examination of its pretensions. No other book has been subjected to such scrutiny. It has not been shut up in some secret place, where none but an interested few could have access to it; but it has been translated into almost all languages, and published in editions almost without number; and copies have been scattered through all accessible regions by the untiring zeal of its friends, who call on all to search it diligently. Nor has it been without opponents. Men of shrewdness have denied its authority, and disputed its claim to the respect which it receives. Con-

troversies have arisen, and have been carried on by men of great ability, in which the authority and credibility of the Bible have been discussed with acuteness and earnestness. Many volumes have been written on the subject; and every form of investigation which ingenuity could invent has been adopted. No other book has ever been subjected to such an ordeal, yet it comes forth from this scrutiny still commanding the highest respect from multitudes of the wisest and best men, and firmly believed by them to be of divine origin.

But however numerous, intelligent, and virtuous the advocates of the Bible may be, it would be wrong for us to receive it merely because they receive it. This would be to rest our faith on the authority of men. We should examine for ourselves the evidences of its divine origin. The men of Sychar who went out to see Jesus at Jacob's well, said to the woman who had informed them concerning him, "Now we believe, not because of thy saying; for we have heard him ourselves."¹ So every wise student of the sacred scriptures will be able to rest his faith, not on the wisdom or virtue of those who receive the Bible, but on the evidences which attend the Bible itself, demonstrating that it is a revelation from God. The fact that the Bible is singular in the respect which it has obtained from men, though not of itself sufficient to demonstrate the divinity of its origin, presents a strong inducement to study its character and claims; and harmonizes well with other facts which prove its divine origin.

¹ John, iv. 42.

SECTION IV. CHARACTER CLAIMED.

THE BIBLE IS THE ONLY BOOK THAT EXHIBITS RESPECTABLE PRETENSIONS TO THE CHARACTER OF A DIVINE REVELATION.

Various heathen nations have preserved with care books which they have esteemed sacred, and have regarded with religious reverence. But none of these are considered worthy of high respect by any intelligent persons in our land. The only book likely to be put in comparison with the Bible, as a divine revelation, is the Koran of Mahomet. Its pretensions will be examined hereafter. At present it will suffice to remark that he who puts it in comparison with the Bible, does so, not to establish the authority of the Koran, but to bring the Bible into discredit. We may take it for granted that every one who reads these pages will either believe the Bible to be a revelation from God, or deny that any book in the world has a just claim to this character. It will therefore be needless to prove that the Koran, and the sacred books of the heathen, are unworthy of such respect as it was shown in the last section the Bible has received from multitudes of the wisest and best of mankind.

The fact that various nations have had their sacred books, and regarded them with religious reverence, furnishes strong proof that men have felt the need of a divine revelation. Some of the wisest among the ancient heathen expressed their sense of the need in language which has come down to our times; and where is the man who will affirm that the morality and religion of the heathen world have not needed such correction as a revelation from heaven might be expected to impart?

The atheist consistently rejects all revelations from God, because, according to his creed, there is no God to make it. But the deist professes to learn from nature that there is a God infinitely powerful, wise, and good; and he is therefore compelled to admit that such a God is able to make to his creatures any revelation that may be necessary for them; yet he denies that such a revelation has ever been made. He professes to learn his religion from nature; and sees in the bountiful provision which the author of nature has made to supply the animal wants of man proofs of divine benevolence which he admires and extols; but when man's moral wants call for relief, and nature within him cries to Heaven, and vainly catches at fables and bungling forgeries for divine illumination, the God of Deism shuts up his benevolence, and makes no provision to supply the chief want that his creatures suffer.

CHAPTER II.

BENEFICIAL EFFECTS.

THE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF THE BIBLE HAVE BEEN EXCEEDINGLY GREAT, AND OUGHT TO BE REGARDED AS SINGULAR BLESSINGS BESTOWED ON MANKIND BY DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

SECTION I. ON MORALS.

OUR present concern is with facts. We inquire into the effects which the Bible has actually produced on the morals of mankind. Good precepts do not always secure good conduct. Parental commands are often disobeyed by children, and the laws of a state are often better than the morals of the people. The ethics taught by the ancient heathen philosophers had but a feeble practical influence on themselves and their disciples, and never wrought any thorough reform in the populace. Bible morality is remarkable for its greater success in this particular.

In a general survey of the nations which inhabit the earth, we cannot well avoid observing that the purest morality prevails where the Bible is best known. The nations which are in total ignorance of Christianity are deeply sunk in corruption, and every species of vice prevails among the people. Tyranny and cruelty mark the acts of those who are in power; the rights of property which have not fallen a prey to official rapacity,

are often rendered insecure by predatory bands of robbers; fraud and falsehood abound in the intercourse of the people with one another; the benevolent affections of the heart, and the tender sympathies of human nature, are smothered in their exercise by the prevalent selfishness and sensuality; husbands are oppressors; mothers are monsters; filial piety is unpractised; and chastity and modesty are little known and little appreciated. Here and there the moral gloom may be broken by fitful gleams from the expiring light of nature in the hearts of men; but it is still true that darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people. The description given by Paul is, in general, true of all heathen nations: "Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant breakers; without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."¹

Infidels, while rejecting the doctrines of Christianity, have generally admitted the excellence of its morality; and while they exult in being themselves free from its bondage, they have admitted its beneficial influence on the mass of mankind. Statesmen and legislators have been sensible of its power, and have regarded it as the surest foundation of virtue, order, and good government. In proportion as Christianity has prevailed in its purity among any people, the conviction of its utility has prevailed also: and while nations have groaned under the burden of its corrupt forms, and have desired release from the oppressions of its corrupt priesthood,

¹ Rom. i. 29-31.

the general approbation of mankind has been spontaneously yielded to its intrinsic excellence; and not only the wise and virtuous, but even the vicious, have rendered homage to it, and have felt that its banishment from the world would be a great calamity.

The effect of the Bible in promoting virtue may be seen by contrasting the moral degradation of pagan countries with the condition of society in those lands in which Christianity exerts its purest and least obstructed influence. Where the Bible is unknown iniquity abounds in every form, and the very rites of religious worship are polluted. Contrast with these loathsome exhibitions of human depravity the happy condition of a community who obey the precepts of the Bible, if you would estimate its beneficial influence.

The debasement of morals in heathen lands cannot well be conceived by persons educated under the influence of Christianity. In ancient Greece and Rome, amidst their refinement in literature and the arts, and notwithstanding the philosophy which their sages taught, crimes which no Christian community could tolerate were practised publicly without shame. Fabulous accounts of some modern heathen nations have reported their virtues so favorably, that infidels have suggested the expediency of importing missionaries from them to instruct Christians how to live virtuously; but Christian missionaries sent to those very lands have found them to be habitations of cruelty, fraud, falsehood, lewdness, and degrading idolatry. A few, through the labors of these missionaries, have received the gospel, and by their sober, righteous, and godly lives, contrasted with the prevalent iniquity, have exemplified the beneficial effects of the Christian religion. We know that in many countries Christianity has supplanted polytheism,

and has erected barriers which promise effectually to prevent its return ; but history does not record a single instance in which a heathen nation has of its own accord, under the influence of natural religion, abandoned idolatry and vice, and been converted to virtue and the worship of the one living and true God.

Heathen nations, ancient and modern, have not been without religion, for man's depravity has not wholly effaced from his heart the sense of religious obligation. But heathen religions are superstitious rites which have no tendency to promote virtue, and in many cases are themselves moral abominations. These religions have their priests ; but the priests are not employed in teaching men virtue. On the contrary, these ministers of religion are often the chief instigators of crime.

If, in our survey of the world, we pass from pagan nations to those countries in which the Roman Catholic religion prevails, we shall perceive an improvement in the morals of the people. The absence of polygamy and the superior sanctity of the conjugal relation, give worth and endearment to family and home. The Sabbath, though too little regarded, is a blessing to man and beast. The public worship of God, though degraded by ceremonies of human invention, and prostituted to serve the purposes of designing priests and rulers, restrains the vicious propensities of men with a sense of religious obligation. And the Christian precepts which are inculcated even in this corrupt form of Christianity, have their effect in the public and private charities which mitigate the evils of poverty and suffering, and in the degree of security which is given to life and property.

But to understand the influence of the Bible in promoting morality, we must look at Protestant countries,

where the free use of the sacred volume is not only permitted but encouraged. Nor will it suffice to satisfy ourselves with a general and careless comparison of Protestant nations with others; though even such a comparison will redound to the credit of the too-much neglected book. We should search for the communities where it is best known, for the families where it is most read, and for the individuals who are most familiar with its pages. In this search we shall find the purity of morals greatest where the Bible is permitted to exert its greatest influence.

In a general view of the benefits which Christianity has conferred on mankind, we may observe the following facts:—

1. Christianity has wholly abolished many evils which prevailed among the heathen.

Idolatry was universally practised in the most enlightened heathen nations; and was sanctioned by their wisest and best men. Among their entertainments gladiatorial combats held a prominent place, and polished men and women, even beautiful and tender virgins, gazed with intense delight on these scenes of human slaughter. The laws and usages allowed parents to destroy their infant children, when unwilling to rear them. Polygamy and divorce at pleasure were authorized and freely practised.

All these evils Christianity has banished wherever it has prevailed. Idolatry fell before it. Constantine, the first Christian emperor, put an end by decree to infanticide (38 a) and gladiatorial shows; and in modern times infanticide and the burning of widows on the funeral pile of their deceased husbands have been prohibited in India by English legislation. And the abolishment of polygamy and divorce has been a chief cause

of the superiority which the Christian nations of Europe possess over the inhabitants of Asia.

2. Christianity has mitigated many evils which it has not wholly abolished.

Wars were anciently undertaken for the avowed purpose of conquest, and were conducted with ferocious cruelty. Conquered armies were massacred or enslaved, the lands of conquered nations were ravaged, the possessions of the inhabitants seized or destroyed. Now no Christian nation will make war except for real or alleged injury; and it is necessary to the reputation of any military chief, that he avoid as much as possible the shedding of blood, and that he treat with kindness the wounded and prisoners who may fall into his hands, and that he spare private property.

Anciently conquered people were enslaved; and masters were invested with the power of life and death over their slaves. They nailed them to the cross at pleasure, or threw their bodies into the fish-ponds to feed the fish; and when a master was found dead by suspected violence, all his slaves might be put to death. Now, slavery is not inflicted by Christian nations as a penalty on those whom they conquer; and, where slavery has existed in a Christian nation, the power of the master has been greatly restricted. He has not been legally permitted to take away the lives of his slaves; and even to treat them with cruelty has been held to be a criminal and punishable abuse of power.

The forms of civil government have been meliorated by the influence of Christianity. Despotism has given place to restricted monarchy or republicanism. Capital punishments are less frequent, and are not inflicted at the will of the ruler, or without fair trial. Venality and corruption in the administration of justice have become

far less common ; and far greater security exists for life and property. Assassinations are far less frequent, and a higher value is everywhere set on human life.

3. Christianity has conferred many positive benefits on human society.

Christianity has elevated the condition of the female sex. The women of heathen lands are the slaves rather than the companions of the stronger sex, and are made in degradation to minister to the pleasure of their masters. Christianity elevates and refines the sex, and creates sisters, wives, and mothers, who sustain honorable relations, and perform duties that are full of blessings to the family and the nation.

Christianity elevates the condition of the poor, promotes industry, encourages self-reliance, and diffuses intelligence. It provides hospitals, dispensaries, and various modes of relief to the indigent and suffering. Such benevolence is unknown in heathen lands.

Christianity gives Sabbaths for the relief of our animal nature, and for the cultivation of piety. Natural religion teaches the obligation to worship God, but provides no special time for this service. The due observance of the Sabbath is productive of the highest benefits to individuals, families, and communities ; and for this benign institution mankind are wholly indebted to the Bible.

Christianity confers blessings on all the relations of domestic and social life. Husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, learn and perform their several duties to each other, so as to promote the happiness of all. The aged are treated with a reverence which heathenism never inspires, and a care unknown to heathenism is exercised over the young.

The numerous moral benefits which we have contemplated, follow from the Bible. They are found where the

Bible is found ; and they exist in the greatest degree, wherever the Bible has the greatest influence. Moreover, the men who are most distinguished for moral purity, tell us that their characters are formed by the Bible. They tell us that it gives them the precepts which they obey, the examples which they imitate, and the motives which impel them forward in the pursuit of holiness. They tell us, in short, that the book is precisely adapted to make men perfect ; thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Our present concern is, not to look into the contents of the Bible, but to take a survey of the moral benefits emanating from it. After this survey, it is natural to inquire how it has happened that such a source of moral purity has been opened in this sinful world. Have fraud and imposture conferred this vast benefit on mankind ? If there is a God who rules in the affairs of men, and if he delights in virtue, must it not be that he is pleased with the effects which the Bible is producing ? Will he be offended if we study the book that makes men holy, prize its teachings, and thankfully receive it as a gift of his benevolence ?

SECTION II. ON HAPPINESS.

In surveying the population of the globe to ascertain where the highest degree of happiness is to be found, it will be convenient to follow the same order as that which was adopted in the last section, beginning where the Bible is unknown, and ending where its influence on the conduct and character of men is the greatest.

In pagan nations misery abounds as well as crime. Governments are administered, not to promote the good of the people, but to gratify the selfishness and ambition of the rulers. Rivalships for political power give frequent occasion for civil wars, wasting the lives and

property of the people, multiplying their miseries, and discouraging the efforts of industry to provide supplies for necessary wants. Mutual distrust prevents co-operation to promote the general good ; and while each endeavors to appropriate to himself as much as he can of the scanty means of enjoyment, no one obtains a large share, and no one has a secure enjoyment of the portion which he obtains. The domestic relations exist ; but without those refined affections that are necessary to render home happy. Instead of the exquisite enjoyments of which human beings are capable, the feelings become blunted, and the pleasures are few and frothy ; or sullenness and gloom prevail, attended with an undervaluing of life. Were life filled with high enjoyments, it would be valued : but the low estimate placed on it by heathen nations, demonstrates that they feel its emptiness.

In lands where a corrupt Christianity denies to the people the free use of the Bible, we find miseries prevailing similar to those which afflict heathen nations ; but they are attended with many mitigations. Where the Bible is most known and influential, governments are administered with mildness and justice, life and property are secure, the arts flourish, industry is stimulated, and mutual confidence gives freedom to social intercourse, and success to trade and commerce. While the means of enjoyment are multiplied, the susceptibility of enjoyment is increased by the refinement of feeling resulting from superior education ; and while the general condition of society is greatly improved, the happiness of the domestic circle receives more than an equal share of the general improvement. The families where the Bible is read, and the God of the Bible devoutly worshipped, are heavenly places on earth, and in the sanc-

tified intercourse of the members with each other, a measure of that bliss is experienced which the pious expect to enjoy to the full in the upper world.

But, to estimate rightly the influence of the Bible in promoting human happiness, we must extend our research. Having entered a family in which the religion of the Bible has diffused happiness, we must select from its members the individual who loves the Bible most, and in whose heart the word of Christ dwells most richly. Contemplate the walk of that individual on the very verge of heaven. He has joys that a stranger intermeddles not with, and of which no power on earth can deprive him. He may be poor in the things of this world; but he is rich in faith. He may be wasting away with disease, or suffering torturing pain in his body; but he is strengthened with all might in the inner man, and a joyful confidence in God more than countervails the pain which he endures, enables him to rejoice in the light and momentary affliction, which he believes to be working for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. But spiritual enjoyments, however exquisite, are not perpetual in the present life. Their tide has its ebb and flow, and the most highly favored individual has seasons of comparative gloom and depression. Select his moments of highest ecstasy, when the tide of his enjoyment is at its flood; and you will find that it is just then the truths of the Bible are nearest to his heart, and its precious promises most clearly and ravishingly unfolded to his view.

The Bible—wonderful book! How benign its influence! Wherever it is, in proportion as its influence is unobstructed, it diffuses virtue and happiness around. The more the heart receives its teaching, the more is its sanctifying and beatifying power felt and manifested.

We know that the sun is the source of light and heat, because the light and heat increase as we approach the centre from which they emanate. So the Bible is a source of holiness and happiness, which some power has opened in this world of sin and misery; and from which the sons and daughters of men are deriving the best of all blessings. What must be the unseen power which has bestowed this inestimable gift? The character of the gift determines the character of the giver. The holiness and happiness which it produces demonstrate the holiness and benevolence of its author; and give proof that it is what it claims to be, the book of God.

Modern deism has had but little opportunity to display on a large scale its influence on the morals and happiness of mankind. But at the close of the last century it arose to power in France, and a short experiment of a few years fully demonstrated that the evils of popish superstition and oppression to which the people had been accustomed, were far more tolerable than the illuminations and blessings of infidelity.

Philosophers have proposed captivating theories of human perfectibility, and have predicted a delightful state of society to which, by the power of self-love, mankind are to advance through increase of knowledge, and improvement in the forms of civil government. But thus far experience has never verified these predictions. It has been found that increase of knowledge, if not sanctified by religion, gives increased power to wickedness; and the wisest statesmen have learned that the best forms of civil government are unavailing, if the morals of the people are not purified by religion.

SECTION III. OBJECTION.

It is objected by infidels that the Bible has caused much of the war and consequent misery with which the world has been afflicted, and has originated an oppressive priesthood which has been a curse to mankind.

We admit that the religion of the Bible has been an occasion of much bloodshed and suffering, but deny that it has been the cause. The birth of Jesus at Bethlehem was the occasion of Herod's massacre of the infants in that city, but it was not the *cause* of that bloody tragedy. So Christianity is innocent of the blood which its persecutors have shed. The religious wars and clerical oppression which have claimed the sanction of Christ, are utterly opposed to the spirit of his religion. It will be shown in the next chapter that the morality of the Bible has no tendency to produce these evils, and they must therefore proceed from another cause. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?"¹ These warring lusts Christianity counteracts by a peaceful and benignant influence; and, instead of causing the evils which the objection lays to its charge, it is the divinely appointed remedy for their removal.

The wars of Joshua, in the conquest of Canaan, furnish to infidels a more plausible objection, but these are not properly chargeable on the religion of the Bible. The Israelites lived at peace with surrounding nations of idolaters, when undisturbed by them; and neither the precepts nor the spirit of their religion required them to war against their neighbors. The wars against

¹ James, iv. 1.

the nations that inhabited Canaan were directed by the special command of Jehovah; for the purpose of inflicting a punishment which had been deferred until the iniquity of the nations was full.¹ God has an indisputable right to punish nations for their iniquities, and to employ what agency he pleases for the execution of his judgments. An angel was sent to destroy the army of Sennacherib;² and the blood of the one hundred and eighty-five thousand men slain by him in one night, did not stain the moral purity of the heavenly messenger. So Joshua and the hosts that he led were not chargeable with crime when they destroyed the Canaanites by divine command. That women and children perished in the overthrow of these nations, is nothing different from what happened in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and from what happens whenever a country is scourged with famine or pestilence. The right of God to send such calamities deists cannot deny without rejecting the teachings of natural religion, the guide which they claim to follow. Hence their objection to Joshua's wars is unfounded.

¹ Gen. xv. 16.

² 2 Kings, xix. 35.

CHAPTER III.

PERFECT MORALITY.

THE MORALITY TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE IS PERFECT, AND BEARS THE IMPRESS OF DIVINE HOLINESS.

SECTION I. PERFECT PRECEPT.

MEN are endowed by nature with a moral faculty, which enables them to distinguish between right and wrong, impels them to make the discrimination, urges the obligation of doing right, and rewards with self-approbation, or punishes with remorse, according to the moral character of actions performed. This faculty is peculiar to human beings, distinguishing them from all other animals which inhabit the earth; and the due use and cultivation of it are therefore necessary to the accomplishment of the proper end for which man exists.

The moral faculty of each individual qualifies him to comprehend the distinction between right and wrong; and in some measure to discover, by the light of nature, the moral quality of actions, for his guidance in duty. But no individual is indebted, for his moral knowledge, to his own experience and observation exclusively. We all owe much to parental instruction, the moral sentiments of the community, and the laws of society. Another and very important source of instruction is found in books which the wisest and best men have written on morals for the direction of human conduct. A

few of such books have come down to us from ancient times; and, in modern times, a large part of the productions which emanate from the press are works of this class.

Of all the books on morals, the Bible, though the oldest, is incomparably the best. The excellence of its morality even infidels, who reject its divine authority, are compelled to acknowledge. Concessions from them to this effect might readily be quoted; but it will be more profitable to examine the subject for ourselves.

But does not our belief that the Bible is the highest standard of morals disqualify us for the examination which we have proposed, and bind us to the absurdity of estimating the morality of the Bible by comparing the book with itself? It does not; for the Bible, though it is the highest standard of morals, is not our only means of knowing the distinction between right and wrong: but the Creator has endowed us with a moral faculty for this purpose; and so orders the course of events under his providence that the moral quality of actions may often be learned from their effects. In geometry we regard Euclid's Elements as a standard work, and believe all its propositions to be true: but if any one should pronounce it to be a work of falsehood and delusion, we are not under the necessity of vindicating it by comparing the book with itself. We produce the author's demonstrations, which are an appeal to every man's reason. We receive the facts of history on authority; and we may so receive the truths of geometry from the lips of a teacher: but when we have studied the demonstrations, we have within ourselves a proof which is independent of all authority. So we have within ourselves the means for obtaining independent proof of moral truth. When our parents authori-

tatively decided right and wrong for us in our childhood, we had even then our thoughts about the correctness of their decisions; and, with whatever authority moral truth comes clothed, our minds sit in judgment on it. Though reason and the moral faculty are not infallible, they are capable of giving us a firm conviction that the morality of the Bible is supremely excellent, just as we have a firm conviction that the propositions of Euclid are certainly true.

In the heathen world, the ablest instructors in morals have been such men as Socrates, Plato, Epictetus, Cicero, and Seneca. It would not be altogether fair to refer to the lives of these men for specimens of the morality which they taught; for many even in Christian lands teach better morality than they practise: but what said their public instructions? These justified drunkenness, when it occurred in the worship of Bacchus; held fornication to be innocent; exalted lying to the character of virtue, when used skilfully in managing the affairs of state; and not only tolerated but approved compliance with the prevalent idolatry. How different from all these are the pure precepts of the Bible! How does the Decalogue frown on the vices which these sages not only practised but approved! Let any one open the New Testament, and study the morality taught by Christ and his Apostles; and he cannot but be sensible of its great superiority to that of the heathen philosophers.

The author of the Koran, in founding the new religion which he introduced, had the advantage of free access to the Bible, and of incorporating its moral principles into his system: but with all this advantage, how degraded is the morality of the Koran, compared with that of the Bible! It corrupts the institution of mar-

riage, dishonors and oppresses the female sex, encourages sensuality, and teaches hatred, revenge, and cruelty.

The best books on morals, except the Bible, are among the works of modern Christian writers; and all these with one accord acknowledge themselves indebted to the Bible for the principles which they inculcate. They refer to it not merely as a help in their studies, but as the highest standard to which they can appeal; as a rule which their best reasoning cannot correct; and as authority of such tried and acknowledged perfection that there can be no appeal from its decision.

It is an excellence of Bible morality that it elevates a class of virtues which mankind have generally held in low estimation. The heroic virtues have attracted the admiration of the world, and valor, fortitude, and even revenge, have been held in honor: but humility, meekness, gentleness, forgiveness, and all the passive virtues, have been contemned. In opposition to these prevalent sentiments, the Bible assigns the highest place of excellence to the gentle virtues; forbids all revenge; teaches forgiveness of injuries, love of enemies, and the return of good for evil; and promises the highest reward to the meek and lowly. This system of morality, when judged by its effects, is demonstrated to be the wisest and best; and the fact that we derive our first knowledge of it from the Bible, ought to inspire us with reverence for the moral teachings of this ancient book.

It is an excellence of Bible morality, that it does not respect the outward conduct only, but extends to the heart; and, by regulating the desires and affections, rectifies the first springs of human action. It forbids anger, covetousness, unchaste desires, pride, and discontent. The teachings of the wonderful book probe the inmost depths of the soul, and reveal unsuspected

corruptions from which proceed the outward forms of wickedness that fill the earth.

It is an excellence of Bible morality, that it refers all duties to a few simple principles. So perfect is its generalization, that it reduces all duty to a single affection, "Love is the fulfilling of the law."¹ It contemplates this affection in a two-fold relation, to God and our fellow-creature, and expresses the obligations thence arising, in two great precepts: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart;" and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."² On these two commandments, the comprehensive system makes all the law and the prophets to depend; and these two commandments, by a further unfolding, adapting them to the relations and circumstances of human beings, become the decalogue or ten commandments, recorded in the 20th chapter of Exodus. These commandments contain an admirable summary of human duties. They are represented to have been given by Jehovah to the people of Israel, as the foundation of his covenant with them; and to have been engraven by him on two tables of stone, and preserved by them with special care, in obedience to his command, in a sacred chest, called "the Ark of the Covenant." Natural philosophy approaches nearest to perfection, when it explains the various phenomena of the material world, by referring them to a few simple principles, called laws of nature. In morals, the Bible has already accomplished what philosophers are laboring to accomplish in physics. It presents a perfect system of ethics made out from a few general principles.

The moral system of the Bible is complete. It regu-

¹ Rom. xiii. 10.

² Matt. xxii. 37-40.

lates the duties appertaining to every relation in life, prohibits all forms of vice, and enjoins every species of virtue. Its requirements are not confined to the external conduct, but as has been already noticed, extend to the heart, and regulate the desires and affections, which are the first springs of action. So far-reaching is its authority, that an ancient student of it exclaimed, "Thy commandment is exceeding broad,"¹ and such did he discover to be its influence on the inner man, that he testified, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."²

The Bible not only gives to men a pure and perfect code of morality, but it also presents the strongest motives to induce obedience to its requirements. It records the penalty affixed to the first transgression, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"³ and depicts fearfully the woes which that transgression introduced into the condition of human existence. In page after page the sacred volume unfolds the terrible judgments of God on the sins of men; and the retributions of the future world, which are vividly portrayed in the Bible, allure to virtue by the hope of eternal life, and deter from crime by the apprehension of enduring the wrath of the Almighty for ever and ever. To these strongest of motives, another of great power is added, in the exhibition of divine love and mercy which is made in the gospel of Christ. Here the goodness of God leads to repentance; and they who cordially receive the gospel, become devoted followers of Christ, who loved them and died for them; and imitate his example of perfect virtue.

¹ Psalms, cxix. 96.

² Psalms, xix. 7.

³ Gen. ii. 17.

The promotion of virtue and piety is the great end for which the Bible was written, "All scripture is profitable . . . that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works."¹ Among the earliest portions of it, and possibly the first written of all, we find the decalogue, which as we have seen is a brief code of laws, prescribing the duties of men to God and to one another. This summary exhibits the morality of the Old Testament; and its authority is recognised in all the teachings of Christ and his apostles. Christ taught, "Verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled;"² and the apostles of Christ instructed men, both by example and precept, to delight in the law, and fulfil its requirements. Some books are commended for the incidental inculcation of pure morality; but to make men pure and perfect, has been the grand aim of the Bible from its origin.

We do not enter at present into the historical question respecting the origin of the Bible. The senses which nature has given me, testify that the book lies before me on the shelf; and I can as soon doubt my own existence as to doubt its presence. The moral powers with which nature has endowed me, testify, after careful examination, that the moral system which it presents, is transcendently excellent, and precisely adapted to guide men into all duty. The volume before me was printed and bound a few years ago in a neighboring city; but the printer and binder never claimed the authorship of the moral system which the volume contains, and if impenetrable darkness concealed its authorship, the system itself shines forth in brightness and beauty.

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

² Matt. v. 18.

Apart from all inquiry into the origin of the natural world, we admire the beauties of the landscape and the flowery plain; and whatever may have been the origin of the Bible, human beings are false to the noblest powers with which nature has endowed them, if they do not admire the morality of the Bible, and conform their lives to its teachings.

Let us, then, come to this light by which our steps may be guided through all the intricacies of life's way. The heathen philosophers lighted torches to find the right path, in the thick darkness which enveloped them; but the Bible shines upon us, like the sun in the firmament. Whatever scepticism may say concerning the origin of the sun, and of the Bible, let it be our wisdom to walk in the light which they give. And when natural religion points out to us the admirable contrivance by which the sun is adapted to the accomplishment of good, and leads our thoughts from the glorious luminary to the glorious Being who made it; let us ask her to apply the same mode of reasoning by which she finds out that God made the sun, to the inquiry, who is the author of that system of morality which the Bible contains.

We freely admit that iniquity abounds, even in Christian countries, and that many who profess to follow Christ are often guilty of odious vices. But it is nevertheless true that the general morality of lands where Christianity prevails, and especially where it prevails in its purest form, is greatly superior to that which is found in pagan nations. And it is true that the brightest examples of virtue that have ever adorned the world, have been exhibited in the lives of sincere Christians. We must not estimate the excellence of Christianity by the character of those who falsely assume the Christian name. But where are the bright examples of virtue in

heathen lands? The very philosophers who taught men morals, were addicted to hateful vices; and the very systems of ethics which they taught, tolerated such vices (157). The deists of modern times, in forming a system of morals, have many advantages over the heathen philosophers, derived from the prevalence of Christianity around them; but notwithstanding these advantages, their morality in theory as well as in practice, falls much below the Bible standard.

Deists have charged the Bible with being an immoral book, because it contains descriptions of iniquity which shock virtuous feeling. But they might with equal propriety charge courts of justice with being sources of immorality, because they bring to light the murders, thefts, robberies, and other crimes, which are perpetrated in human society. The Bible as a faithful record gives a true history of crimes as well as of virtues; but it exhibits crime as odious, and presents the strongest possible motives against the practice of it. They who study the Bible most diligently, and most fully imbibe its principles, abhor iniquity most cordially, and exhibit in their lives the highest degree of purity and virtue. The iniquities which disgrace human society, are not learned from the Bible; but abound most where the Bible is least known and revered; and, when fully rampant, have banished the holy volume from common use, and from a place in the affections of the heart.

Deists charge Christianity with the religious persecutions which history has recorded. They allege that the pagan religions tolerated each other, and that persecution was unknown till Christianity arose. But when Christianity arose, did it begin and continue the work of persecution? Did Christ persecute Herod and Pontius Pilate? Did Peter, James, and John form an

inquisitorial court, and persecute the Jewish priests and elders? Did the Christian disciples, everywhere throughout the Roman empire, persecute the pagan world for three hundred years, and deluge the earth with heathen blood. Surely the fact that persecution slept till Christianity arose, demonstrates that Christianity differs from all the corrupt religions which the god of this world peacefully tolerated, and demonstrates also that those religions which practise persecution under the name of Christianity, differ widely from the religion taught by Christ and his apostles. But is deism peaceful and tolerant? When in the minority, it contents itself with reproaches, reviling, and bitter hatred; but what it can accomplish when exalted to power, let the history of the French revolution testify.

Other corruptions which are seen in papal and merely nominal Christianity, have given abundant occasion for infidel invectives. Under the name of priests, the ministers of the gospel have been reproached as universally mercenary, ambitious, intriguing, and hypocritical. But deists themselves know that this was not the character of the apostles and first ministers of Christ; and they know how to distinguish between those who truly exhibit the apostolic spirit, and those who, without that spirit, claim to succeed the apostles in office. The fact that hypocrisy is enumerated among the priestly vices, demonstrates that the accusers of the priesthood understand the distinction between the mercenary, ambitious, and intriguing religious officials, and the true ministers of Christ; and the very accusations which they bring against the false pretender, are a compliment to Christianity. But when a deist is an immoral man, who charges him with hypocrisy? Who reproaches him, and sneers at him, for having acted inconsistently with his

religious profession? He may be mercenary, ambitious, and intriguing; but no one complains that he is hypocritical in religion. The very manner in which deists inveigh against the vices of professed Christians, and extenuate the vices of their own party, shows clearly that, deists themselves being judges, consistency does not require the morality of deism to be as pure as that of Christianity.

The lives of men are books which all may read. In the lives of the apostles, and all true disciples of Christ, we may read the true character of Christian morality. Deism has its apostles; and it will be of great practical utility to study in their lives the character of infidel morality (158).

The divine origin of the Bible is sufficiently proved by the perfection of its morality; since human wisdom, even in the wisest and best of men, could not have invented so perfect a system. But the strength of the argument becomes greatly increased by the consideration that the Bible, if it is not what it claims to be, is an imposture by which mankind have been grossly deceived. Then wicked deceivers have invented the purest and most sublime system of morality the world has ever known; and have contributed more by their imposture to purify and elevate the morals of mankind than has been accomplished by all other agencies combined. In all other cases human imposture exhibits some marks by which the sagacious observer may detect the motive from which it originated. But everything in the Bible is at war with the supposition that it originated in avarice, pride, love of fame, love of power, or any other of the motives which usually produce imposture. It cannot be that wicked men conceived so pure a system; that by every utterance which they made they condemned

their own fraud; and that they have preserved others from perpetrating like iniquity by denunciations so terrible that the very imagination of them is unwelcome to the minds of transgressors. The holy Bible cannot be the work of unholy deceivers.

The argument from the perfection of Bible morality is of itself decisive; but its force is increased when the antiquity of the book is taken into consideration. Men have, at different periods of the world, invented various artificial lights to be used in the night. At first, the rude torch and the glimmering lamp dispelled the darkness; and, afterwards, the ingenuity of man obtained superior illumination from the candle, the chandelier, the gas-light, and the Drummond light. But God's great luminary for dispelling darkness from the face of the earth, and shedding on it the light of day, was perfect in its origin; and it does not now shine with greater brilliance than when it was first set in the firmament. So, the sciences which come from human investigation have, from small beginnings, made progress towards perfection; but the system of moral science taught in the Bible was perfect from its origin, and when all human science was in its infancy. That the oldest writing in the world contains a complete ethical system, which the most cultivated wisdom of man has never improved, cannot be accounted for, except on the supposition that it came from God.

SECTION II. PERFECT EXAMPLE.

The morality of the Bible tends to form a perfect character. Not content with outward virtue, it regulates the desires and affections of the heart, and establishes pure habits of thought and action. It may be objected that such moral perfection is unattainable, and

that therefore the morality of the Bible is impracticable. But the perfection of Bible morality, instead of being a valid objection to it, is its highest recommendation, and proves its divine origin. It sets before all, even those who have made the highest attainments in virtue, a prize yet in advance, and engages all in persevering efforts to win it.

The practicability of Bible morality is proved by the lives of holy men recorded in the book. In their characters different virtues are illustrated, blended more or less with human frailty. But pre-eminent among them is the character of Jesus Christ. His life is an exemplification of the perfect morality which is enjoined in the divine code, and the perfection of his example deserves to be studied as a peculiarity distinguishing the book which contains his biography from all human productions. In making this use of the account which the New Testament gives of Jesus Christ, it is not necessary to assume the truth of the gospel history. This will be proved hereafter. At present we do not determine whether the evangelists Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John have described a real or a fictitious character. It will suffice for our present purpose to show that the character which they have delineated is one of perfect moral excellence.

1. The several virtues were perfectly exemplified in the character of Jesus Christ.

Devotion to God was manifest in all his conduct. He came to do his Father's will, and accounted the service his meat and drink. At the age of twelve he said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"¹ and at the close of his life he was able to ad-

¹ Luke, ii. 49.

dress his Father in the language, "I have finished the work that thou gavest me to do."¹ And this devotion, which was apparent in all his actions, was manifested also in the habitual communion which he held with his Father by prayer. For this exercise of devotion he often withdrew to some lonely place, and sought the stillness of the night. Nor did he cease to hold this communion with his Father, when pressed by a thronging multitude; as at the grave of Lazarus, and in the presence of thousands whom he fed in the wilderness on a few loaves and fishes. When about to send forth his apostles in the beginning of that ministry on which was to depend the future success of his religion, he spent a whole night in prayer. His agonizing prayer thrice uttered in the garden of Gethsemane, evinced his disposition to hold communion with his Father, who was at the very time presenting to his lips the cup of bitterness which he was to drink. In this prayer appears his perfect resignation to his Father's will. He was obedient even unto death. His zeal for his father's glory had been manifested by twice purifying the temple of God, and by rescuing the divine law from the corrupt glosses and opposing traditions of the Jews; but it was manifested in a still higher degree by the perfect worship he himself rendered, and by his perfect obedience to the law in all the extent and spirituality of its requirements. In the review of his life he was able to say at its close, "I have glorified thee on the earth."¹

Perfect benevolence to men was displayed in his conduct. His mission from heaven to earth was one of love; and in dying for us he gave the highest exhibition of love that the mind of man can conceive. All

¹ John, xvii. 4.

his intercourse with men was a perpetual outflowing of love. With reference to his immediate attendants, the apostles, it is said, "Having loved his own, he loved them to the end,"¹ and, with reference to the young man who was turning away from him, unwilling to become his follower, it is said "Jesus beholding him loved him."² His travels and toils were all for the benefit of mankind; for he "went about doing good."³ He mingled with the poor, the suffering, and the guilty, to confer such benefits as their necessities required; and everywhere he evinced for them the utmost tenderness and compassion. When multitudes were fainting in the wilderness, he had compassion on them and supplied them with food. In cases innumerable he exerted his miraculous power to heal the sick. When he met a poor widow who was sorrowfully accompanying her only son to the grave, his tender heart was moved with pity, and the disconsolate mother was soon made joyful by receiving in her arms her lost son restored to life. The sympathy of his heart was manifested at the grave of Lazarus; and his compassion for the guilty inhabitants of Jerusalem was expressed in language of inimitable tenderness: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"⁴

To the primary virtues, piety and benevolence, all other virtues were added in his perfect character. He was without selfishness. His miraculous power, often exerted for the relief of others, was never used for his

¹ John. xiii. 1.

² Mark, x. 21.

³ Acts, x. 38.

⁴ Matt. xxiii. 37.

own relief. He made no account of his own wants. Though weary, hungry, and thirsty, at Jacob's well, he did not seek rest by inactivity, but seized the opportunity to instruct the Samaritan woman; and though he asked drink of her, he was less intent on receiving from her the needed draught, than on communicating to her the water of life. The disciples had gone to the city to buy food; but the demands of hunger were to him less pressing, than his solicitude to do good; and the food which they brought was less welcome to him than the opportunity which he had enjoyed of conferring benefit: "I have meat to eat that ye know not of."¹ He once said, "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head:"² but this expression was used, not as a complaint of his hard lot, but for the benefit of the person addressed. Though he could multiply loaves and fishes, he was content to live in poverty, and to be dependent for the necessaries of life on the ministrations of a few women.³ Such was his superiority to avarice, that he allowed a thief to be his treasurer; and such his superiority to ambition, that he rejected regal honors when pressed upon him. He never sought the favor of the rich and great by compliance with their wishes, as he might have done in the case of Herod who desired to see him work a miracle; nor did he ever through fear of men flatter their vices, or withhold needed rebuke. His control over his passions was perfect. He was never betrayed into rashness, or had occasion to recall a word which he had uttered, or apologize for a deed which he had done. Though his hearers were often so annoyed by his words that they sought to kill him, it

¹ John, iv. 3.² Matt. viii. 20.³ Luke, viii. 3.

was not at any indiscreet utterance which he had reason to regret. Questions were repeatedly proposed to him with the malicious design of ensnaring him; but the wisdom and firmness which such exigencies demanded, never failed him. No act of injustice has ever been laid to his charge; and no one has ever alleged that guile was found in his mouth. Even Pilate, who ordered that he should be crucified, confessed, "I find no fault in him."¹ The traitor Judas bore testimony to his innocence; and his testimony is of the greater value because he was one of the twelve who were the familiar attendants of Jesus, and the chosen agents for executing his designs and propagating his religion. If there was, in his designs or any part of his conduct, aught that was iniquitous, Judas had the best opportunity for knowing it, and the strongest motive possible for disclosing it; but he made no such disclosure. On the contrary, remorse drove him to relinquish the reward which he had received for his treachery; to confess before his accomplices in guilt, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood,"² and to seal the sincerity and truth of this confession by the act of suicide. In view of Christ's character, infidels who would destroy his religion from the earth, are either hushed into silence as if abashed in his presence, or are compelled to break forth in panegyric.

II. The virtues which appear in the character of Jesus Christ blend with each other in perfect harmony.

Such is the frailty of human nature that our virtues are always liable to be tinged with the vices to which they are nearest. Firmness is liable to degenerate into obstinacy; and gentleness into compliance with tempta-

¹ John, xix. 4.

² Matt. xxvii. 4.

tion. Devotion may become tarnished by austerity, or may lead to such retirement from the world as is inconsistent with the proper duties of life; and, on the other hand, he who performs these duties is ever in danger of not keeping himself unspotted from the world. In the character of Jesus Christ the virtues so blend that each is perfect. Perfect firmness unites with perfect gentleness. Devotion to God combines with the most active performance of duties to men. Towards the guilty he exhibited compassion, but without any indulgence to their crimes. He mingled freely with publicans and sinners, but was nevertheless holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Such were his meekness and gentleness that he did not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax; and yet his voice spoke terror to hypocrites, deceivers, and oppressors.

III. The virtues of Jesus Christ accorded perfectly with his relations to God and men.

The duties of men differ according to the relations which they sustain. The duties of father and master differ from those of son and servant. Hence we cannot estimate rightly the virtues of Jesus Christ, without considering the relations which he sustained both to God and man.

In the person of Jesus Christ divinity and humanity were united. As God he did and said things which would be unlawful for any creature however exalted. Peter,¹ Paul, and Barnabas² would not bear for a moment that such honor should be rendered to them as is due to God only; but Jesus never rejected divine honor, or evinced uneasiness when it was offered. On the contrary, he claimed to be the Son of God in a sense which

¹ Acts, x. 25, 26.

² Acts, xiv. 13, 15.

implied equality with God, declared himself to be one with the Father, required that men should honor the Son as they honor the Father, and connected his own glory with that of the Father in a manner which would have been unsuitable to any mere creature. If we keep in view the deity of our Lord, we perceive the propriety of all that he claimed, and we learn to appreciate more correctly his wonderful condescension. He spoke of his Father's house and its many mansions with such familiarity as a prince would manifest in speaking of his father's palace, but without any of the pride which a vainglorious prince would be likely to betray. Nothing is said for the sake of ostentation. All is easy and natural; and what he says of the celestial world, or of his own power and glory, is never for the purpose of gratifying curiosity, but of doing good to those who heard him. He asserted and proved his power to forgive sins, that men might come to him for forgiveness and everlasting life; and he affirmed his ability to give rest, that he might induce the laboring and heavy laden to come and obtain it at his hands.

Though on proper occasions, and for suitable purposes, he claimed to be the Son of God, yet the title which he usually assumed was 'the son of man.' He was human as well as divine, and took on himself the form of a servant. In this nature he suffered; and in the endurance of suffering exhibited the patience and resignation which it is our duty to imitate; and in this nature he sustained relations, the duties of which he performed as an example for his followers. During his childhood and youth he was subject to his parents,¹ rendering to them filial respect and obedience; and his subjection appears to have continued, until at the age

¹ Luke, ii. 51.

of thirty years, he entered on his public ministry. And amidst the agonies of the cross, his tender regard for his mother, who was probably then a widow, was touchingly exhibited in his commitment of her to the care of his beloved disciple John.¹ He acknowledged also his relation to the civil government exercised over his country, and paid to Cæsar the tribute required.²

IV. The virtues of Jesus Christ were perfectly adapted to the work of establishing a pure religion in the world.

He taught the purest morality, not only by precept, but by his own example. He made no attempt to restrain vice, or gain converts to his religion, by physical force, or by the allurements of ambition or sensual gratification. Such means would have tended to establish a religion far different from the spirituality and purity of true Christianity. Mahomet, with his example of sensuality, with his promise of a voluptuous paradise, and with the military power by which he extended his conquests, established such a religion as corresponds to the character of its founder, and the means employed to give it success. But Jesus Christ employed such means only as, if successful, would produce a pure religion, and such means only as nothing could render successful but divine power. Yet he speaks of the extension and final triumph of his religion with perfect confidence; and this faith in the divine power for the support of a good cause, is a divine virtue which the Founder of Christianity exhibited in full perfection. Now we ask not whether he did really found a pure religion, which has existed to the present time; nor even whether he was a real personage. It is enough

¹ John, xix. 26, 27.

² Matt. xvii. 24-27.

for our present purpose that the Bible exists, and that it tells the story of Jesus Christ. Whence came that wonderful story?

Near the beginning of the Christian Era the greatest of Latin poets employed his extraordinary genius in describing a hero. It was not a picture of a real character, but a picture drawn by the brilliant imagination of the poet, and with full poetic license. This hero is made illustrious for piety towards his father, and towards the gods. Yet so far is his character from being pure and faultless, that a chief event in his history is a criminal love affair, causing the suicide of a female whom he wickedly deserted. Such was the hero of the *Æneid*, the boasted poem of the Augustan age. How came the fishermen of Galilee so far to surpass the splendid genius of the Mantuan bard? What inspired them,—not to compose a poem, such as the heathen attributed to the inspiration of the muses; for the gospels have not the art and decorations of a poem,—what inspired them to portray, in a style of unrivalled simplicity, a character of unparalleled excellence? If the gospel history is a fiction, the inventors of the fiction must have been divinely inspired. That Galilean fishermen should, without supernatural aid, invent such a character as Jesus Christ, and give such a description of their astonishing invention as is found in the Gospels, is far less credible, than that the character really existed as they have described it. But if the account of Jesus Christ given in the Gospels is true, Christianity, the religion which he founded, is true, and of divine origin. And were there reason to believe that Jesus Christ is a fictitious and not a historical character, it would still be true, that the perfect morality exemplified in the wonderful fiction, and otherwise taught in the Bible, must be of superhuman origin.

CHAPTER IV.

SUPERHUMAN DOCTRINES.

THE DOCTRINES TAUGHT IN THE BIBLE ARE NOT OF HUMAN ORIGIN, AND MUST HAVE PROCEEDED FROM GOD.

It has been usual to divide the evidences of Christianity into External and Internal; but it is not easy in all cases to apply the distinction. The beneficial effects discussed in Chapter II. may be referred to the class of External evidences, because they are, so to speak, visible fruits by which the tree is known. The morality discussed in Chapter III. may be referred to the class of Internal evidences, because it is found in the Bible itself, and is seed from which good fruit may be expected, but is not itself the fruit. For the same reason the doctrines of the Bible belong to the class of Internal evidences; but in viewing their adaptedness to the character and condition of man, they approach to the nature of External evidences; just as prophecy, hereafter to be considered, is Internal because found in the Bible, and External because its efficiency as proof depends on its fulfilment, of which in many cases the Bible does not give us information.

To the whole class of Internal evidences an objection presents itself, which deserves consideration. It may be stated thus: *We are incapable of judging a priori what kind of revelation God would make to men; and an attempt to judge savors of presumption.*

To pronounce that the Bible possesses internal evidences of its divine origin, is to assume, as the objection alleges, that we are capable of judging a priori what kind of a book the Divine Being would prepare.

This objection is equally applicable to all the deductions of natural religion. We cannot judge a priori what sort of a world God would create, and yet natural religion finds in the volume of creation internal evidence that it proceeded from a divine author. An objection which would abolish the whole system of natural religion, must be invalid. It should have no other use than to guard us against arrogant reasoning. If the Bible contains some things which we should not have expected to proceed from God, we ought not arrogantly to infer that the book cannot be God's; for this would be to assume that we are capable of judging in all particulars what sort of a book God would make. The same arrogant reasoning would decide that God did not make the world, because it contains some things which we would not have expected to proceed from a being of infinite wisdom and benevolence.

Some, who admit the use of Internal evidences, consider them wholly posterior and subsidiary to those which are External. The authority of a document from the court of one nation to that of another, is not determined by the matter which it contains, but by the external proofs of its origin. These establish its authenticity before the contents of the document are examined. So the External evidences of Christianity, it has been urged, ought to be first studied; and, when by means of these we have satisfied ourselves that the Bible has come from the Sovereign of the Universe, we should then reverently receive and study its contents; but

should not attempt, from the character of the contents, to judge of the authority from whence they proceed. This restriction, if applied to natural religion, would render it necessary for us to possess historical proof that God made the heavens and the earth, before we can look into them for proofs of his power and Godhead. The case is not analogous to that of a document from an earthly court, which men might readily counterfeit. Nature and the Bible contain within themselves proofs of their divine origin, which cannot be counterfeited, and which directly meet the eye of the humble and well-disposed inquirer, and bring conviction to his understanding and heart, when he has not the means and opportunity necessary for the investigation of historical proofs.

The moral constitution of human nature supplies some means for forming a judgment concerning the morality of the Bible. The reasonableness and excellence of a law prescribing duties to man, we may expect the mind of man to be capable of perceiving; but the doctrines of the Bible bear relations to God which are incomprehensible to finite minds. It is therefore especially necessary in our investigation of them that we remember our weakness, and avoid arrogance in our judgment. But though we may not presume to judge a priori what doctrines a revelation from God ought to teach, we are capable of judging what doctrines a human imposture would be likely to originate. If the Bible is not what it claims to be, the book of God, it is a mere human production; and we know enough of man to judge of his works. To this test we shall bring the doctrines of the Bible in the next section, with a view to determine whether they are of merely human origin.

SECTION I. SUPERIORITY TO MAN'S INVENTION.

The character of God exhibited in the Bible is not a human invention. Men have made multitudes of gods, some of gold, silver, wood, or stone; and others, invisible creations of the imagination, having natures and attributes corresponding to the fancies of those who invented them. Such are the gods of heathen nations; but the God of the Bible differs wholly from all these man-made divinities. The refined nations of Greece and Rome had gods that were not omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, or unchangeable. They opposed and thwarted each other's plans; and their supreme deity had not the power and wisdom necessary to govern the subordinate divinities, much less to govern the whole universe. A God, infinite in wisdom and power, unchangeable in all his perfections, and present at every point in the universe, to work all things after the counsel of his will, never found a place among the inventions of men; yet such is the God of the Bible. And still more, the moral perfections of Jehovah place him at an infinite distance from the deities of human invention. The heathen gods were even more debased in morals than their worshippers; and when men were virtuous, it was not because of their religion, but in spite of it. A religion emanating from a holy God, and exhibiting his perfections as the source and model of all moral excellence, is unknown in all the history of the world, except in the Bible; and hence the Bible has not the character of a human invention.

The moral government of God, which the Bible throughout reveals, is not a human invention. The heathen had deities that presided over different parts of

nature ; but the idea of a universal government directed to moral ends never entered their mythology. Some notion of rewards and punishment after death, and of retribution for crime in the present life, was derived from natural religion ; but the conception of a moral government taking cognisance of every action, intention, and desire, and ruling over all by a law of perfect morality, never entered into the minds of any who have attempted to instruct mankind in morality or religion, except from the Bible. To whom were the writers of the Bible indebted for this grand conception ?

It cannot be a human invention.

The Scripture doctrine of redemption has not the characteristics of a human invention. Natural religion may give some knowledge of God and moral government, but none whatever of redemption. No deist, I think, has ever maintained that natural religion teaches the propriety or necessity of a sacrifice for the expiation of guilt : but, on the contrary, an infidel objection which is frequently urged against the gospel, is, that the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice is inconsistent with the principles of justice. The sacrifices which have formed a part of the various heathen religions, were probably derived by tradition from an ancient revelation to the fathers of our race. But these fathers themselves did not understand the full import of their sacrifices, and much less was it understood by their degenerate sons. The idea of a perfect sacrifice, which should explain the meaning and remove the necessity of all other sacrifices, and which being made by the Son of God incarnate should honor the justice of God, sustain his moral government, effectually remove sin and provide for the salvation of guilty men,—this idea is too grand and glorious to have proceeded from human invention.

SECTION II. ADAPTEDNESS TO MAN.

In the adaptations with which nature abounds, we find manifestations of contrivance which demonstrate that the world has proceeded from an intelligent author; and the number, extent, and perfection of these contrivances, furnish proof that the intelligence in which they originated must be infinite. In this way we study the volume of nature, and learn from it the existence and wisdom of God. By a similar study of the Bible, we may learn the wisdom of its author from its adaptedness to the character, condition, and wants of man, for whose benefit it was designed.

Before the introduction of Christianity the heathen nations, who had been left to the light of natural religion and the obscure glimmerings of tradition, were involved in gross darkness. They had no knowledge of the true God, no means of moral reform, and no correct apprehension of the chief good or the mode of securing true happiness. They possessed genius, and pushed their investigations with industry; but their understandings, darkened by depravity, failed to discover the truth. Conscious of their failure, they sighed for knowledge which unaided reason could not attain. This felt want the volume of revelation is precisely adapted to supply. It gives knowledge of the true God, provides for the moral reform of mankind, and teaches the nature of true happiness, and the mode of obtaining it.

The very manner in which revelation addresses us is adapted to our ignorance. When human reason has fainted in its pursuit after the knowledge needed, the Bible gives immediate possession of the good sought. It puts an end to vain efforts, uncertain conjectures,

and perplexing doubts, by authoritative declarations from the source of infallible truth.

The Bible explains the mystery of man's condition. He possesses intellectual powers which place him at the head of this lower world, far exalted above all the other creatures which inhabit it; and moral powers which adapt him to relations higher than the earth, and more enduring than the present life. Yet, with all these noble endowments, he is abject, dependent, and wretched. The mystery of his condition revelation explains. It unfolds the moral government of God, and tells, not as a philosophic theory, but as a historical fact, the simple story of man's fall. The mystery is solved; and the weakest intellect, if willing to learn, may clearly comprehend the incongruity between the high endowments and the deep degradation of man.

The explanation which the Bible gives of our present fallen condition is so perfect that we learn our own character from it better than from our own consciousness. Even heathen wisdom could deliver the precept, "Know thyself;" but means of self-knowledge are needed beyond those which man's deceitful heart supplies. God searches the heart, and his word is a discerner of its thoughts and intents. Thousands have denied that the Bible description of human depravity applies to them, simply because they are strangers to themselves. When they begin to understand their true character, they begin to understand the correctness of the Bible description; and when they have made further progress in self-knowledge they confess with astonishment the accuracy of the dark picture, and are convinced that it must have been drawn by the Searcher of hearts.

The Bible meets man in his fallen condition, and

precisely adapts its remedy to his actual necessities. If human philosophy could teach all that ought to suffice for man, it cannot overcome the waywardness of his disposition, and make its instructions effectual. But the Bible, besides revealing a mode of acceptance with God wholly undiscoverable by philosophy, reveals also a power which applies the truth to the renovation of the heart. The Bible exhibits the wisdom of its author, not only in describing our moral disease with more than human skill, but in providing a remedy which human sagacity never could have adapted so admirably to our necessities.

The Bible not only meets man in his fallen condition, but leads him out of it to the true end of his being. It takes cognisance of the intellectual and moral powers with which he is endowed, and provides for their noblest development and exercise. It brings him back to God from whom he has wandered, and opens before him the fulness of the Deity for his admiring contemplation and adoring love.

The Bible is adapted to the condition of man in all ranks and circumstances of life. Such is the simplicity of its instructions, that the child may learn its lessons and become wise to salvation; and such are the grandeur and extent of its revelations, that the greatest human genius may in the study of them become conscious of its weakness and insufficiency, and may exclaim with Paul, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"¹

To the poor especially, that class of men for which human philosophy never sought to provide, the gospel

¹ Rom. xi. 33.

adapts its provisions, and supplies precisely such relief, support, and comfort, as are needed in the hut of poverty, and in the chamber of affliction and death.

SECTION III. COMPLETENESS OF SYSTEM.

As divine contrivance appears in the adaptedness of Bible doctrine to the character and condition of man; so it is discoverable in that fitness of the several doctrines to each other, by which they become one doctrine, one complete system. The completeness of the system was not apprehended by the ancient prophets, who understood not their own predictions concerning the sufferings of Christ and the glory which should follow.¹ Yet this system began to be developed in the very beginning of the revelation. The moral government of God appears in the probation to which he subjected our first parents; and his justice, in the sentence pronounced after their transgression. But with justice mercy was blended, in the promise that the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head. The acceptance of Abel's sacrifice gave further intimation of mercy, and the whole system of sacrifice in the Old Testament was preparatory and subsidiary to the redemption by Christ, which the New Testament reveals, and the whole, therefore, makes but one system. But the Jews are living witnesses that the Old Testament was written long prior to the New; and the fact that the great system began to be disclosed by men who did not understand it, demonstrates conclusively that it did not proceed from their wisdom. The more we study the system of revealed truth, the more we discover its completeness and perfection; and hence, to a heart rightly disposed, the

¹ 1 Pet. i. 10, 11.

study of the Bible brings direct and satisfactory proof that God is its author.

As in nature, so in revelation, simplicity and grandeur characterize the works of God.

The simple law of gravitation binds the material universe together, and the centripetal and centrifugal forces which move the planets in their orbits, though always conflicting with each other, yet harmoniously combine in their effects to produce the movement on which the whole plan of nature depends. The moral government which provides for man's obedience and God's holiness and justice, and redemption which provides for man's salvation and God's mercy, harmoniously combine their conflicting tendencies to effect the glorious purpose of divine grace. Revelation, like creation, expands into grandeur before our admiring view; and the simplicity discoverable in both furnishes an argument that they are the work of the same Author. Such harmony pervades the system of nature, that the vast movements on which the return of the seasons, and of day and night, depends, are necessary to the sustenance of animal life, and are therefore tributary to the young sparrow in its nest; and the power of gravitation which pervades and controls these vast movements, holds the feeble nestling in its place or determines its fall to the ground. Like harmony and unity may be seen in revelation. The grand principles which it unfolds, and which have their bearing on the whole universe of intelligent creatures and on their condition through eternal ages, are tributary to the humble believer in his hourly experience, and have their hourly use in regulating his obedience and faith. The completeness and perfection of the system he does not comprehend, and the vastness of the interests affected by it he is wholly unable to compute;

but nevertheless his obedience has a relation to God's moral government; and his faith, to the method of salvation by Christ. As he increases in spiritual knowledge, he will have clearer discoveries of the principles which regulate his faith and obedience; and as he comprehends more and more of the simple, grand, and harmonious system, he will obtain increasing evidence and more assured conviction that its author is God.

SECTION IV. CONNECTION WITH MORALITY.

The influence which the Bible actually exerts in promoting morality was considered in Chapter II.; and this beneficial influence was, in part, accounted for in the last chapter, in which it was shown that the Bible teaches morality by perfect precept and perfect example. But mere precept does not insure obedience, and mere example does not insure imitation. Sanctions and motives are needed, and these the doctrines of Christianity supply.

1. The Bible enforces its morality by reference to the moral government of God and the retributions of eternity. It reveals an almighty God, rewarding and punishing men according to their works, and measuring the duration of these rewards and punishments by his own eternity. The morality of heathenism or deism is without any such sanction. Among the heathen, the immortality of the soul was involved in doubt; and among deists, with all the light which they have borrowed from Christianity, this important truth is but dimly perceived, and hence it produces but little practical effect on their morality. The Bible proclaims the doctrine authoritatively and indubitably, and the believer in Christianity receives it as a declaration of God, who cannot lie. Hence the precepts of the Bible are habitu-

ally viewed by him in connection with the sanctions affixed by the almighty Governor of the world.

2. The morality of the Bible is recommended by its likeness to the moral perfections of God.

The objects of religious worship among the heathen have always been senseless or impure deities; and the God of the deists is distinguished by natural rather than moral excellence. But Christianity introduces its worshippers to a God of perfect holiness, and teaches them to worship in the beauty of holiness. Hence, while it inspires the mind with reverence for the Infinite One, it presents his moral beauty as an object of love, and secures obedience to the precepts of morality by gaining over the affections of the heart to holiness.

3. The doctrine of redemption by Christ furnishes the strongest imaginable motives to holiness. Its appeal to the heart is not by terror, but by the melting power of love.

A sense of God's goodness in giving his Son for us, and of Christ's compassion in dying for us, overcomes the heart, leads to repentance, and constrains to a life of holy obedience.

4. All the doctrines of the gospel have a holy aim and tendency. They form a complete system; and the end of the system is holiness, or conformity to God's moral image. The Bible nowhere teaches its doctrines to gratify curiosity. It leaves questions of mere curiosity without answer. False religions incite their votaries by promises of initiation into mysteries; but the alluring promise of Christianity is an advance in holiness here, and complete holiness hereafter. The religion proposes no enjoyment, and claims no excellence apart from holiness. In this it differs from every false religion, and manifests its divine origin.

SECTION V. BENEFICIAL TENDENCY.

In Chapter II. we considered the beneficial influence of Christianity in the effects which it has actually produced. In the last chapter we considered its perfect morality taught by precept and example; and in the present its superhuman doctrines adapted to enforce its morality and to elevate and bless mankind. We see a cause in Christianity adapted to produce the beneficial effects which have been attributed to it, and we are therefore left without doubt that these benefits which have been observed to attend the religion are its proper effects, and not merely accidental results.

The effects which Christianity has actually produced are not the proper measure of its tendency. Were the obstacles which oppose it removed, all its tendency would be converted into effect; but, while these obstacles remain, their number and the strength of their opposition must be estimated, as well as the effect actually produced, in order to a just estimate of the tendency.

The influence of Christianity on individuals is opposed by their unbelief. The truth does not affect them, because their minds do not receive it. Many even of those who profess Christianity are not true believers, as many who claimed to be Moses' disciples did not believe Moses.¹ When the truth forces a partial entrance into the unsanctified mind, it encounters strong resistance from the enmity of the human heart to God and holiness. And when the sanctifying power of the truth has regenerated the heart, its full effect is hindered by

¹ John, v. 46.

unholy affections and passions which remaining depravity keeps alive and operative.

The tendency of Christianity to benefit the world is hindered, on the one hand, by the want of zeal in its propagation and the unholy lives of its professors; and, on the other hand, by the powerful opposition of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Wickedness prevails in all the departments and usages of society, in the organization and administration of civil government, in the various false religions which exist, and in the various corruptions of the true religion. Long-continued habit has fortified iniquity in its strongholds, and before the gospel can gain complete success, it must overcome all these strongholds, and successfully wrestle with principalities and powers, with the rulers of the darkness of this world, and with spiritual wickedness in high places.

To estimate the tendency of Christianity to benefit an individual or the world, we must suppose all its tendency to become effect, by the removal of opposing obstacles. We must suppose that the individual receives the gospel with ready and unwavering faith, and embraces its precepts and doctrines with a glad heart, and that every thought and every imagination is brought into subjection to it.

The effect on such a mind is joy unspeakable and full of glory, a commencement of heaven on earth.

Communities, nations, and the whole world, are made up of individuals. If Christianity tends to produce perfect purity and perfect bliss in each individual, its tendency is to fill the world with such inhabitants, and therefore to banish all crime and misery from the earth. It would purify the organization and administration of civil governments, or rather it would render civil government unnecessary; it would produce a universal preva-

lence of the true religion, freed from all corruption ; and it would bring down to earth the holiness and felicity of heaven. Such a state of things, believers in the promises and prophecies of the Bible are expecting, and toward it they see the world advancing in the progress of Christianity.

The beneficial tendency of Christianity has often been acknowledged by statesmen and legislators. They perceive its utility to give sanction to oaths, and to supply, by the power of an enlightened conscience, the unavoidable defects of human laws. Infidels also have often expressed their willingness to retain Christianity for the sake of its moral benefit to the masses of mankind, and have sometimes prudently concealed their sentiments that they might not do harm to the community. What other religion is there in the world that any wise man would wish to prevail universally? But in view of the benefits which Christianity has already produced, and which it continues to produce more and more as obstacles are removed, and in view of the tendencies discoverable in its morality and doctrine to render the benefits perfect and enduring, every wise and benevolent man must say, let it prevail over all opposition, and fill the earth.

SECTION VI. EXPERIMENTAL PROOF.

The facts on which the theories of philosophy are established, are sometimes of so rare occurrence that few persons have opportunity to observe them. In these cases the student who investigates the theory is compelled to rely for proof of it on the testimony of those who have witnessed the facts. In many other cases it is possible to institute experiments which will bring the phenomena under the observation of the student himself, and obviate the necessity of any other testimony than

that of his own senses. The same difference occurs in the evidences of Christianity. The proof from miracles depends on the testimony of those who saw the miracles; but the proof derived from the beneficial tendency of the religion may be subjected to experiment by any one who desires, and the facts necessary for making out the proof, may be learned from the testimony of consciousness.

Christianity is a remedial religion. Men are morally diseased, and Christianity offers a remedy to restore them to health. They are unholy and unhappy, and it offers the means of sanctification and felicity. Thousands have testified that they have used the remedy proposed, and have found it effectual, but no one is compelled to rely on their testimony, since he may try the remedy for himself, and ascertain the truth of its pretensions by his own personal experience.

We have before noticed the power of the Bible to probe the human heart, and reveal its depravity. Paul teaches that by the law is the knowledge of sin,¹ and states how in his own experience he obtained by the commandment knowledge of lust or unholy desire in his heart,² and how the commandment slew his self-righteous hopes.³ The perfect morality of the Bible serves to show the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Let any man study the law of God, making it his meditation by day and night, and honestly applying it to his conscience, and he will learn experimentally whether its tendency to produce conviction of sin, and self-abasement before God, is such as Paul attributed to it.

The gospel professes to bring to sinners the means

¹ Rom. iii. 20.

² Rom. vii. 7.

³ Rom. vii. 9.

of sanctification. Christ prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth:"¹ and he sanctifies and cleanses his church "with the washing of water by the word."² The same perfect law that convicts of sin, directs to obedience and holiness. The character of God is exhibited in the Bible that men may be holy as God is holy.³ The retributions of eternity are unfolded that we may be holy in all manner of conversation.⁴ And the grace of God that bringeth salvation by Jesus Christ is proclaimed, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world.⁵ The tendency of the gospel to save from sin is taught in innumerable passages of Scripture; and it is expressly declared that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.⁶ Now let any one who is willing to bring this matter to the test of his personal experience, habitually contemplate the perfect character of God revealed in the Scriptures; let him habitually keep before his mind the day of judgment, and the happiness and misery consequent on the awards of that day; let him receive into his heart the good news of salvation by the death of Christ, and in his feelings and contemplations live habitually at the foot of the cross; let him do all this, and then inquire whether he finds in it no tendency to save from the love and power of sin. Let him ask what else has equal tendency, and to what else will he trust if this fails.

The gospel is good news, glad tidings. They who received it anciently had gladness of heart, joy unspeak-

¹ John, xvii. 17.

³ 1 Pet. i. 16.

⁵ Tit. ii. 11, 12.

² Eph. v. 26.

⁴ 1 Pet. i. 15.

⁶ Rom. i. 16.

able and full of glory. They had comfort and consolation in the midst of sorrow and trials, and an inward peace which the world could not take away. Since the gospel claims a tendency to produce such happiness, any man who desires may test its pretensions by a fair experiment on himself. Let him, as a guilty, depraved, and wretched sinner, receive the message of salvation by Christ; let him contemplate the fulness of the salvation provided, and its adaptedness to his necessities; let him listen to the promise of free pardon and full justification to all who believe, and of grace to help in every time of need; let him attend to the assurance that, whatever may be his trials and sorrows, all things shall work together for his good, and let him fix his faith on the promise of eternal life given in Christ.

If in all this he finds no tendency to relieve an aching heart, to calm an agitated breast, and to inspire the troubled and sinking spirit with consolation, he may pronounce that the promises of the gospel are vain, or rather that his experience differs from that of all others by whom the trial has been fairly made.

The Bible not only, like a skilful physician, describes our spiritual malady better than we could ourselves, but it also, with like skill, describes the symptoms which indicate the progress of cure by the remedy which it applies.

The various exercises of the renewed heart it accurately delineates. The godly sorrow, the humility, the reverence, the hope, the patience, the brotherly love, and every other grace of the Holy Spirit by which the converted man is fitted for his new life, the Bible describes.

Especially it explains the struggle between faith and remaining unbelief, the conflict between simple faith in

Christ and a self-justifying spirit, and the warfare between the law in the members and the law of the mind, in a manner which indicates a perfect knowledge of what is experienced by the Christian under the teaching of the divine spirit. These things the unrenewed man knows not; but let him try the experiment proposed if he would ascertain whether these things are so; and when he has learned these truths let him ask whence the Bible obtained all this knowledge.

It is a doctrine of Christianity that the gospel is made effectual by the accompanying power of the Holy Spirit. The sanctification and comfort of believers are attributed to the Holy Spirit. He helps their infirmities in prayer, and gives inward strength for any service which they perform. He begins the work of grace in the heart by shedding abroad the love of God; and throughout the whole course of their spiritual lives Christians live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, are led by the Spirit, enjoy the communion of the Spirit, and have the inward witness of the Spirit. Such is the Bible description of the Christian life.

If true, human reason never discovered it; for human reason, in its pride and self-sufficiency, is slow to receive the doctrine. Yet every one who is skilled in Christian experience receives the doctrine, and cheerfully acknowledges his absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit for all internal grace. To the man who does not understand the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influence, the promise that our heavenly Father will give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, possesses very little of meaning and interest; but to him who has learned his helplessness and dependence, no promise in the covenant of grace is more rich in blessing; and there is no prayer recorded in the sacred volume in which he can more

cordially unite than in that of the Psalmist, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."¹ In the agreement of his experience with the Bible the Christian has an evidence which no other man can possess or understand, that the Bible is the word of God. Herein is fulfilled the declaration, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."²

The evidence arising from Christian experience is suited to persons in all the conditions of life. The illiterate, who are unable to appreciate the historical evidence which learned men value, and who are wholly unable to cope with learned infidels in argument, have a conviction on which their hearts rest in perfect quiet, and against which the arguments and scoffs of infidels are unavailing. To the learned Christian also the experimental evidence is of the highest value. Other evidence has to him its use; but this abides with him as a perpetual source of confidence and joy. He has examined other evidences, and has laid up in his memory the conviction which the examination produced; but the evidence from Christian experience is not a past judgment laid up in the memory. It is like the immediate proof which the beams of the sun give to the beholder that the luminary is in the heavens.

The evidence from experience increases in strength as the believer makes progress in the divine life. The more he enjoys the communion of the Holy Spirit, the more sensible is he of the presence and influence of that divine agent.

Every prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit, and every consciousness of having received answer to the prayer, gives an increase of strength to his faith.

¹ Psalms, li. 11.

² Psalms, xxv. 14.

And he knows by experience that nothing so much darkens his mind to the evidences of Christianity as departure from Christian duty.

While he lives near to God, all is clear.

From observation on his own experience, he learns that the secret of infidelity is an unholy life. The man whose heart is right, finds nothing in the Bible to object to; but on the contrary, clearly perceives in it direct evidence of its divine origin.

SECTION VII. CONNECTION WITH HISTORICAL FACTS.

The morality of the Bible is a perfect system without regard to the history of its promulgation, or of its exemplification in the lives of good men, and of Jesus Christ. But the Bible history is useful in illustrating it, and teaching us to apply it practically in the regulation of our conduct. So the moral government of God, which would be an important doctrine, if the Bible contained no history, is instructively and impressively illustrated by the history which the Bible records of God's dealings with man in past ages.

But the doctrine of redemption by Christ is wholly dependent on facts which are reported in the New Testament. The connection of this doctrine with the remaining doctrines of the system, and with the divine morality taught by precept and example, and the union of all in a singular book of most beneficial influence, give strong assurance, previous to all historical inquiry, that the facts reported must be true: but history waits to confirm our faith, and Christianity calls fearlessly for its testimony.

CHAPTER V.

TRUTHFUL HISTORY.

THE HISTORY CONTAINED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IS TRUE.

THE subject of the present chapter is limited to the historical books of the New Testament, which are the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Old Testament history will be considered hereafter; and the truths of the entire Bible will be proved in the chapter on Inspiration.

SECTION I. CREDIBILITY OF HISTORY.

WE are so placed in the world, that much of our necessary knowledge is derived from the testimony of other persons. The merchant sends his ship to lands which he never saw. How does he know that they exist? Other persons have visited these lands and from their testimony he obtains his knowledge, which he uses with undoubting confidence. He believes as much in the existence of India and China as of his own counting-house which his eyes see daily.

As of the distant, so of the past, we obtain our knowledge in a large part from the testimony of others, and to reject all testimony concerning the past would be to destroy all legal proceedings, to annul all laws, to abolish civil government, and to put an end to most of the business and enjoyments of social life. Men must

believe and will believe the duly authenticated records of the past. They may be deceived sometimes by fictitious history, but in general they learn to distinguish between truth and fable: and if there are some historical facts concerning which they entertain doubts, there are others which they as firmly believe as if they had seen them with their own eyes. No American more firmly believes that his own parents lived and watched over him in his helpless infancy, than he believes that George Washington existed and fought the battles of his country. No man of information entertains a doubt concerning the existence of Napoleon Bonaparte, Oliver Cromwell, Julius Cæsar, or Alexander the Great; or discredits the general facts of their history. The truth of historical facts can be proved so as not to leave room for doubt in any candid and well-informed mind. It cannot be demonstrated by such processes of reasoning as establish the Newtonian theory of gravitation, or the geometrical truth that the three angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles. Historical facts are not learned by philosophical or mathematical reasonings. Such reasonings cannot prove that there is a Bible on the table where I write, or that I was accustomed to read the Bible in the days of my childhood; yet I am not less assured of these facts than if they were demonstrated by the clearest processes of reasoning. The proofs rest, in one case, on the testimony of the senses; and, in the other, on the testimony of memory; and memory and the senses are as much entitled to confidence, as reason: and as seldom deceive us.

If our own memory and senses are entitled to confidence, so also are those of other men: and if the knowledge which other men obtain by observation, is

truthfully communicated to us, it becomes as valuable to us, as if it had been the result of our own personal experience. By means of language, information is communicated from one mind to another; and by means of written language, it is embodied in a durable form, in which it serves to benefit future generations. History, therefore, relies on the testimony of the senses and memory of those who make the original observations of facts: and on the veracity with which these observations are reported and committed to record. Memory and the senses sometimes deceive; but no sane man will therefore wholly reject their testimony. Men sometimes deceive each other by the utterance of falsehood: but were all confidence in human testimony withdrawn, our courts of justice would be closed, the commerce of the world would cease, and all the benefits of society would be banished from the habitations of men. The possibility of being deceived is sufficient to awaken caution; and wise men will exercise the necessary degree of caution without denying to themselves the benefits resulting from belief in testimony. Universal distrust and scepticism are irrational, a diseased state of the mind unfitting man for the duties and enjoyments of life, and therefore subversive of virtue and happiness. It would be madness to doubt that the Bible which I see on the table really exists, or that I was accustomed to read the Bible in my childhood; and it would be madness to doubt, that the Bible has been a well-known book in America, from the time that the pilgrim fathers landed at Plymouth. In tracing the lines of history back through a long succession of years, it is not unwise to proceed with increased caution, as we approach remoter periods; but as in the outset so in the progress of our investigations, it is necessary to distinguish between

caution and scepticism. The existence of the Bible may be traced backward, from the first settlement of America through the various revolutions of the old world, to a remote period of antiquity, of which its records are the chief and to a great extent the only memorials. No reason can be given why the history contained in the Bible is not worthy of at least as much confidence as any other on which we rely for our knowledge of the past; and its narratives so harmonize with all the records and monuments of the past and so intertwine with them that all history must be rejected, if confidence cannot be reposed in the historical records of the Bible.

SECTION II. GOSPEL HISTORY.

Christianity exists in the world, and it is not unreasonable to expect that among the written records or oral traditions of the past, some account should be found of its origin. The persons who now receive its doctrines form a large part of the human race, and a succession of such persons in great numbers may be traced by undoubted history in various nations of the earth through many past ages. All these, however differing in language, manners, intelligence, or any other peculiarities, agree in believing the following facts.

THE AUTHOR OF CHRISTIANITY WAS BORN IN JUDEA UNDER THE REIGN OF AUGUSTUS CÆSAR, AND WAS CRUCIFIED NEAR JERUSALEM UNDER THE REIGN OF TIBERIAS. THOUGH OF HUMBLE RANK, HE CLAIMED TO BE THE MESSIAH WHOM THE JEWS HAD LONG EXPECTED. HE PREACHED NEW DOCTRINES, AND IN CONFIRMATION OF THEM PERFORMED EXTRAORDINARY WORKS. AFTER SUFFERING CRUCIFIXION HE WAS INTERRED IN A TOMB; BUT ON THE THIRD DAY AROSE AND SHOWED HIMSELF

ALIVE TO MANY OF HIS FOLLOWERS, TO WHOM HE GAVE COMMANDS TO PROPAGATE HIS RELIGION THROUGH THE EARTH.

These principal facts with many connected details are recorded in the New Testament, a book which Christians hold sacred, and have held sacred for many ages. We shall hereafter prove the divine origin and authority of this book; but it will answer our present purpose to show that it is a truthful history, worthy of as much confidence as any other book of history on which men rely for the knowledge of past events.

The principal facts of Christianity are few and simple, and they occurred publicly and within a short space of time. They were not, like most of the facts comprised in the history of nations, connected with the diplomacy and intrigues of courts, and to be made out from numerous documents prepared at distant times and places. They were all witnessed by the persons who first published them; and the publication was made at the place and immediately after the time of their occurrence. The number, agreement, and character of the witnesses were sufficient to give credit to their testimony: and it obtained credit among persons who had ability and opportunity to judge of its truth.

The Christian facts differ widely in their character from the fables of mythology in which the origin of heathen religions is involved. The heathen gods were perhaps deified men of whose history we have no certain account; and the stories of their mythology may have originated in facts which have been converted into wonders by mistakes of language, or the transforming power of a vivid imagination. But these fables are without place and date, and have no binding connection with the facts of well-authenticated history determining and

fixing their position in the system or aggregate of historic truth. They resemble an imaginary country which has no connection with other countries, and to which geography can assign no definite locality. But it is far different with respect to the origin of Christianity. Around the time and place of its origin authentic history casts a bright light. In all the ages which preceded we know that Christianity did not exist, for not a trace of it can be found in all the memorials of those ages; and in all the countries out of Judea, the new religion was wholly unknown, at the time when it is said to have originated in that well-known land. With these facts consider the definiteness of the statements concerning the time and place of Christ's birth, public ministry, and death, of which we may take as a specimen the words of the evangelist Luke: "Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness."¹ We find in this manner date and place assigned to the gospel facts, and are able to perceive clearly their connection with other history: and from the time and place assigned to them, their connection ramifies through succeeding time, and extends to all lands. The introduction of the new religion is clearly seen to be an historical fact with which ten thousand other facts become connected, and all the records and monuments of history give consistent and indubitable testimony on the subject.

¹ Luke, iii. 1, 2.

It is scarcely credible that any sane man should seriously take the history of Christ to be an astronomical allegory. May not some future visionary astonish the world by explaining the history of Columbus's discovery of America as an allegorical record of observations made by an astronomer on the course of an extraordinary meteor which shot westward through the sky? If the account of this successful voyager is too modern to admit such allegorical interpretation, let some ingenious trifler try his skill on Suetonius' Lives of the Twelve Cæsars, and demonstrate that this is an allegorical representation of the twelve months which constitute the calendar year. He may take, as a good starting-point, the undeniable fact that two of the months bear the names of Julius and Augustus, two of the Cæsars. If even the age of the Cæsars is too modern for such allegorizing, let it be remembered that Julius Cæsar died before Jesus was born. The facts that Julius lived, waged war in Gaul, and was assassinated in the Roman Senate, are admitted by all to belong to real and authentic history; but they are not so near to modern times, nor half so well attested, as the facts, that Jesus lived, preached his gospel in Judea and Galilee, and was crucified on Calvary.

The gospel facts are not moral or religious myths. We may conceive it possible that moral or religious truths, expressed in figurative language, may be misinterpreted by mistaking metaphor or allegory for literal language; and that myths originated by some such process may come to occupy the place of real history. But the gospel is not a system of myths. Its facts have real agents, known place, fixed time, historical antecedents, historical consequents, historical connections, and all the attributes of historical realities. The testimony

on which they were first believed, and on which they continue to be believed, is such as could not possibly attend a system of myths.

SECTION III. TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH.

The Christian church now existing in the world is a standing monument of the principal facts connected with the origin of Christianity. On these facts the doctrines of the religion are founded. It teaches the doctrine of the resurrection, and establishes the doctrine on the fact that Christ rose from the dead. It teaches the doctrine of atonement for sin, and it founds this cardinal doctrine of the system on the fact that Christ was crucified. Of these facts the Christian ceremonies are an abiding memorial. Baptism refers to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ,¹ and every one who is baptized into Christ is baptized into the faith that Christ died, was buried, and rose again. The Lord's Supper is a memorial of Christ's body broken and blood shed for sin; and every communicant declares in this ceremony his belief of the fact that Christ died for sin. Even the moral duties of the religion are enforced with a constant reference to these facts. A motive to brotherly love is drawn from the fact that Christ loved us, and gave himself for us;² and, after his example, Christians are required to lay down their lives for the brethren.³ The grand motive to obedience is thus presented: "The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them and rose again."⁴ And on

¹ Romans, vi. 3, 4.

² Eph. v. 2.

³ 1 John, iii. 16.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

the gospel facts were founded the hopes which animated Christians amidst the trials and sufferings that they underwent. In the belief that Christ died and rose again they cheerfully suffered in hope of a joyful resurrection,¹ and of reigning for ever with their risen Redeemer.² In the propagation of Christianity the gospel facts were continually made known. The preaching of the gospel was the preaching of Christ crucified, and of Christ risen from the dead.³ Without the promulgation of these facts the gospel was not preached, and without a belief of these facts the gospel was not received. These facts were kept present to the minds of Christians in every prayer which they offered, and in every act of religious service which they performed: for they were taught to hope for acceptance through Christ only. Every church that was formed was established on a belief of the gospel facts; and every minister that was ordained engaged to proclaim these facts. How could a religion thus founded on facts be introduced into the world and gain credence among mankind, if the facts never occurred? If Christianity originated in Judea, under the reign of Tiberius and the government of Pontius Pilate, how could its ministers gain converts by telling the people that Jesus had preached in their midst and been publicly crucified among them, when every man who heard would know the utter falsehood of the declaration? It is manifestly impossible that the religion should have been introduced and have gained credence at the time and place when and where Jesus is said to have been crucified, if the history of his ministry and suffering is

¹ Heb. xi. 35.

² 2 Tim. ii. 12.

³ 1 Cor. ii. 2; xv. 1-4.

fabulous. And if it was not introduced then and there, it is impossible that it should have been introduced at some subsequent time or distant place. It claims to have been introduced then and there, and to have spread from that time and place rapidly through the nations of the earth, and to have been handed down continuously through succeeding generations. Now if all this claim was without any foundation in fact, how could the originators of the new religion induce men to believe their statements? They declared that the doctrine which they preached had been first proclaimed in Jerusalem many years before, and when the facts on which it was founded had recently occurred; that multitudes had been converted to the new faith; that by opposition and persecution great publicity had been given to the new religion; that men in great numbers had travelled through all countries zealously extending the doctrine; that churches maintaining the new faith had been organized throughout the known world; that baptism and the Lord's Supper had been regularly and publicly observed in all these places as well-understood memorials of Christ's death and resurrection; and that assemblies for Christian worship had been held every Sabbath day. How could they declare all these things with any hope of being believed? Their declaration would be known by every one to be false if no such religion had been heard of before; and it would be impossible for them to gain credence.

These considerations show that the Christian church is a monument of the gospel facts; that it is a monument set up at the time when the facts occurred; and that it is a monument, so to speak, on which these facts have ever been recorded so plainly as to be read by all the world.

We have another consideration to add, which greatly increases the force of this testimony. The record is not only so plainly written that it may be known and read of all men, but it is written in the blood of the saints. Whether the Bible be true or false, and whether Christianity be a divine religion or an imposture, it is an indisputable fact of history that multitudes have endured toils, sufferings, and death, for their adherence to the Christian faith. The patience and firmness with which these labors and sufferings were endured by the Christians of former ages, fully establish the sincerity of their faith: for though a false religion may have its martyrs, yet no one charges these martyrs with insincerity in their devotion to it. The Christian martyrs suffered and died, rather than renounce their religion, because they had a firm conviction of its truth; and whence did this firm conviction arise? It cannot be shown that they were fools or madmen; and the gospel which they received was not a speculation which bewildered their minds, but a declaration of facts to be received on testimony, the sufficiency of which they were competent to judge. How, then, can it be accounted for that vast multitudes of men believed these facts from the time of their first promulgation, and believed with a conviction which the terrors of death were unable to shake? The credence which the gospel obtained may be accounted for, if they who professed to have been eye witnesses of its facts, were men of known veracity, if all the circumstances attendant on the delivery of their testimony combined to establish its truth, and if, as is alleged, they confirmed their testimony with their blood. Thus, and only thus, can we account for the fact that Christianity is in the world.

SECTION IV. WRITTEN RECORDS.

Let it be observed that the proof of the gospel facts which has been adduced, is independent of written documents. But the Christian church, besides being itself a standing monument of the principal gospel facts, and besides keeping up a constant memorial of these facts by its ministry, its Sabbaths, its religious worship, and its ritual service, has also written records in which these facts are fully and clearly set forth. The chief of these is the New Testament. Without insisting, at present, that the book is given by inspiration from God, we may regard it merely as an historical record; and we claim for Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the confidence due to truthful historians. These Christian men were not surpassed in veracity by the heathen historians Herodotus, Thucydides, Tacitus, and Suetonius. They had better opportunities of knowing the facts which they record; and they have exhibited in their narratives such artless simplicity, candor, freedom from passion and prejudice as are found in no other historians. If the four Gospels were written by their reputed authors, the history which they contain deserves the highest confidence, apart from the considerations of its divine authority. A writer of history is believed without much inquiry into his private character for veracity, because his historical reputation depends on his general adherence to the truth. If what he publishes to the world, the world may readily know to be a falsehood, he gains nothing to reward the labor of writing, and secures only his own infamy. A single historian is therefore believed, when there are no facts or circumstances known which can discredit his testimony. When two unite their testimony in independent histories composed from

their own knowledge of facts, the confirmation which they give to each other is exceedingly great. Matthew and John had been personal attendants of Christ, and witnesses of his preaching, miracles, death, and resurrection. Mark, the companion of Peter, is reported to have written his Gospel under that apostle's supervision. Luke, the companion of Paul, informs us that he had perfect knowledge of the facts which he records. We have, then, the life of Christ written by four contemporary historians, well qualified to perform the service which they undertook. Has any other individual ever lived whose biography has been transmitted to future generations with equal attestation? But it is not our present design to insist that the four Gospels were written by their reputed authors. The question of their authenticity is purposely postponed. It is enough for our present purpose that the principal facts recorded in the four Gospels have been believed by Christians from the origin of the religion, and form the basis of their peculiar system of doctrine and practice. Christianity had spread extensively before the Gospels were written, and their agreement with the faith already widely spread, is demonstrated by the favor and respect with which they were received. Proofs of such favor and respect abound in the Christian writings of all antiquity.

SECTION V. CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

Next to the New Testament may be mentioned the writings of the apostolical fathers. Barnabas (**14**), Clement (**15**), Hermas (**16**), Ignatius (**17**), and Polycarp (**18**). These men conversed with the apostles, and learned from their lips the gospel facts that are directly described (**14 a**, **15 a**, **17 a**, **18 a**), or manifestly implied

in the writings which they left, and which have been preserved to our time.

After the apostolic fathers followed a long succession of Christian writers, who with the works which they have left, constitute an immense mass of testimony establishing beyond all possible doubt that vast multitudes of persons professing the Christian religion have lived during all these times, and have agreed in the belief of the gospel facts. These writers, moreover, made direct quotations from the New Testament, and allusions to passages in it; and these are so numerous, that if the New Testament itself had been lost, it might in a great measure be recovered out of the writings which the Christian fathers have left. In all these writings the highest respect is evinced for the New Testament; and the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, are recognised as the acknowledged historians of Christ.

While the Christian writers of past ages uniformly manifest the highest respect for the New Testament, they never speak of it as the original source of information respecting the gospel facts. On the contrary, each of the four evangelists furnishes evidence that these facts were first published orally, and that multitudes of converts were made to the religion before the facts were recorded in writing; and Luke expressly testifies that¹ other written records had been attempted before he prepared the full and authentic account which he has left us. If the four Gospels when written had not agreed as to the gospel facts with the oral testimony which had been everywhere circulated by the twelve apostles and other first ministers of the religion, and

¹ Luke, i. 1.

which had everywhere been received by the multitude of converts in all lands; these Gospels could not have gained the respect and authority universally accorded to them. We have therefore full proof that all Christian tradition, oral and written, establishes the truth of the New Testament history.

SECTION VI. HEATHEN TESTIMONY.

Heathen writers have noticed the existence of Christianity, so far as it fell in their way (49-62); and all that they have said respecting it corresponds with the history of it given in the New Testament, and by the Christian fathers. From these pagan authors, testimony may be drawn respecting the extensive spread of the religion, the cruel persecution which its disciples endured, the patience and firmness with which they suffered, the harmlessness and purity of their character, and the unyielding steadfastness with which they adhered to their faith even unto death. Some of the heathen writers expressly name Christ as the founder of the religion, and the object of Christian worship; and those of them who wrote against the religion, never denied the great facts which lie at its foundation.

SECTION VII. JEWISH TESTIMONY.

The Jews were the first and most bitter persecutors of Christianity; and, though no testimony to its excellence can be expected from them, their opposition to it from its origin to the present time, furnishes proof of its historical facts. The Mishna and Talmud exhibit hatred of Christianity; but contain admissions of its historic truth. Josephus (48), a Jew, wrote soon after the time of Christ, and probably knew much more concerning the religion hated by his countrymen than he

was willing to write; yet he has borne express testimony concerning John the Baptist, and has in various other particulars confirmed the evangelic history.

SECTION VIII. INCIDENTAL CONFIRMATION.

Besides the principal facts which it was the direct design of the New Testament history to record, it abounds with incidental allusions to places, persons, usages, and events. Many of these allusions are made with such particularity as demonstrates that the writers were accurately informed on the subjects of which they wrote. If the Gospels had been forged at some distant place or time, the writers would have made their allusions general; or, if they attempted much particularity, would have fallen into such mistakes as would suffice to detect the forgery. But the allusions in the New Testament harmonize exactly with all the known facts of geography and history.

The geography of the Scriptures has been much elucidated by the labors of modern travellers. Dr. Robinson especially has rendered valuable service to the cause of truth by twice visiting the Holy Land, and by giving the result of his explorations in a very valuable work entitled "Biblical Researches." A comparison of this work with the New Testament history confirms the accuracy of its geographical allusions.

Dr. Lardner has devoted 519 pages of an octavo volume to a comparison of the incidental allusions which are made in the New Testament to persons, usages, and events (1-13) of which other history gives account. His investigations have brought to view incidental agreements, so many and so exact, that it is impossible

for any man of sound mind who duly considers them, to believe the gospels to be a forgery.

SECTION IX. INTERNAL PROOF.

The harmony of New Testament history with other history does not furnish more satisfactory proof of its truth, than may be derived from its consistency with itself. The forger of a complicated tale needs the exercise of much thought to make all the parts of his fiction harmonize with each other; and it will be very difficult to conceal the care and effort which his task demands. But when the harmony, instead of being contrived by the author, is manifestly natural and undesigned, it becomes a proof that the history describes facts taken from real life, and not fictions from the author's invention. In this way Dr. Paley (72) in a work which he calls *Horæ Paulinæ*, has made out a most interesting and satisfactory demonstration that the New Testament history is true, by showing the undesigned coincidences between the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul. He finds these coincidences so numerous, and so manifestly undesigned, that a suspicion of forgery is completely excluded. The history proves the genuineness of the Epistles; and the Epistles prove the truth of the history.

SECTION X. MONUMENTAL PROOF.

A further and most impressive proof of the Christian facts is furnished by existing monuments of antiquity. Coins and medals (70) have been found which prove facts incidentally stated in the New Testament; and the catacombs (71) of Rome give indisputable testimony that the Christians of the second and third centuries were so numerous as to form a large part of the popula-

tion in the imperial city; that multitudes of them suffered martyrdom; and that they believed the facts of Christianity as recorded in the New Testament.

SECTION XI. CONCLUSION.

If the gospel history is not true, why have we no correct accounts of the origin of Christianity? So important an event in the history of the world ought to be accounted for. It did not enter the world at a dark corner where it could not be observed, or in a dark age when no historian lived. Where then is the record? We have no accounts different from that which is given in the New Testament. If the gospel history had not been true, its falsehood would have been exposed by its enemies, or by apostates from the religion. Judas, who had been admitted to such intimacy as was allowed to the twelve apostles only, betrayed his master to the chief priests and elders; and, if he had possessed knowledge of any imposture or secret plot to deceive mankind, he was in precisely such circumstances as would have called forth a revelation of the wicked scheme.¹ Many who were admitted to the fellowship of the apostles and first Christians, apostatized from their faith: but not one of them testified that the gospel facts were fictions or cunningly devised fables. The emperor Julian (60) was an apostate from Christianity; and had most favorable opportunities from his acquaintance with Christians, his learning, and his high position, to detect the falsehood of the gospel history, if it had been false; yet his testimony confirms the principal facts of the history. Celsus (53), Porphyry (57), and Hierocles (58), learned heathens who wrote against Christianity in early

¹ Matt. xxvii. 4.

times, admitted that Jesus had lived, declared his doctrines, wrought miracles, and been crucified; and referred to the Gospels now in our possession as received accounts of his life and ministry. Though they desired to banish the hated religion from the world, they made no attempt to disprove its principal facts.

When the various proofs which have been enumerated are duly considered, it will clearly appear that the history of Julius Cæsar, which no one doubts, is far less attested than that of Jesus Christ. Indeed Christianity has been so incorporated with the affairs of the world for the last eighteen centuries, that if its history is rejected, all history of the past must be rejected with it. Julius left his mark on the history of Rome, by originating the empire of the Cæsars; but the empire of the Cæsars has long since fallen, and little can be found in the present condition of the world, which can serve as a memorial of his having lived. But Jesus has left a mark which all have seen, and which is now visible to all. The kingdom which he set up still stands, and is extending its conquests. And he who contemplates the present condition of the world, may trace the chief excellence of all that blesses the human race to the Author of Christianity.

The resurrection of Christ as believed by Christians, is an event of the kind denominated miraculous. The subject of miracles is reserved for another chapter, and therefore we have not in this chapter entered into the inquiry, whether any supernatural agency was concerned in the event. The subject of inspiration is also postponed to another chapter. The present chapter claims for the writers of the New Testament the respect and confidence due to truthful historians, reserving for future consideration the question, whether the record

which they have given us possesses divine authority, and is infallibly true. All that this chapter aims to establish is, that the sacred writers have given us a truthful account of what was assuredly believed by themselves, and by all the Christians of ancient times, including the original witnesses of the facts recorded. As the inquiry into the miraculous character of the facts has not been introduced, so no notice has been taken of the confirmation which the original witnesses gave to their testimony by the performing of miracles. The resurrection of Christ was not a natural return to life after three days of suspended animation: but God raised him by supernatural power; and the belief of this great fact was not founded on the mere testimony of fallible men who might be deceived by external appearances. But God confirmed their testimony by signs, wonders, and divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.¹ But the present chapter views the gospel facts in the light of ordinary history, and does not enter into the question, whether the events deemed miraculous were real miracles, or only appearances mistaken for miracles by the beholders.

¹ Heb. ii. 4.

CHAPTER VI.

PROPHECY.

THE BIBLE CONTAINS NUMEROUS PROPHECIES, THE EXACT FULFILMENT OF WHICH DEMONSTRATES THAT THEY PROCEEDED FROM DIVINE FOREKNOWLEDGE.

SECTION I. GENERAL VIEW.

THE Bible contains, in addition to its morality, doctrines, and history, an extensive system of prophecy, beginning with the third chapter of Genesis, and ending with the last chapter of Revelation. This system includes the threatenings which enforce the moral precepts, and the promises which have been given at various times for the comfort and encouragement of God's people.

Among the important purposes which the prophecies of the Bible subserve, one of great value is the attestation which they give to the divine origin of the book. God only possesses infallible foreknowledge of future events. Men generally acknowledge their ignorance of the future, and seldom attempt more than conjecture with respect to it. If any make higher pretensions, they either express their predictions in ambiguous language, such as was used by the heathen oracles, or the subsequent failure in the fulfilment of their predictions convicts them of imposture or delusion. But the predictions of the Bible are made with such definiteness

and clearness, in very many cases, as to render the fulfilment of them indisputable; and the number and exactness of these fulfilments prove beyond doubt that the predictions were not mere human conjectures.

The design of prophecy was not to gratify our curiosity, or to make us prophets; but, when fulfilled, the fulfilment establishes our faith, and, by this more beneficial effect, proves the benevolence as well as the prescience of the Great Author.

So thoroughly was the system of prophecy incorporated with the dispensation of the Old Testament, that its divinely instituted rites were prophetic; and persons and places were types of future things. And the whole system of prophecy has such relation to the great scheme of salvation by Christ, that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;¹ that is, the testimony concerning him is the design, scope, and end of all prophetic revelation. The promise to our fallen parents was a prediction of Christ's first coming; and predictions of his second coming close the sacred volume.

The proof that the prophecies of the Bible proceeded from God, derives an increase of strength from the character of the prophets by whom they were delivered. They were men of holy lives, and labored to teach and persuade the people to live according to the law of God. They reprobated the vices of the people, and denounced the judgments of God against powerful kings, and were rewarded for their faithfulness with persecution and death. So common was this ungrateful requital of their faithfulness, that Jerusalem, where much of their ministry was performed, was characterized thus: "Thou that

¹ Rev. xix. 10.

killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee.”¹

The extent of the prophetic system, and its subservience to the divine work of salvation, cannot be thoroughly understood without a careful study of the Holy Scriptures. He who would justly appreciate the argument from prophecy, should prepare himself for the examination of particular prophecies by a general study of the Bible; and in perusing the remaining sections of this chapter, he must take the pains to examine carefully the passages of Scripture which are referred to. If he declines this labor, he dismisses the case without a fair hearing.

SECTION II. THE MESSIAH.

The Old Testament contains numerous predictions concerning the Messiah, of which the fulfilment appears in the history that the evangelists have given of Jesus Christ.

The particulars so predicted may be briefly classified as follows:—

I. *Time of his birth.*—1. When the sceptre was departing from Judah.² 2. While Jerusalem and the second temple remained.³ 3. When a general expectation of him prevailed.⁴ 4. While the house of David remained distinct but depressed.⁵ 5. Within four hundred and ninety years from the commandment of Artaxerxes to restore Jerusalem.⁶ 6. In Bethlehem Ephrata.⁷

¹ Matt. xxiii. 37; Luke, xiii. 34.

² Gen. xlix. 10.

³ Isaiah, xl. 9; xli. 27; Haggai, ii. 6, 9.

⁴ Haggai, ii. 7; Mal. iii. 1.

⁵ Isaiah, xi. 1; liii. 2; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.

⁶ Daniel, ix. 24, 25.

⁷ Micah, v. 2.

II. 7. *His descent.* — From Abraham.¹ Judah.² David.³

III. 8. *His forerunner.*—John the Baptist.⁴

IV. 9. *His person and history.* — A virgin's son.⁵ 10. His flight into Egypt.⁶ 11. His entrance into Jerusalem.⁷ 12. The cry of the children that surrounded him.⁸ 13. His gentleness.⁹ 14. His zeal for his Father's worship.¹⁰ 15. The price at which he was betrayed and the use made of the money.¹¹ 16. The treachery and end of Judas.¹² 17. His last sufferings and his companions therein.¹³ 18. The offer of gall.¹⁴ 19. His bones unbroken,¹⁵ and his side pierced with a spear.¹⁶ 20. Taunts, desertion by his Father, his last words, the distribution of his garments.¹⁷ 21. His grave.¹⁸ 22. His body remaining uncorrupted.¹⁹ 23. His resurrection on the third day.²⁰ 24. The establishment of his kingdom.²¹

V. His ministry and works. 25. Miracles.²² 26. His preaching.²³

VI. His humanity. 27. A branch from the root of

¹ Gen. xii. 3; xviii. 18.

² Gen. xlix. 10.

³ Isaiah, xi. 1; Psalms, lxxxix. 4, 27.

⁴ Mal. iii. 1; iv. 5; Isaiah, xl. 3. ⁵ Isaiah, vii. 14.

⁶ Hosea, xi. 1.

⁷ Zech. ix. 9.

⁸ Psalms, cxviii. 26.

⁹ Isaiah, xlii. 2, 3.

¹⁰ Psalms, lxix. 9.

¹¹ Zech. xi. 12, 13.

¹² Psalms, lxix. 25.

¹³ Isaiah, liii. throughout.

¹⁴ Psalms, lxix. 21.

¹⁵ Ex. xii. 46.

¹⁶ Zech. xii. 10.

¹⁷ Psalms, xxii.; xxxi. 5.

¹⁸ Isaiah, liii. 9.

¹⁹ Psalms, xvi. 10.

²⁰ Jonah, i. 17; Matt. xii. 39, 40.

²¹ Psalms, ii. 6; lxxii. 8, 9; cx. 1, 2; Isaiah, ix. 7.

²² Isaiah, xxix. 18; John, vii. 31.

²³ Isaiah, lxi. 1-3; Luke, iv. 16-29.

Jesse,¹ a tender plant—rejected—oppressed²—a worm³—servant of rulers⁴—stone of stumbling⁵—without comeliness, hated, reproached⁶—falsely accused⁷—a man of sorrows.⁸

VII. His divinity. 28. The Son of God⁹—the Shiloh¹⁰—the Star of Jacob¹¹—Living Redeemer¹²—chief corner stone¹³—the Lord of David¹⁴—king of Israel¹⁵—Emanuel¹⁶—Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, &c.¹⁷—from everlasting¹⁸—Jehovah¹⁹—object of trust and worship.²⁰

On this comparison of these predictions with their fulfilment the following observations may be made.

1. The number of the facts furnishes complete proof that the agreement between the predictions and their fulfilment was not accidental.

If in each particular case, the chances were equal that the event would or would not happen, the probability of its happening may be expressed by the fraction $\frac{1}{2}$. The probability that two of the events should happen, each in agreement with the prediction, will, as mathematicians know, be properly expressed by the fraction $\frac{1}{4}$. For three independent events, the fraction will be $\frac{1}{8}$; for four, $\frac{1}{16}$; for five, $\frac{1}{32}$; and, if we extend the

¹ Isaiah, xi. 1.

³ Psalms, xxii. 6.

⁵ Isaiah, viii. 14.

⁷ Psalms, xxxv. 11, 20.

⁹ Psalms, ii. 7, 12.

¹¹ Numbers, xxiv. 17.

¹³ Isaiah, xxviii. 16.

¹⁵ Jeremiah, xxiii. 5, 6; xxx. 9; Zech. ix. 9.

¹⁶ Isaiah vii. 14; Matt. i. 23.

¹⁷ Isaiah, ix. 5, 6.

¹⁹ Jeremiah, xxiii. 6.

² Isaiah, liii. 2, 3, 7.

⁴ Isaiah, xlix. 7.

⁶ Isaiah, liii. 2.

⁸ Isaiah, liii. 3.

¹⁰ Gen. xlix. 10.

¹² Job, xix. 23–27.

¹⁴ Psalms, cx. 1.

¹⁸ Micah, v. 2.

²⁰ Psalms, ii. 12.

series by a regular geometrical progression, to compute for twenty-eight events, we shall find that the chances of so many agreements, if determined by chance, is as one to 268,435,436.

It has been objected that some of the passages referred to in the preceding enumeration do not appear in the Old Testament to have been designed for predictions, and are therefore improperly set down as prophecies of Christ.¹ It is not needful for our present pur-

¹ The objection has greater importance in its bearing on the doctrine of plenary inspiration.

Did the writers of the New Testament mistake for prophecies of Christ passages of the Old Testament which were not intended to be predictions?

When these writers say that an Old Testament passage which they quote, was fulfilled in an event which they have recorded, nothing more may have been meant than that the language quoted fitly describes the event to which it is applied.

Fulfilment, when there is no prediction, means nothing more than full agreement. This explanation is sufficient to vindicate the evangelists from the charge of mistake: but we are not at liberty to affirm that mere agreement directed them in applying these disputed passages. In some instances, as in John xi. 49-52, God meant language to be prediction, when it was not so understood by those who uttered it. In some instances, as in Ex. xii. 46, John xix. 36, language which was not predictive in its application to a type, was predictive in its relation to the antitype. And in some instances, as in Hosea xi. 1, language which was not predictive in its application to part of a great design, was predictive in relation to the consummation of that design. Israel was delivered out of Egypt for the purpose of establishing the true religion in Canaan, and sending it thence through the world; but this design would have been frustrated, if Christ, the chief glory and excellence of Israel, had been suffered to remain in Egypt. Hence the words of the prophet not only fitly describe the event to which the evangelist has applied them, Matt. ii. 15, but they would not have been fulfilled,

pose to contradict this objection. If all the doubtful passages were struck from the list, there would remain indubitable prophecies more than sufficient to sustain the argument. Besides, the loss might be countervailed by reckoning the several incidents which are comprehended in some of the predictions, as so many distinct facts.

For example, the prophecy of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem, No. 11, states definitely several particulars in the mode of his entrance. He was not to walk, or to be borne on the shoulders of applauding attendants, or to be conveyed in a vehicle of some sort, but to ride on the back of an animal; and this animal was to be, not a camel, a horse, or a mule, but an ass: and with still greater particularity, the prophecy states that he was to ride, not on an old ass, but on an ass's colt. It is manifest that, though the entrance into Jerusalem is set down in the enumeration as a single fact, the prophecy concerning it comprehended many particulars, all of which must concur to render the fulfilment complete. We may therefore conclude that the chances against the exact fulfilment of all the prophecies concerning Christ were not over estimated in the last paragraph.

2. The improbability that so many predictions should be fulfilled in one person, is greatly increased by the circumstance that there is an obvious appearance of incongruity between the predictions. Thus, classes six and seven appear inconsistent with each other, and their concurrence in any ordinary person may be pronounced impossible. But in the person of Jesus they were all harmoniously fulfilled, because in him humanity and divinity were united.

in their comprehensive and most important sense, if this event had not occurred.

3. The force of the demonstration is further increased by the consideration that the predictions were delivered at different times, and by different persons, and were wholly independent of each other. They were delivered at different times during a period of four thousand years. To the first revelations, which were comparatively obscure, additions were made harmonizing with those which preceded them, but not growing out of them.

The Messiah was to be born of Eve, but this did not determine that he was to be of the seed of Abraham; and when this was foretold, the prediction did not determine that he should be of the tribe of Judah, or of the family of David. Thus, independent additions were made from time to time, unfolding a scroll of prophecy in which converging lines appear that at length meet in the person of Jesus Christ. The concurrence of so many independent predictions proves that they originated from one source, one divine mind, and not from the minds of the several prophets. The whole Hebrew nation, with its typical rites of religious worship, uttered a continued prediction of Christ from the time of Moses.

From the first passover in Egypt to the scene on Calvary, when Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us, the congregation of the Lord exhibited its prophetic handwriting of ordinances; and when these were nailed to the cross, the congregation was dissolved, the purpose for which it had been divinely organized having been accomplished. Yet—

4. By an admirable arrangement the nation of Israel remain witnesses of the genuineness of the prophecies which point out their rejected Messiah. They hold up to the view of the world their sacred volume, which contains these predictions, and thus give honorable tes-

timony to the prophets, while they reject their predictions. They forbid the computation of Daniel's seventy weeks, and the interpretation of Isaiah's fifty-third chapter; and herein convict themselves of rejecting the revelations which have been committed to their keeping through these inspired men.

5. The most important predictions concerning the Messiah are in progress of fulfilment at the present time. He was to be a spiritual deliverer, bruising the head of the serpent,¹ blessing all nations,² and releasing individuals from the bondage of sin.³ These benefits the exalted Jesus now confers on mankind. The evidence is before the eyes of all in the spread of Christianity and the benefits which it confers on the nations; and it is in the heart of every humble believer who has within him the witness and earnest of the Holy Spirit given by the ascended Redeemer.

SECTION III. THE HEBREW NATION.

The Old Testament contains numerous prophecies concerning the descendants of Abraham. Some of these have been fulfilled, and others are in the progress of fulfilment.

It was foretold that—1. The children of Israel should go into Egypt and there be enslaved.⁴—2. They should be delivered from this bondage at a time designated.⁵—3. They should be brought into Canaan and hold it as their possession.⁶—4. They should become a great nation.⁷—5. They should be carried to Babylon and be in

¹ Gen. iii. 15.

² Gen. xxii. 18.

³ Isaiah, lxi. 1.

⁴ Gen. xv. 13.

⁵ Gen. xv. 14–16.

⁶ Gen. xvii. 8; xv. 16.

⁷ Gen. xii. 2.

captivity seventy years.¹—6. They should be besieged and overcome by a foreign warlike people; should suffer extreme famine in the siege.²—7. They should be removed from their land, and scattered among the nations, and in their dispersion should be reduced to extreme suffering and degradation.³—8. Though dispersed and afflicted, they should still be preserved a distinct people.⁴—9. They should be treated with contempt by the nations among whom they would be scattered.⁵—10. Their sufferings would be of long continuance.⁶

These predictions have all been fulfilled, and some of them continue to be fulfilled at the present time, before the eyes of all men. The remarkable people carry with them everywhere in their dispersion, and preserve with the utmost care, the book which foretells their present condition, and explains it as a just judgment of God for their sins. The long continuance of their calamity indicates that God has been provoked by some grievous offence: and what is this offence? Can anything be alleged so probable as the rejection and murder of their Messiah?

SECTION IV. ANCIENT CITIES.

NINEVEH.

Ancient history informs us—1. That this ancient city (**102 a**), the metropolis of the Assyrian Empire, after being besieged two years, was inundated by the swollen waters of the river on which it was built, and its walls thrown down.⁷—2. That the king, despairing

¹ Jer. xxv. 11.

² Deut. xxviii. 49–57.

³ Deut. xxviii. 57–68.

⁴ Levit. xxvi. 44; Deut. xxviii. 65.

⁵ Deut. xxviii. 37.

⁶ Deut. xxviii. 59.

⁷ Nahum, i. 8.

of success, erected a funeral pile, on which he heaped his wealth, and with which himself, his household, and palace, were consumed by fire.¹—3. That the king had appointed a time of festivity, and he and his soldiers had abandoned themselves to drunkenness; and the general of the enemy, apprised of their condition, had attacked the Assyrian army, destroyed a part of them, and driven the rest into the city.²—4. That many talents of gold, preserved from the fire, were carried away to Ecbatana.³—5. The overthrow of the city was complete and final. It has long lain in utter desolation; and its ruins, recently examined by Layard, harmonize with the account of this ancient city given in the Bible, and at the same time prove the fulfilment of the Bible prophecies respecting it.⁴

If the above facts be compared with the Scriptures referred to, it will be seen that the overthrow of Nineveh was in exact fulfilment of prophecies which had been delivered while the city was in its strength and glory, and when its utter ruin was an event which no human sagacity could have foreknown.

BABYLON.

1. This ancient, powerful city (**102 a**) was besieged and taken by the Medes and Elamites or Persians.⁵—2. The name of the conqueror was Cyrus.⁶—3. Various nations that he had previously conquered, had contributed to enlarge his army.⁷—4. Finding the city strongly

¹ Nahum, iii. 15.

² Nahum, i. 10.

³ Nahum, ii. 9.

⁴ Nahum, i. 8, 9, 10; iii. 7-19; Zeph. ii. 13, 15.

⁵ Isaiah, xxi. 2-9; Jer. li. 11.

⁶ Isaiah, xlvi. 28.

⁷ Isaiah, xiii. 4; Jer. li. 27.

fortified on every side by its immense walls, he made preparations for a long siege,¹ by digging a trench entirely around it, and erecting towers.—5. The Babylonians, though their armies had once been a terror to the nations, evinced great cowardice, and shut themselves up within their walls.²—6. An entrance was obtained by diverting from its channel³ the river Euphrates, which ran through the midst of the city.—7. Through the channel Cyrus led his army by night, selecting for the time a season of festivity,⁴ in which the gates leading from the river into the city had been carelessly left open.⁵—8. While the king Belshazzar and his courtiers were feasting and drinking wine out of the vessels which had been brought from the temple at Jerusalem, the conqueror approached the royal palace; and, finding the guards intoxicated,⁶ entered before the king had knowledge of his approach. That night Belshazzar was slain.—9. By the conquest of Babylon, Cyrus became master of the great riches⁷ of the place, and reduced it from an imperial to a tributary city. Subsequently the height of the wall was reduced by Darius, and the gates destroyed.—10. Xerxes afterwards rifled the most sacred treasures which were laid up in the temple of Belus, and took away their idols.⁸—11. All designs to restore Babylon to its ancient greatness proved abortive. It gradually declined, and in the second century of the Christian era nothing remained but its walls, and under the Saracens it became a com-

¹ Isaiah, xxi. 2; Jer. l. 29.

² Jer. li. 30.

³ Isaiah, xliv. 27; Jer. l. 38; li. 36.

⁴ Jer. l. 24; li. 39-57.

⁵ Isaiah, xlv. 1.

⁶ Jer. li. 39-57.

⁷ Isaiah, xlv. 3.

⁸ Isaiah, xxi. 9; xlvi. 1.

plete desolation.¹—12. Nothing of it now remains but mounds of ruins amidst pools of stagnant water.²—13. But in another portion of the space once occupied by the city, the ground is dry and barren.³—14. Wild beasts and venomous serpents are the only inhabitants of the place, and the wild Arab shuns to pitch his tent there.⁴—15. The temple of Belus,⁵ once higher than the pyramids of Egypt, is now a shapeless mound of ruins, as are also the palaces⁶ which were once the abode of luxury and merriment.⁷—16. Of the immense walls, not even a vestige can be found.⁸—17. Modern travellers who visit the place, contemplate the desolation with astonishment,⁹ and are overawed by its dreary solitude.

The facts which have been enumerated above, and which are gathered from historical records, were the subjects of prophecies contained in the Bible. A reference to these prophecies is made at the statement of the several facts; and if the facts be compared with the passages of Scripture referred to, it will be seen that they have exactly fulfilled predictions that had been delivered by the prophets Isaiah and Jeremiah. Isaiah prophesied at least one hundred and sixty years before the taking of Babylon. Though Jeremiah was a century later, he sent¹⁰ his prophecy to Babylon fifty-six years before its capture, and while Nebuchadnezzar the Great was on the throne, by whom Babylon was raised to the

¹ Isaiah, xiii. 19; xiv. 22, 23; Jer. i. 13, 23, 39, 40; li. 13, 26, 29, 37, 42, 43.

² Isaiah, xiv. 23.

³ Jer. li. 43.

⁴ Isaiah, xiii. 20–22.

⁵ Isaiah, xlvi. 1; Jer. i. 2; li. 44.

⁶ Isaiah, xiii. 22.

⁷ Isaiah, xiv. 11.

⁸ Isaiah, xxv. 12; Jer. i. 15; li. 44–58.

⁹ Jer. i. 13; li. 37.

¹⁰ Jer. li. 59, 60.

zenith of its power and splendor. There was then no human probability of its overthrow in little more than a half century, and much less of its utter desolation. It was much more probable, according to human foresight, that Jerusalem, recently taken by Nebuchadnezzar, and stripped of its inhabitants, should become utterly desolate, than that this should be the lot of Babylon. Yet Jerusalem now exists, and Babylon has been in ruins many centuries. Who but God could have foretold this?

TYRE.

1. Ancient Tyre (**102 a**) built on the shores of the Mediterranean, and distinguished in very early times¹ for its commerce, opulence, and luxury,² was, after a siege of thirteen years, destroyed by the Chaldeans under Nebuchadnezzar.—2. The dispersed inhabitants passed over the sea to islands,³ and distant countries, some of them to Tartessus in Spain, which is the Tarshish⁴ of the prophets.—3. After seventy years Tyre was rebuilt,⁵ not on the old site, but on a neighboring island.—4. Though defended by the sea, and by strong walls, it was besieged, taken, and set on fire by Alexander the Great.⁶ The conqueror sold thirty thousand of the inhabitants for slaves.⁷—5. In order to approach it, he made a causeway through the sea to the island, with the stones and rubbish⁸ of the old city.—6. In modern times this once magnificent city is described by travellers as a desolation, a barren rock, on which a few

¹ Isaiah, xxiii. 7.

² Isaiah, xxiii. 3, 8; Ezek. xxvii. 3-34.

³ Isaiah, xxiii. 12; Ezek. xxvi. 18.

⁴ Isaiah, xxiii. 6.

⁵ Isaiah, xxiii. 15, 17.

⁶ Ezek. xxvii. 32; xxviii. 18; Zech. ix. 3, 4.

⁷ Joel, iii. 6-8.

⁸ Ezek. xxvi. 12.

fishermen have their huts, and where they dry their nets.¹

If the above facts be compared with the passages of Scripture referred to, it will be seen that they are the exact fulfilments of prophecy. The predictions of Isaiah concerning Tyre were delivered one hundred and twenty-five years before its first overthrow by Nebuchadnezzar. It was not foretold, as in the case of Nineveh and Babylon, that Tyre should become an utter desolation. Though of the old city no remains are now to be found, a remnant of insular Tyre may be said still to exist in the few fishermen's huts that now occupy the place, and give proof of the exactness with which the prophecy of the Bible has been fulfilled. Who but God could have foreknown that such cities as Nineveh, Babylon, and Tyre would be destroyed; and who but God could have foretold so many centuries ago the precise condition of their ruins at the present time?

SECTION V. TRIBES AND KINGDOMS.

The patriarch Noah prophetically described the condition of his posterity, as propagated from his three sons. "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan² shall be his servant."

¹ Ezek. xxvi. 3-5, 14, 21.

² The curse, so far as it is expressed in the record, was limited to the *person* of Canaan; but it was undoubtedly understood by Moses to extend to his descendants, and it was so recorded as to encourage the children of Israel in expelling the Canaanites from the promised land. Whether more was said by Noah than Moses has recorded, we have no means of knowing: but the crime which drew forth the curse was committed by Ham; and there is no reason apparent why the curse should not equally affect all his children. Shem and Japheth were blessed, but

The pre-eminence of the European race, descendants of Japheth (103) is here foretold: and the servile condition which has been the lot of Ham's descendants, from the conquest of Canaan by Joshua down to the modern prevalence of African slavery.

Noah's prophecy is the more remarkable, because, though its fulfilment is clearly seen in an extended view of history, yet for several centuries after it was uttered, and down to the time when it was recorded by Moses, the progress of events was in a contrary direction. If the curse denounced had fallen at once on Ham's descendants, it might now be alleged that Moses fabricated the prediction to accord with historical events of which he had knowledge. But the same author who recorded the prediction has transmitted with it such a history as to human view rendered the fulfilment of the prediction wholly improbable. The first founder of a great empire was Nimrod, a descendent of Ham.¹ Egypt, the land of Ham, witnessed cruel bondage, not endured by the sons of Ham, but inflicted by them on the most favored children of Shem. Egypt was not then the "basest" of kingdoms; but it was foremost among the nations for science, arts, and civilization; and furnished the school in which Moses himself acquired the learning for which he was distinguished. Even the descendants of Canaan, against whom the curse was specially recorded, continued, as long as Moses lived, to enjoy prosperity in the land of Canaan. Here Sidon and Tyre began

Ham was not: and the mere withholding of a blessing was, in the circumstances, a virtual curse on the offender, even if none was expressed; and this silent curse at least was the inheritance of all his posterity, while the posterity of his brothers inherited their blessings.

¹ Gen. x. 8, 10.

the commerce of the world. Hence went out to Africa the colony which founded Carthage, the great rival of Rome; and hence went Cadmus, who gave letters to the Greeks. From such a history of Ham's progeny it was impossible for human sagacity to draw the prediction uttered by Noah; and the fulfilment of the prediction down to our times, demonstrates that it did not proceed from the wisdom of the historian who recorded it, or of the patriarch who delivered it.

The Bible foretold that Amalek,¹ Edom,² and Moab³ should lose their distinct existence; but predicted that the posterity of Ishmael (104) should continue, distinguished from other nations, and in perpetual hostility.⁴ The history and present condition of the Arabs correspond to this ancient prediction.

Egypt was once powerful, and renowned for its learning; and it now contains the oldest monuments of art in the world. While it was still in its greatness, a prophecy of its degradation⁵ was uttered, not of its overthrow, as in the case of the Assyrian and Babylonian powers. For ages this prophecy has been fulfilled. All attempts to raise it to greatness have failed, including one of modern times by the powerful Napoleon.

The four great empires of the world, the Babylonian, the Medo-Persian, the Macedonian, and the Roman, were foretold by Daniel with many particulars respecting each.⁶ The fulfilment of the prediction is exact, and extends down to the present time. The division of the Roman empire (105) into ten kingdoms was pre-

¹ Ex. xvii. 14.

² Jer. xlix. 10; Ezek. xxv. 12, 14; Obad. 10-18.

³ Numbers, xxiv. 17; Isaiah, xvi. 14; Amos, ii. 2.

⁴ Gen. xvi. 12.

⁵ Ezekiel, xxix. 15.

⁶ Dan. ii. 37-40; vii. 1, 7, 17.

dicted, and the rise of a power different from all the rest.¹

SECTION VI. THE PAPACY.

The prophecy of Daniel concerning the Little Horn² agrees with that of Paul³ concerning the Man of Sin, and the Falling Away; and with that of John concerning the Beast with seven heads and ten horns. All these prophecies relate to the same thing, and find their fulfilment in the Roman Catholic Church. The prophecy of John, which is far the most minute, will be considered in Section 8. At present we shall merely enumerate some characteristics of the Papal or Roman Catholic Church; and refer to passages of Scripture in which these characteristics are foretold.

1. Popery is not, like Mahometanism, a new and distinct religion; but is a corruption of Christianity, a falling away.⁴ The little horn has "eyes,"⁵ which may signify that it is the Seer of the church, that is, its overseer or Bishop.—2. In this apostate church worship has been rendered to demons, or angels and departed Saints.⁶—3. It has enjoined celibacy on the clergy, and encouraged it in monks and nuns; and has forbidden the use of flesh at prescribed fasts as a mortal sin.⁷—4. The pope has made himself God, in affecting divine titles, attributes, and honors; in assuming power to dispense with divine commands; in placing his foot on the altar and table of the law at his inauguration, and

¹ Dan. ii. 41-43; vii. 19-26.

² Dan. vii. 8, &c.

³ 2 Thes. ii. 3.

⁴ 2 Thes. ii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 1.

⁵ Dan. vii. 8.

⁶ 1 Tim. iv. 1, "doctrines [of devils] concerning demons;" Dan. xi. 38:

⁷ Dan. xi. 37; 1 Tim. iv. 3.

in this posture receiving the adoration of his cardinals.¹—5. The pope has claimed supremacy over all other bishops, and over the kings of the earth.²—6. The papal church has secured great wealth under the control of its clergy.³—7. It has made much use of purple and scarlet, and introduced costly decorations into its worship.⁴—8. It has extended its power by craft and pious frauds.⁵—9. Also by pretended revelations and miracles.⁶—10. It has required implicit faith and obedience, and deprived of civil rights those who would not conform to its requirements.⁷—11. The Roman pontiffs have caused the shedding of much Christian blood, and secured their supremacy by inquisitions and tortures.⁸—12. The ungodly and covetous priesthood of the papal church have introduced false doctrines and unauthorized modes of worship; and have made merchandise of men's souls by the sale of indulgences, absolutions, and releases from purgatory.⁹

SECTION VII. CHRIST'S PREDICTIONS.

Besides the general judgment and other events which are still future, our Saviour foretold (**106 a**)

I. His own death, with attendant circumstances, which may be enumerated as follows:—1. He was betrayed by one of the twelve apostles.¹⁰—2. All the others forsook

¹ Dan. vii. 25; xi. 36; 2 Thes. ii. 3, 4.

² Dan. vii. 20; Rev. xiii. 7; xvii. 2, 13.

³ Dan. xi. 39.

⁴ Rev. xvii. 4.

⁵ Dan. vii. 8; 1 Tim. iv. 2; Rev. xiii. 11–14.

⁶ 2 Thes. ii. 9, 10; Rev. xiii. 13, 14.

⁷ Rev. xiii. 16, 17.

⁸ Dan. vii. 21–25; Rev. xvii. 6; xviii. 24.

⁹ 2 Pet. ii. 1; 1 Jude 4, &c.; 2 Tim. iii. 1.

¹⁰ Matt. xxvi. 21; Mark, xiv. 18; John, xiii. 21.

him, and fled.¹—3. Peter denied him thrice.²—4. He was not thrown from a precipice, or stoned to death by a Jewish mob, but was delivered to the Gentiles to be mocked, scourged, spit upon, and killed.³—5. He was crucified.⁴

II. His resurrection on the third day,⁵ and his appearance to his disciples in Galilee.⁶

III. The success of his apostles as fishers of men ;⁷ their power to speak with tongues and work miracles ;⁸ their publication of the gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth ;⁹ the persecutions and sufferings which they endured ;¹⁰ the manner of Peter's death ;¹¹ the [intimated] continuance of John until after the destruction of Jerusalem.¹²

IV. The rejection of the Jews and the call of the Gentiles ;¹³ the great increase of his church ;¹⁴ and its preservation and perpetuity, though powerfully assailed.¹⁵

V. The destruction of Jerusalem. The exact fulfilment of the prophecy relating to this event, may be seen in the following historical facts (**106 b**)—1. Jerusalem was destroyed by a Roman army, in which an

¹ Matt. xxvi. 31 ; Mark, xiv. 27.

² Matt. xxvi. 34 ; Mark, xiv. 30, 72.

³ Matt. xx. 19 ; Mark, x. 33, 34 ; Luke, xviii. 32.

⁴ Matt. xx. 19 ; xxvi. 2 ; Luke, xxiv. 7.

⁵ Matt. xx. 19 ; Mark, x. 34 ; Luke, xxiv. 7 ; John, ii. 19.

⁶ Matt. xxviii. 10.

⁷ Matt. iv. 19 ; Mark, i. 17.

⁸ Mark, xvi. 17, 18.

⁹ Matt. xxiv. 14 ; Mark, xiii. 10.

¹⁰ Matt. xxiv. 9 ; Mark, xiii. 9 ; Luke, xxi. 12.

¹¹ John, xxi. 18, 19.

¹² John, xxi. 22, 23.

¹³ Matt. xxi. 43.

¹⁴ Matt. xiii. 31, 32 ; Mark, iv. 31, 32 ; Luke, xiii. 19.

¹⁵ Matt. xvi. 18.

eagle, the ensign used by the Romans, was borne at the head of each legion.¹—2. It was destroyed A. D. 70, within less than forty years after the crucifixion of Christ, and while many who had heard him preach were still living.²—3. In this short period of forty years the gospel was preached throughout the known world, giving “witness” before all mankind that the Messiah had come, and explaining the awful calamity which fell on the Jewish people as the vengeance of their rejected King.³—4. The gospel gained its success in opposition to fierce persecution,⁴ and notwithstanding the defection of many who, for a time, numbered themselves among its followers.⁵—5. The latter part of this intervening period of forty years was marked with the occurrence of extraordinary calamities, among which history has recorded famines in Palestine⁶ and Italy; pestilences at Babylon, Rome, and other parts of the Roman empire; and earthquakes at Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Rome, Laodicea, Campania, and Judea. Moreover, the Jews, who were scattered over nearly every country of the Roman empire, attempted in many places to break the yoke of Roman authority, and hence arose bloody civil wars,⁷ which, disastrous as they were to the Jews, were only the first drops of a desolating tempest.⁸—6. Fearful prodigies (**107**), including extraordinary appearances in the heavens, preceded the

¹ Matt. xxiv. 28; Luke, xvii. 37.

² Matt. xxiii. 36; xxiv. 34; Mark, xiii. 30; Luke, xxi. 32.

³ Matt. xxiv. 14; Mark, xiii. 10.

⁴ Luke, xxi. 12, 16, 17.

⁵ Matt. xxiv. 10–12; Mark, xiii. 12, 13.

⁶ Acts, xi. 28.

⁷ Matt. xxiv. 6.

⁸ Matt. xxiv. 7; Mark, xiii. 7; Luke, xxi. 9.

destruction of Jerusalem.¹—7. The Jews were encouraged in their attempt to free themselves from Roman power by the vain hope that their Messiah would come for their deliverance; and hence numerous impostors, who promised them deliverance, deceived multitudes, and caused their ruin.²—8. The appearance at the holy city of the Roman ensign, which being an object of idolatrous worship, was an “abomination” to the Jews, became to the Christians a signal for flight, that they might escape the impending calamities; and Providence gave opportunity by a temporary withdrawal of the army after its first approach.³—9. While the Jews from all parts of the world were assembled in Jerusalem at the feast of the passover, the Roman army began a siege of the city.⁴—10. During the progress of the siege, the Jews suffered unprecedented misery, from the assaults of the Romans, from internal dissensions, and from famine. It has been computed that eleven hundred thousand were slain, besides multitudes who died of hunger, or committed suicide; and multitudes of captives were sold into slavery.⁵ Josephus says, in words which have a remarkable agreement with Christ’s prophecy, “Never did any city suffer so great calamities.”⁶—11. Ultimately the city and temple were burned, their walls completely demolished, and the very foundations dug up.⁷—12. From that time Jerusalem has been under the power of Gentile rulers, and in a comparatively abject condition; and all attempts to restore it

¹ Luke, xxi. 11.

² Matt. xxiv. 23–26; Mark, xiii. 3–6, 21, 23; Luke, xxi. 8.

³ Matt. xxiv. 15, 16; Mark, xiii. 14; Luke, xxi. 20.

⁴ Luke, xix. 43.

⁵ Luke, xxi. 24.

⁶ Matt. xxiv. 21; Mark, xiii. 19; Luke, xxi. 22, 23.

⁷ Matt. xxiv. 2; Mark, xiii. 2; Luke, xix. 44.

to its former state have proved abortive. But though eighteen centuries of deferred hope have passed, the Jews still expect its restoration, and Christians believe that the time of its restoration will be after the heathen nations have been converted to Christianity.¹

This remarkable prediction has been recorded by each of the three evangelists who wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem; namely, Matthew, Mark and Luke. That the three Gospels which bear these names, were written before the destruction of Jerusalem, is established by the concurrent testimony of all Christian antiquity; and, with respect to two of them, by conclusive internal proof. In pre-indicating the signal by which the Christians were to know when they might escape out of the city, it is said, "Whoso readeth let him understand."² This parenthetical clause is manifestly, not a part of Christ's address to his disciples, for he would have said, "Whoso *heareth* let him understand," but it is introduced by the evangelists, Matthew and Mark, as admonitions to those who should read their Gospels, to notice the signal indicated. This previous warning shows that the books were written before the time referred to. We know therefore that the prediction was delivered, recorded, and circulated before the beginning of the calamities predicted. When Jesus delivered this prophecy, the Jews were at peace, and there was no probability, to human view, that such affliction would befall them. It was improbable that their temple should be so soon destroyed, and its massy stones removed; and it was especially improbable that the Romans should destroy this magnificent edifice, inasmuch as they were accustomed to spare works of art in

¹ Luke, xxi. 24.

² Matt. xxiv. 15; Mark, xiii. 14.

conquered nations. If human sagacity could have conjectured that the Romans would lay Jerusalem desolate, it was beyond its power to foretell whether the desolation would be temporary, like that which occurred at the Babylonish captivity, or permanent, like that which has befallen Nineveh, Babylon, and Tyre. Nothing less than divine prescience could have foretold that the city would continue to exist, though oppressed and trodden under foot by a succession of Gentile masters; and that for a long period it would not come again into the possession of Israel.

Christ's predictions were like his miracles, designed to give proof of his divine mission and Messiahship.¹ This proof is furnished most abundantly and conclusively by his remarkable prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; and is displayed before the eyes of all men at the present time, in the condition both of the holy city, and of the Hebrew nation, who, with long deferred hope, still look forward to the re-possession of their land. But the calamities which have fallen on the Jews, furnish proof of the mission and Messiahship of Jesus, beyond that which the mere fulfilment of prophecy can give. The destruction of Jerusalem proves not only the prescience which foretold it, but also the divine power and justice which inflicted the dreadful calamity on the guilty nation, for rejecting and crucifying their Messiah. The catastrophe was deferred until the gospel had been preached among all nations, and invitation thereby given to the world to behold the issue of the conflict between the nation and their rejected king: and succeeding generations down to the present time, are called on to contemplate the

¹ John, xiii. 19.

event and its consequences in the same light. Jerusalem and the Jews are now witnesses to the world, not only that Jesus was a prophet, but also that he ascended the throne as king, and took vengeance on those who refused his dominion, and that he still reigns with a power which rebellious Israel vainly opposes.

SECTION VIII. REVELATION OF JOHN.

The Revelation of John, written near the close of the first century, professes to be a prediction of things which were shortly to come to pass.¹ Some of the predicted events manifestly belong to a time which is even now future; but the beginning of the series followed closely after the writing of the book. Amidst the predictions much religious instruction is interspersed, showing that the book, like all other parts of the Scriptures, was designed to be "profitable, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It was not given to gratify vain curiosity; and much of its prophecy is expressed in dark symbolical language, which nothing but the fulfilment can interpret. But amidst the obscurity some things are sufficiently clear to serve for strengthening the faith and hope of Christians: and as the predictions become interpreted by the occurrence of the events foretold, the divine origin of the book is demonstrated, and the seal of God is seen affixed to the whole volume, of which this book is the last and completing part.

It is our present purpose to notice very briefly the principal predictions in the book of Revelation, so far as they have been already fulfilled. We shall be aided in our examination of them by the notes of Dr. Barnes,

¹ Ch. i. 1.

who, after an original and independent investigation, arrived at an interpretation of which he says, "It surprises me, and, under this view of the matter, may occasion some surprise to my readers, to find how nearly the views coincide with those taken by the great body of Protestant interpreters. And perhaps this fact may be regarded as furnishing some evidence that, after all the obscurity attending it, there is a natural and obvious interpretation of which the book is susceptible." But though the interpretation of Dr. Barnes agrees substantially with that which has been usually given by Protestant divines, his notes are specially valuable because he confirms the interpretation by reference to the infidel historian Gibbon.¹

¹ Concerning Mr. Gibbon, Dr. Barnes says: "To my own surprise, I found, chiefly in Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, a series of events recorded such as seemed to me to correspond to a great extent with the series of symbols found in the *Apocalypse*. The symbols were such as it might be supposed would be used on the supposition that they were intended to refer to those events, and the language of Mr. Gibbon was often such as he would have used on the supposition that he had designed to prepare a commentary on the symbols employed by John. It was such, in fact, that if it had been found in a Christian writer, professedly writing a commentary on the book of Revelation, it would have been regarded by infidels as a designed attempt to force history to utter a language that should conform to a predetermined theory in expounding a book full of symbols. So remarkable have these coincidences appeared to me in the course of this exposition, that it has almost seemed as if he had designed to write a commentary on some portions of this book, and I have found it difficult to doubt that that distinguished historian was raised up by an overruling Providence to make a record of those events which would ever afterwards be regarded as an impartial and unprejudiced statement of the evidence of the fulfilment of prophecy. The historian of the '*Decline and*

CHANGES IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

The first prophecy which claims our attention describes by the most appropriate symbols the condition of the Roman empire, in the principal changes which it passed through after the death of Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars. John was banished to the isle of Patmos under the reign of Domitian, and wrote the Revelation just before the death of that cruel tyrant. Hence the predicted series of events commenced almost immediately after the writing of the book.

The symbols used in the prophecy are represented as portrayed on a scroll, sealed with seven seals, and were gradually and successively rendered visible by the breaking of the seals and the unfolding of the scroll. The events which these symbols denoted are the following:—
1. A period of great prosperity (108) in which the

Fall of the Roman Empire' had no belief in the divine origin of Christianity, but he brought to the performance of his work learning and talent such as few Christian scholars have possessed. He is always patient in his investigations; learned and scholar-like in his references; comprehensive in his groupings, and sufficiently minute in his details; unbiassed in his statements of facts, and usually cool and candid in his estimates of the causes of the events which he records; and, excepting his philosophical speculations, and his sneers at everything, he has probably written the most candid and impartial history of the times that succeeded the introduction of Christianity that the world possesses, and even after all that has been written since his time, his work contains the best ecclesiastical history that is to be found. Whatever use of it can be made in explaining and confirming the prophecies, will be regarded by the world as impartial and fair; for it was a result which he least of all contemplated, that he would ever be regarded as an expounder of the prophecies in the Bible. or he referred to as vindicating their truth."

empire was enlarged by conquest to the greatest extent that it ever attained, and enjoyed a sort of perpetual triumph, being wisely and ably ruled by the good emperors, Nerva, Trajan, Adrian, and the Antonines; A. D. 96 to 180.¹—2. A time in which prosperity and internal peace were banished from the empire, and civil wars prevailed with murders and cruel slaughters (109). This change began with the accession of Commodus,² A. D. 180.—3. A time of general calamity (110) in which wheat and barley were sold by exact weight, at several times their usual price; and in which the government rigidly and oppressively exacted tribute on these necessaries of life; and by imperial edicts with severe penalties forbade the doing of anything that would lessen the income from wine and oil as sources of revenue.³ The severe exactions commenced under Caracalla, who reigned from A. D. 211–217, and, after some abatement under Alexander Severus, were again revived, and under Diocletian and Galerius were most oppressive and ruinous.—4. A time of great mortality from wars, pestilence, famine, and wild beasts (111), A. D. 249, and onward.⁴—5. The persecution under

¹ Rev. vi. 2.

² Rev. vi. 4.

³ Rev. vi. 5, 6.

⁴ Rev. vi. 8. Respecting events 1, 2, 3 and 4, it may be observed that the first only has a distinct period. It was predicted that 2 would "take peace from the earth," or, as it should be rendered, *the* peace; that is, it would terminate the peace and prosperity which prevailed during the first period. The calamitous events 2, 3, and 4 occurred as to their beginning in the order designated; but they did not pass away to give place to the next in succession. Thus the bloody civil wars of No. 2 continued during the oppressive exactions of No. 3, and the mortality of No. 4. Between the years 250 and 300 no less than thirty tyrants usurped the throne, and were proclaimed in different parts of the empire;

Diocletian-(112) the tenth, last, and severest that the Christians suffered from pagan Rome. The martyrs are encouraged with the promise of divine favor, and of an end to their persecutions; ¹ A. D. 302-313.—6. A time of general commotions (113); of political revolutions in which civil rulers would be stripped of their glory, and fall from their high places of power; ² and also a time of great consternation from a dread of divine judgment. ³ The empire passed from heathen to Christian hands under Constantine the Great, A. D. 312. Northern hordes, whose invasions of Italy filled the people with consternation, hovered about the borders of the empire; but were held back for a time, like a rising wind or tempest held in suspense. ⁴ The suspension of this dreaded judgment was ordered by Providence for a purpose connected with the interests of the church. ⁵ The divine judgment by ravaging invasions, literal earthquakes, and wars, produced alarm and terror as if the world were coming to an end. ⁶ Though delayed, they may be regarded as vengeance inflicted for the persecution of Christians ⁷—“the wrath of the Lamb:” ⁸ and were probably so regarded by many on whom these calamities fell with crushing weight. Galerius, who instigated the Diocletian persecution, was driven to issue the edict which put an end to that last

they were all defeated, and, with but two or three exceptions, slain. In like manner the oppressive exactions and consequent distress which belonged to No. 3, continued after the introduction of No. 4, and were never greater and more ruinous to the empire than under Diocletian and Galerius in the time of No. 5.

¹ Rev. vi. 9-11.

² Rev. vi. 12, 13.

³ Rev. vi. 14-17.

⁴ Rev. vii. 1, 2.

⁵ Rev. vii. 3.

⁶ Rev. vi. 14.

⁷ Rev. vi. 10.

⁸ Rev. vi. 16.

persecution by an apprehension that a disease with which he was visited was a judgment inflicted on him by the God of the Christians.—7. The catastrophe of this series, or the fall of the judgments which had been suspended during the time of No. 6. As these judgments fell in a succession of calamitous events, they are represented as forming a new series into which No. 7 is subdivided.

The changes which we have considered make the outline of Roman history from the time of Domitian to the year 400. This history is given with exactness in expressive symbols; and it cannot be that human sagacity made the prophetic record.

DOWNFALL OF THE EMPIRE.

Each event of the second series is symbolically introduced by the blowing of a trumpet. They are in order as follows:—1. The invasion of the Goths (114) desolating the country with fire and sword; A. D. 410.¹—2. The depredations of the Vandals (115). This tribe passed by numerous migrations from the shores of the Baltic to the northern coast of Africa, where they established themselves as a formidable maritime power. With strength and impetuosity not unaptly represented by the symbol of a volcanic mountain thrown into the sea, they ravaged the Mediterranean,² and contributed much toward the downfall of the Roman empire; A. D. 428–468.³—3. The invasion by Attila, king of the Huns (116). This chieftain resembled a meteor in bril-

¹ Rev. viii. 7.

² As if Mount Atlas, from which their ships were built, had come down on fire into the sea.

³ Rev. viii. 8, 9.

liance, and in the superstitious dread with which he was regarded. He received the title "The Scourge of God." His ravages fell chiefly on those parts of Italy in which the rivers have their source, and were in their effects a "bitter" calamity. The blow inflicted on the empire, is to be attributed to the chieftain himself, symbolized as a star, rather than to his people,¹ A. D. 447.—4. The subjection of Italy to barbarian rule under Odoacer, king of the Heruli (117). This affected the supreme power, symbolized by the sun,² and is regarded as the consummated downfall of the Western Empire. Yet the light was not wholly extinguished, but only "a third part" of it, some parts of the old constitution were retained in the West, and the Eastern Empire still remained.

Here a pause occurs in the blowing of the trumpets, distinguishing the first four from the last three. The first four are grouped together as of like kind: and so the four events to which they refer are grouped together in history, as the blows which effected the downfall of the Western Empire. The occurrence of these events at the proper place in chronology; their precise agreement as to number with the number of the symbols employed to represent them; and the appropriateness of the symbols; may suffice to assure us that we have given the right interpretation of the prophecy, and that the prophecy proceeded from Divine foreknowledge.—5. The rise, spread, and tormenting power of the Saracens (118). Their leader was Mahomet, a chieftain of extraordinary genius, who claimed to be the prophet of God. He is symbolized as a star falling from heaven to earth. He obtained followers by proselyting them

¹ Rev. viii. 10, 11.

² Rev. viii. 12.

to his false doctrine; and hence the host who went forth under his authority to afflict the world, originated, according to the symbolical representation, in a sort of spontaneous generation out of smoke which issued from the nether world. They were numerous and destructive as the locusts which sometimes desolate eastern nations. But they differed from the Goths, and most other warriors who had preceded them, as scourges of mankind, in that they were prohibited from destroying the productions of the earth, and committing indiscriminate slaughter. They made war on idolaters, and persons who refused to receive their religion, and submit to their authority. It was their policy, not to kill men, but to subdue them and exact tribute from them, and thus, to "hurt" and "torment" them. This they did for 150 years (five prophetic months). After this they changed their policy, and cultivated learning and peaceful arts. In the prophetic picture of these warriors, some striking peculiarities in their external appearance seem to be marked. They wore yellow turbans, and iron cuirasses; and with the bearded face of man, had the long hair of woman.¹—6. The overthrow of the Eastern Empire (119). The Turks under Togrul their chief took Bagdad, A. D. 1055, and soon began to extend their conquests west of the Euphrates. Though Providence had prepared this powerful horde to effect the overthrow of the Eastern Empire, various causes combined to produce a delay of the catastrophe until A. D. 1453. Dr. Barnes computes that this interval of delay agrees well with the prophetic time mentioned by John, "an hour, a day, a month, and a year." In their progress westward they may be contemplated as emerging from the waters of

¹ Rev. ix. 1-11.

the river, and accordingly the four bands into which they were divided, are symbolically represented as four angels loosed from their confinement in the river, and going forth, after the restraints have been removed, to accomplish the service to which they had been appointed. In the prophetic vision the Turkish army by which Constantinople was taken, is brought to view; as containing myriads of horsemen, and dealing destruction from their ranks as if from the mouths of their horses, by fire-arms and gunpowder, then for the first time used in war. The symbols employed are not adapted to describe any army that had ever before been in battle. Some striking peculiarities in the external appearance of the host seem to be marked, in the colors attributed to their military dress, namely, scarlet, blue, and yellow; and in the probable reference to the banner under which they fought, which consisted of horses' tails, acknowledged emblems of the authority by which the army was commanded.¹

Prominent in the history of the times are the two events which we have referred to the blowing of the fifth and sixth trumpets; and their agreement with the prediction is so exact that the prophecy must have proceeded from divine foreknowledge.

THE REFORMATION.

Six trumpets have sounded, and six judgments have fallen on the Roman empire involving it in ruins; but the woes suffered by men have not turned them away from their sins.² A divine interposition of another kind is needed, and this is graciously granted in the Reformation, which commenced sixty-four years after

¹ Rev. ix. 13-20.

² Rev. ix. 20, 21.

the taking of Constantinople. This event is symbolized in the prophecy by the descent of an angel from heaven, not blowing warlike trumpets, nor pouring out vials of wrath, but having a rainbow on his head, the token of peace and mercy.¹ The first movements in the Reformation roused public attention, and drew forth thundering anathemas from the city of the seven hills: but the people of God were instructed not to heed them, and especially not to regard them as utterances of divine authority.² With a solemn oath the angel is represented as announcing that the time was fully come, for a divine work which would be finished when the seventh angel should sound.³

Martin Luther, by a providence of God, which was to him like the visit of a beneficent angel, found in his monastery a Bible, which became the means of his conversion, and the cause of the Reformation. From that time this book has been an "open" volume, and the knowledge of it has been diffusing inestimable blessings among the nations of the earth. When we observe that the gift which the angel in the symbolic prophecy brought in his hand from heaven was an open book,⁴ we need not be at a loss to understand what that book was. The holy volume was read by the reformers with eagerness and pleasure, and was as honey to the taste; but the consequences were "bitter."⁵ The free use of the Bible restored the preaching of divine truth which had been intermitted during long ages of darkness.⁶ The increase of religious knowledge at the time of the Reformation caused careful inquiry respecting the true

¹ Rev. x. 1.

³ Rev. x. 5, 6.

⁵ Rev. x. 9.

² Rev. x. 3, 4

⁴ Rev. x. 2.

⁶ Rev. x. 11.

church, the doctrines of propitiatory sacrifice, including that of justification, and the distinguishing character of accepted worshippers.¹ The inquiry disclosed the fact that what had long been regarded as the Holy Catholic Church was merely the outer court, trodden under foot by those who were not the true Israel of God.² The time during which this desecration of the holy place should continue is stated to be forty-two prophetic months, or 1260 years. During this period of papal ascendancy, it was foretold that God would have a small but competent number of witnesses who would stand up for the truth, and denounce the judgments of God against the crimes of men;³ and that the papal power would make war against them at a time when they had *fully*, though not finally, borne their testimony in circumstances of severe trial;⁴ and that the persecuting power would succeed in effectually silencing their testimony for the space of three and one-half prophetic days.⁵ The crusade against the Waldenses fulfilled this prediction; and on May 5th, 1514, it was proclaimed in the Lateran Council that heresy had been completely exterminated. This triumph of the papacy lasted three and one-half years, until Luther posted up his theses at Wittemberg on October 31st, 1517. From that time the testimony of the witnesses was renewed, and became triumphant;⁶ and a commotion among the nations subject to the papacy followed, with a falling away of part from the papal dominion.⁷ This interesting portion of Revelation exhibits, in a beautiful picture, which must

¹ Rev. xi. 1.

³ Rev. xi. 3-6.

⁵ Rev. xi. 8, 9.

⁷ Rev. xi. 13.

² Rev. xi. 2.

⁴ Rev. xi. 7.

⁶ Rev. xi. 11, 12.

have been drawn by divine prescience, the principal facts connected with the Reformation.

The Reformation was, in its design and effect, intimately connected with the final establishment of God's kingdom on the earth, and was therefore the beginning of that gracious work which is yet to be completed. The first four trumpets brought the Western Empire to a close; and the fifth and sixth in like manner terminated the Eastern Empire. But while the Eastern Empire was coming to its end, a new power which has continued to the present century arose in the West, and prolonged the duration of the Roman Empire under a new form. This new power, like the forms of empire which preceded it, must pass away before all has been accomplished that is to follow the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which will bring the kingdoms of the world into complete subjection to God and his Christ. This consummation will fulfil all that is predicted in the symbolical representations which have thus far been considered. The prophecy now turns back to take a more particular view of the papal power.

THE PAPAL POWER.

What follows under this head may be considered a continuation of Section VI.

Preparatory to a representation of the Papal Power, the church is brought to view as about to have increase which would rule all nations by establishing in the earth a strong and durable kingdom of truth and righteousness.¹ Satan, unwilling to lose his dominion over the world, sought to prevent the enlargement and dominion of the church by devouring its increase.² But in this

¹ Rev. xii. 1, 2, 5.

² Rev. xii. 3, 4.

he was defeated. The increase¹ of the church was taken under the special guardianship of Heaven; and therefore its ultimate rule over the world has been secured.² The form under which Satan is represented in this malicious attempt is that of a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns. We learn elsewhere,³ that these symbols refer to Rome, the city of the seven hills, and to the power of ten kingdoms which Rome wielded. In this case the seven heads are represented as wearing seven crowns; and therefore the persecutions of imperial or pagan Rome are here intended.

When the Roman empire passed from pagan to Christian hands, Satan, as represented in the symbol, was cast down from heaven.⁴ Being no longer able to use the supreme power of the Empire to prevent the enlargement and dominion of the church, he aimed to engulf the whole church itself in an inundation of worldliness.⁵ From this danger the true people of God escaped by retiring into obscurity; and the earth afforded help by furnishing places of retreat in which they could live separate from the world, and beyond the reach of its pernicious influence.⁶

The attempt of Satan to inundate the church with worldliness was successful so far as concerned the mass

¹ Or the prophecy may be interpreted to refer specially to the person of Constantine. The woman's "travailing in birth" may denote an agonizing prayer of the persecuted church that some one should arise in their ranks who would have power to stop their cruel persecution. This prayer was answered when Constantine appeared among the followers of Christ; and his being "caught up unto God and to his throne" may denote his elevation to the imperial throne.

² Rev. xii. 5.

³ Rev. xvii. 9-18.

⁴ Rev. xii. 9-11.

⁵ Rev. xii. 13-15.

⁶ Rev. xii. 14-16.

of professing Christians, usually called the Visible Church.

When profession, instead of exposing to persecution, tended to procure imperial favor, multitudes assumed the Christian name who were destitute of the Christian spirit. Unholy men filled the churches, and unholy pastors or bishops, soon began to exercise an authority which Christ never conferred on his true ministers. This evil increased, till at length the bishop of Rome claimed to be the supreme head of the church, and exercised civil as well as ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

Satan accomplished much by the diffusion of worldliness and false doctrines among the professed followers of Christ: but this bloodless method of assailing the church did not satisfy his cruel malignity. He soon made papal Rome as zealous to shed Christian blood, as pagan Rome had ever been, fulfilling the predictions, "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed;"¹ and, "In her [Babylon] was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."²

By the elevation of the Pope a new power arose in Rome, which re-established the ancient empire in a new form. The Empire had received a deadly wound from the sword of barbarian invaders, A. D. 476. But the deadly wound was afterwards healed by the power which the Roman bishop had acquired.³

The four great empires of the world are all symbolized in the prophecy of Daniel by beasts, and after a like mode of representation, the Roman empire is symbolized in the book of Revelation by a beast having seven

¹ Rev. xii. 17.

² Rev. xviii. 24.

³ Rev. xiii. 3-15.

heads and ten horns. While pagan rule continued, the beast was represented as a dragon,¹ by interpretation the devil,² as if Satan, the god of idolatry, had then ruled in person. In the subsequent administration of the empire, the beast undergoes a change, but still retains the seven heads and ten horns. The seven heads refer to the seven hills on which Rome was built; and therefore determine that in all the changes of power, its centre of influence was Rome. The ten horns denote (105) the number of kingdoms included in the extent of the empire, comprehending in round numbers ten kingdoms, though their separate existence as kingdoms was at first merely prospective; for it is said of them, that they "have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast."³ To represent the ecclesiastical or spiritual power of Rome another beast is introduced: and the relations between the two beasts, as described in what is said of their co-operation and mutual dependence, symbolizes the relation between the civil and ecclesiastical power of Rome.⁴

The bishop of Rome has directly exercised civil authority over a part of Italy, since the eighth century, in which he obtained dominion over the exarchate of Ravenna, the kingdom of Lombardy, and the state of Rome; and assumed in consequence the triple crown. His indirect power over the whole empire was fully established, when at the close of the same century he conferred imperial authority on Charlemagne (120). At that time, and for centuries following, he was considered God's vicegerent on earth, possessing a divine right to appoint or depose kings, and to absolve subjects from

¹ Rev. xii. 3.

² Rev. xvii. 12.

³ Rev. xii. 9.

⁴ Rev. xiii. 11-18.

allegiance to rulers who had fallen under his displeasure.

The secular power of the pope was a continuation of that which had been exercised by the Roman emperors, and is properly represented by the beast with seven heads and ten horns. This power would have become extinct, if the spiritual power of the papacy had not arisen, which, because distinct in origin and kind, is represented by a separate beast. The spiritual power, which was exercised over the minds of men, and was gained in part by pretended miracles,¹ secured homage to the secular power, and ultimately to that "image" of it² which was formed in the person of Charlemagne.

The power of the pope has been declining ever since the Reformation. The monarchs of Europe now feel little obligation to him for their authority, and little dread of losing it by his anathema. At this moment Victor Emanuel, a man whom he has excommunicated, is the acknowledged king of Italy, and into his kingdom those states seem destined to become incorporated over which the pope now exercises civil jurisdiction.

In predicting the downfall of the papal power, the prophecy includes that of the Roman Catholic Church, which it represents as a woman sitting on the seven-headed beast.³ The true church is represented in its final triumph, as the bride, the Lamb's wife;⁴ and, in its afflicted and persecuted state, as a woman driven into the wilderness.⁵ The symbol of a woman is in like manner employed to denote the corrupt and antichristian church: but she bears the character, and wears

¹ Rev. xiii. 13 14.

² Rev. xiii. 14.

³ Rev. xvii. 3.

⁴ Rev. xxi. 9.

⁵ Rev. xii. 6.

the dress of a harlot.¹ So many particulars of the symbol agree with the known character and history of the Roman Catholic Church, that there is no difficulty in determining the design of the symbol. But if there were, it would be removed by the explanation which the Holy Spirit has given, and which amounts almost to a literal and express declaration of the design. When it is said, "the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth,"² no other than Rome can be intended. Babylon was the seat of the first great empire in the world; and Rome, as the capital of the fourth empire, took the place of Babylon, and was not without reason called in the prophecy by the name of Babylon.³ But it is manifest that the ancient city on the Euphrates cannot be literally intended; for this had long ceased to reign over the nations when John wrote. Farther, the mention of the "seven mountains on which the woman sitteth"⁴ confirms the application to Rome, which was built on seven hills. Also the forms of government administered at Rome are accurately enumerated.⁵ Five of these, kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes, had preceded the time when John wrote. The sixth, the imperial, was then in existence, but John predicted that it would not continue. A deadly wound was inflicted in the conquest of Rome by Odoacer, who became king of Italy, and removed the seat of government to Ravenna. During the greater part of the time until the dominion of the pope was established in Rome, the city was governed by a duke, dependent on the exarch of

¹ Rev. xvii. 4.

² Rev. xvii. 18.

³ Rev. xvii. 5.

⁴ Rev. xvii. 9.

⁵ Rev. xvii. 10.

Ravenna; and to this period the words of the prophecy apply, "the beast that was, and is not."¹ If the feeble and dependent dukedom be numbered, the papacy which followed will be the eighth form of government; but the dukedom is not numbered as a head of the beast. The prophecy marked the distinction, and history has confirmed its accuracy. We may notice moreover that the exposition of the ten horns agrees with the supposition that Rome was intended. Of the four empires described in Daniel's prophecy, the only one divided into ten parts was the fourth, or Roman.² Yet this division had not taken place when John wrote, and therefore he calls them "Kings," which have received no kingdom as yet.³ The proof that Rome was intended would scarcely have been greater, if the city had been expressly named.

The propriety of representing the Roman Catholic Church as sustained by the papal power, cannot be questioned. Catholics themselves maintain that the church was built on Peter, and that the pope is Peter's successor.

The fornication with which the woman is charged, is said to have been committed with her by the kings of the earth.⁴ This manifestly alludes to that prostitution of things sacred and spiritual, which the papal church has made to sustain the power of kings, and which kings have repaid by conferring honor and wealth on the clergy, and especially on the pope.

In many passages to which reference has been made in this section and section 6, Daniel, Paul, and John have predicted the rise of the papal power, the charac-

¹ Rev. xvii. 11.

² Dan. ii. 38-41; vii. 7.

³ Rev. xvii. 12.

⁴ Rev. xvii. 2.

ter which it would assume, and the acts which it would perform. A study of these predictions, and a careful comparison of them with the events foretold, will leave no reasonable doubt that these men were taught of God to write the prophecies which they have left on record.

A remarkable period is repeatedly mentioned in the prophecies designated as "a time, times, and half a time," or three years and a half, or 42 months, or 1260 days. During this period, which is understood to be 1260 years, the papal power was to continue, and God's witnesses were to prophesy in sackcloth. This period has not yet terminated; for the papal power still continues, and still obstructs the preaching of the gospel but the manifest decline of this power gives promise that the prediction of its utter overthrow will in due time be fulfilled. As the rise was gradual, so is the downfall. A step was made in the pope's advancement in 533, when the Emperor Justinian appealed to him as the highest ecclesiastical authority; and a step was made in his decline 1260 years after at the commencement of the French revolution, in the progress of which he was dethroned and imprisoned. Another step in his rise was made in the year 606, when he was declared universal bishop by the Emperor Phocas; and a period of 1260 years after this date reaches to the present time, when his throne is undermined by popular revolution. But the papal power was not fully developed until it assumed the triple crown; and we must therefore wait patiently until the fulness of time shall come for its complete overthrow.

PASSING AND FUTURE EVENTS.

Much that is predicted in the book of Revelation remains yet to be accomplished. From unfulfilled

prophecy no direct argument can be drawn that the prophecies proceeded from divine foreknowledge.

But when a part of the prophecy has been fulfilled, and when the remaining part opens to view a grand consummation to which all the fulfilled part is tributary, the harmony and completeness of the entire system give assurance that it was arranged in wisdom, and that the foreknowledge which past events have already demonstrated, comprehended the end from the beginning, and bore like relation to the whole. Such is the system of prophecy contained in the book of Revelation. The final triumph of the Redeemer, the complete establishment of his kingdom, is an end worthy of God, worthy of that overruling Providence by which all the events predicted in the book are directed to the accomplishment of this glorious consummation.

When prophecy is fulfilled by events which are now passing under our eyes, the proof that it proceeded from divine foreknowledge is in the highest degree impressive and satisfactory, if we are assured that the events which we observe are the things predicted; but on this point there is danger of mistake. Passing events have to our view a magnitude greater than they really possess, and we are prone to seek a place for them in prophecy, when perhaps the prophecy entirely overlooked them. It is otherwise with respect to past events which have taken their proper place in history, and appear to the historian in retrospect, as they did to the prophet in prospect, all in their fixed order, and each with its proper degree of prominence. So the historian marks the prominent changes in the Roman empire, precisely as they appeared to John in the opening of the seven seals; and the succession of blows which caused the downfall of the empire, precisely as they were seen by John in the

sounding of the seven trumpets. The agreement is so complete in both series, as respects each event in itself and as respects the order of the whole, that infidelity must close its eyes or become convinced that what the historian has recorded is precisely what the prophet foresaw.

As the period which followed the opening of the seventh seal was subdivided into a new series marked by the sounding of seven trumpets; so the period which follows the sounding of the seventh trumpet, is subdivided into a new series, marked by the pouring out of seven vials. These vials denote the judgments which are now causing the downfall of the papal power; and consequently the period of their being poured out includes the time in which we live. Though we have less advantage for interpreting and applying the prophecy than will be possessed by future generations, there are many points which may be determined with a good degree of certainty.

The Reformation predicted in the 10th chapter, prepared the way for the sounding of the seventh trumpet which was to complete the downfall of Roman power; and an angel having the everlasting gospel to preach is described in the 14th chapter, as preceding the angel that announces the fall of Babylon.¹ There can be no doubt that the increase of spiritual knowledge is an effectual means of correcting and exploding papal errors, and overthrowing papal power; and there is strong probability that the flight of the angel having the everlasting gospel to preach, denotes the extraordinary effort which commenced just before the close of the last century for spreading the gospel, by foreign and domestic

¹ Rev. xiv. 6-8.

missions, Bible societies, Sunday schools, &c. But the means denoted by the outpouring of the vials, are of very different character, since what is poured from the vials is called "the wrath of God."¹

The places in which the seven vials are poured are the same as those which were affected by the sounding of the trumpets: and are mentioned in the same order. This fact suggests that the order of succession in the pouring out of the vials may possibly have been determined by geography, rather than by the chronology of events preindicated. But, in the scheme of interpretation which will be proposed in the next paragraph, the order of succession in the divine judgments which are supposed to be preindicated will be found to correspond in the main with that of the vials, especially if the beginnings of the several judgments are regarded. In the changes of the Roman Empire which followed the opening of the seven seals, the preceding event did not always give way to its successor, but remained and cooperated with it; so, according to our scheme of interpretation, one vial of wrath poured out continues its destroying influence after the next has followed.

The events which we suppose to be intended by the outpouring of the seven vials are the following:—1. The general prevalence of infidelity and corrupt morals² exhibited especially in the French Revolution, which occurred almost simultaneously with the rise of modern missions. The prevalence of infidelity tended greatly to weaken the power of popery. 2. The naval battles which immediately followed the French Revolution, and destroyed the fleets of the nations that upheld the papacy.³ 3. The invasion of northern Italy by Napo-

¹ Rev. xv. 1.

² Rev. xvi. 2.

³ Rev. xvi. 3.

leon Bonaparte.¹ 4. The wars which succeeded in Europe, and kept it as if in a continual blaze.² 5. The dethronement and imprisonment of Pius VI. in 1798; and the dethronement of Pius IX. in 1848, with his subsequent afflictions.³ 6. The gradual wasting of the Turkish power,⁴ which is fitly represented by the drying up of a river, and especially of the river Euphrates, from which it arose,⁵ and to which it extends. 7. The seventh vial has not yet been poured out, and the preceding six have not yet completed their effect.

Without undue confidence in the application of prophecy to recent and passing events, we see in the present condition of the world evident indication that the papal and Mahometan powers are near their end. Their destruction will fulfil prophecy, and remove powerful obstacles to the spread of Christianity. In this general view of passing events, whatever may be said of minute details, the events fulfil the prophecy, and prove that it was given by the omniscient God.

No religion except that of the Bible has ever risked its reputation and success on the prediction of future events. But the Bible contains a system of predictions so extensive, and at the same time, in many of its parts, so minute, that it may be considered a forewritten history of the world; and the evidence which it affords that God must have been the author of the Bible is truly overwhelming.

SECTION IX. DATE OF THE PROPHECIES.

In a few cases infidels have attempted to impugn the evidence from the prophecies, by alleging that they

¹ Rev. xvi. 4-7.

² Rev. xvi. 8, 9.

³ Rev. xvi. 10, 11.

⁴ Rev. xvi. 12-16.

⁵ Rev. ix. 14.

were written after the events which they describe. This method was adopted as early as the third century by Porphyry (57 *a*), who in opposition to historical proof maintained that Daniel's prophecy concerning the four great empires of the world was written in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and that as far down as that time it was history instead of prophecy. In this unfounded hypothesis he has admitted the exact fulfilment of the prophecy down to the time of Antiochus, and reduced the question between himself and Christians to one of simple history, in which his opponents had well-established truth to oppose to his conjecture. But Porphyry, even if we allow him his conjecture, is a valuable witness in our favor. He gives proof that the prophecy in question was certainly extant in his day; and more, that it was extant in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes; since so acute and learned an opponent of Christianity would not have assigned so early a date to the prediction if he could have found a plausible pretext for attributing to it a later origin. Now, a large part of Daniel's prophecy has been fulfilled since the days of Antiochus. It was not until about two hundred years after that the death of Christ occurred, an event which Daniel predicted with a definite computation of the time when it was to take place. In the time of Antiochus the Roman dominion had not attained sufficient extent to be considered an empire of the world; and yet Daniel's prophecy describes it as the fourth great empire, more powerful than those which had preceded it. The division of the empire into ten kingdoms, and the rise of the papal power, events predicted by Daniel, have occurred not only since the time of Antiochus, but also since the time of Porphyry.

Some modern infidels, in imitation of Porphyry, have

assumed that Isaiah's prediction concerning the capture of Babylon by Cyrus was written after the event. In this they, like Porphyry, admit the exactness with which the prophecy was fulfilled, and oppose mere conjecture to the truthful testimony of history. In this case also, unfortunately for the conjecture, the prophecy extends down to modern times. It describes not only the capture of Babylon, but also its utter desolation, an event which did not occur until some centuries after Christ. Yet, if anything in history is true, it is certain that the book of Isaiah formed a part of the Hebrew Bible in the time of Christ.

Many of the predictions examined in the preceding sections of this chapter are at the present time in progress of fulfilment. Respecting the date of these there is no need for appeal to history: and these alone, if all others were set aside, furnish sufficient proof that the Scriptures contain revelations which have proceeded from divine foreknowledge. But the dates of the other prophecies are as well ascertained as the general facts of ancient history, and are true beyond all rational doubt. The whole taken together forms an immense mass of evidence, establishing conclusively the divine origin of the Bible.

CHAPTER VII.

MIRACLES.

SECTION I. CREDIBILITY OF MIRACLES.

GOD HAS POWER TO WORK MIRACLES; AND, ON SUFFICIENT TESTIMONY THAT HE HAS WROUGHT A MIRACLE, THE FACT OUGHT TO BE BELIEVED.

I. GOD has power to work miracles.

A miracle has been defined to be *a suspension of the laws of nature*. A universal suspension is manifestly not intended in this definition; but such a suspension only as relates to the particular event. According to the course of nature, a dead man remains dead, and his body gradually becomes decomposed. The laws of nature which determine these sequences become suspended or inoperative if the dead man is restored to life; and the restoration is therefore a miraculous event. A miracle exists whenever the laws of nature become inoperative, that is, whenever a sequence occurs which they do not determine.

To judge infallibly whether an event is miraculous, we must know all the laws of nature that can affect the case. If, at the command of some prophet, a ball of metal should remain suspended in the atmosphere, or an axe should swim on the surface of the water, the phenomenon would be miraculous, because it would not be the sequence that nature's laws would determine; but it is

not a miracle when a needle is suspended in the air by the attraction of a magnet. In the latter case the law of gravitation is counteracted and controlled as truly and effectually as in the former; but the laws of nature are not suspended, for the counteracting and controlling cause is natural, and operates in obedience to the laws of nature. A person ignorant of magnetic power may be deceived into the belief that a needle held up by a magnet is suspended by supernatural influence; but what at first seemed to him supernatural, appears natural as soon as he has learned the true limits of nature's power. The notions of time and space are not more familiar to the minds of men than the notions of cause and effect. In the phenomena of the universe, innumerable orders of sequences are observable, in which the events stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect; and ordinary men take sufficient cognisance of these sequences to serve them for most purposes of practical utility. Philosophers make more extended researches, and discover orders of sequence, or laws of nature, which are unknown to ordinary men; and they are therefore better able to judge in some cases whether events are natural or miraculous.

But philosophers arrogate too much to their science if they claim either that it has discovered, or that it is able to discover laws which determine the occurrence of all possible events. To illustrate this point, let us imagine some philosopher wholly ignorant of animated nature, but perfectly skilled in the laws which govern the material universe, and let us introduce him to a view of muscular motion, and call on him to explain it. All his knowledge of impulse, attraction, and the modes in which material bodies act and react on each other, fails to explain the phenomena which he beholds. He finds

laws of nature which he knows, controlled and suspended by an agency which he knows not. A limb at rest does not continue at rest, and a limb in motion does not continue to move, as his philosophy teaches him to expect; and the whole body springs from the ground, as if the law of gravitation were for the time repealed. All these phenomena are supernatural to our philosopher until he has enlarged the boundaries of his knowledge, and explored a department of nature in which matter is operated on by mind. When he has entered into this department, how shall he know its boundaries? When brute minds operate on brute limbs, the operation is natural, and conforms to laws of nature. So it is when human minds operate on human limbs, or by means of them on material objects, or on the bodies and minds of other men. But how shall it be determined that nature's realms extend no further, and that she has no laws which govern beyond these boundaries? Has nature nothing to do with angelic agency, nothing to do with the agency of God? The agency of God in all the ordinary operations of his Providence we account natural; and, if we could comprehend his Providence in all his dispensations, we might discover that miracles have their laws as well as the movements of Providence to which we are accustomed. Miracles, like showers of stars, occur but seldom; but it cannot be inferred from their infrequency that their coming is not determined by some law. As a man who is moving his limbs regularly, in walking along in a straight line, may, at a prescribed point, turn aside from this course; so God may, by a rule known to himself, deviate from the ordinary course of his Providence; and, so far as respects him, the distinction between what is natural and what is supernatural or miraculous may be merely rela-

tive to our ignorance. But God's miraculous works and their laws, if they have any, belong to a realm which lies beyond the province of philosophy, and which philosophy has neither the means nor the ability to explore.

Philosophy is guilty of something worse than arrogance if it affirms that miracles are impossible. To affirm that nature's laws cannot be suspended is to deny the existence of nature's God. The philosopher who maintains that miracles are impossible is an atheist. All the arrangements and movements of visible things are referred by him to the laws of nature. Beyond these he knows no governing power, and investing these with supremacy he allows no place in the universe to anything which does not conform to these rules. The pious mind cannot bound its view by these abstractions, but sees God in all the movements of nature, and regards the laws of nature as merely the modes in which he chooses to operate. Hence true piety readily admits that God may for sufficient cause change the mode of his operations, or, in other words, work miracles.

A miracle is an event which cannot be accounted for otherwise than by referring it to divine agency. Philosophy claims to have accounted for an event when it has pointed out an antecedent event as its cause. It traces effects and causes through lines of sequence which run back to the creation, and there terminate, leaving philosophy obliged to accept the doctrine of theology, that there is a great first cause, for whose existence and operations philosophy cannot account, and from whom all these lines of sequence have originated. A miracle has its consequents like any other event, but differs from other events in not having a natural cause as its antecedent. It begins a new line of sequence,

which, like those commencing at the creation, must be attributed to divine power.

When we say that a miracle is an event which cannot be accounted for otherwise than by referring it to divine agency, full scope is allowed to test it according to the most improved methods of scientific investigation. But there are many cases in which unlearned men can judge of nature's powers as correctly as the most learned philosopher. It does not require a philosopher to determine that a gentle call to "arise" or "come forth," has no natural efficacy to awake from the sleep of death those whom the loudest thunders leave undisturbed. When a man known to have been born blind is suddenly made to see by an application of clay to his eyes every one knows that there is no natural efficacy in the application to produce vision. When a congenital cataract has been removed by a surgical operation, and the patient is made to see, there is room for scientific inquiry into the efficacy of the means employed; but scientific inquiry into the efficacy of clay to give sight to the blind is wholly useless; and Galilean fishermen can judge on this point as correctly as Newton. As it is possible for God to work a miracle, so it is possible for even unlearned men to have a rational conviction that a miracle has been wrought.

II. On sufficient testimony that God has wrought a miracle, the fact ought to be believed.

In admitting the general credibility of ancient heathen historians, we do not hold ourselves bound to believe the accounts which they have given of prodigies and supernatural events. We make allowance for the superstition of the times, and acquit the historians of any design to deceive, when they record as facts legends and rumors accredited by themselves, and popularly be-

lieved; but we take the liberty of suspecting that there may be a mistake with respect to these marvellous occurrences, and of examining for ourselves the testimony on which they were admitted to record. Thus far we have claimed for the sacred writers no other credit than that which is due to other faithful historians; and, finding in their writings many accounts of miraculous events, it becomes necessary to inquire into the credibility of these accounts. In a superstitious age fabulous wonders obtained a ready credence; but the philosophic caution of modern times inclines to suspect the truth of reports or records which describe events that cannot be accounted for. Hence the tendency of the present age requires a strict scrutiny of the grounds on which the miracles of Scripture are to be believed, a scrutiny from which Christianity does not shrink.

We the less readily believe in miracles because we have never witnessed them ourselves; but it does not accord with philosophy or common sense to disbelieve everything that lies beyond the range of our own personal experience. Such incredulity is reproved by the folly of the Siamese monarch, who would not believe that water anywhere becomes solid so as to bear up the wheels of a carriage. Nor can we decide against the credibility of miracles on the ground that they are contrary to universal experience. This would be to assume that no miracle ever did happen, that is, to beg the question in dispute. If a miracle was ever witnessed by any man, or number of men, their experience would be in favor of that miracle, and consequently the opposite experience could not be universal. Nor can it be said with propriety of all the world beside, that their experience is against the miracle, unless they, having been in circumstances favorable to the witnessing of it, know

that it did not happen. Events are not contrary to the experience of any one merely because they lie beyond the range of his experience. Of very few persons can it be said that it has fallen within the range of their experience to witness electricity drawn from the clouds, as in Franklin's experiment: but it is contrary to no man's experience; and philosophy and common sense require it to be believed on the testimony of Franklin alone.

It will perhaps be objected that Franklin's experiment may be repeated by other men, and that the result of it is to be believed because it accords with the laws of nature; but that miracles, not being the result of nature's laws, are not to be believed with like readiness. We admit the distinction; but we deny that the result of philosophical experiments is believed because it accords with the laws of nature. These experiments sometimes discover laws of nature before unknown, and therefore the result must be known before the law can be determined. The senses of the experimenter and other observers of the experiment, are the original witnesses of the result, and on their testimony philosophy and common sense are compelled to rely. The question arises whether the result accords with known laws of nature, or develops some law before unknown, or indicates some agency controlling the laws of nature.

Any extraordinary phenomena which may be believed on the testimony of the senses, may be credibly testified to those who have not personally witnessed them. Few persons have seen a shower of stars, or a man restored to life after three days of suspended animation, or sight regained after the removal of a cataract; yet the credibility of such facts, when reported by truthful witnesses, all persons admit. Now we maintain that the eye-wit-

nesses of the wonderful works recorded in the gospel history, are worthy of belief; that they have faithfully reported to us what their senses testified to them, and that the question whether supernatural agency was concerned in the event, appeals as directly to our judgment as it did to theirs. They tell us that water-pots at Cana were filled with water, and that when drawn out it was wine;—that the sea was boisterous, but, after Christ's command, was calm;—and that Lazarus was dead, and afterwards was alive. The facts presented to us by their testimony are as if our own eyes had seen them; and the question comes to us for decision, just as if we had been the witnesses of the phenomena, whether the change produced indicates supernatural agency.

In the observations which we have made on the prophecies of Scripture we have found indications of divine agency obvious to our own senses. Our own eyes read the predictions, and our own eyes see their fulfilment. These observations prepare us to admit the more readily a divine agency in the marvellous works which the Gospels record. So, in the morality and doctrines of the Bible, and in the wonderful propagation of Christianity, the holiness, wisdom, and power of God are clearly discernible. The morality and doctrines of Christianity have been already considered. In the next section we shall consider the propagation of Christianity previous to the examination of the miraculous works performed by Christ and his apostles, as recorded in the New Testament; and shall show that the propagation of Christianity may be regarded as a stupendous miracle, the result of which is now visible to the eyes of all. The Bible contains the morality and the doctrines which have proceeded from God; and the propagation of

Christianity is a conquest which the Bible has achieved through the power of God. If such a Bible and such a religion could not exist in the world without the agency of God, we need not hesitate to believe the miracles which that Bible reports, and by which the religion was attested. We have become, so to speak, familiar with displays of divinity, and therefore without surprise behold them in the miracles of the Bible. Scepticism can no longer bar out the belief of miracles, after we have been compelled to admit the agency of God in the prophecies, morality, and doctrines of the Bible, and the propagation of Christianity; and to this admission our own senses oblige us. On their testimony we believe the facts which lie at the foundation of natural religion, and their testimony can assure us as well that a God exists in the Bible and Christianity, as that he exists in creation and providence. And when the agency of God has once been admitted in however small a degree, Scepticism is dethroned, and the way is legitimately opened to the inquiry, What phenomena ought to be attributed to this agency?

The antiquity of the gospel miracles is no valid objection to their credibility. The facts were committed to record soon after they occurred, and while the proofs of them were fresh and accessible to all. This permanent record annihilates the interval of time, and carries us back to the first age, to study the facts and judge of the agency which produced them. If the facts make less impression on our minds, at this remote period, the disadvantage in this respect is more than compensated by the increased means which we possess to form a just judgment concerning them. We understand the laws of nature better than they did who were eye-witnesses of the miracles; and we understand better than the

primitive Christians the laws of evidence, and the method of determining facts by testimony. We now sit in judgment on records of heathen prodigies made by truthful historians, and pronounce them unworthy of belief. To this severe scrutiny it is just and right that we should bring the record of the Christian miracles; and we shall find, to the confirmation of our faith, that by an ordering of divine wisdom, the abundance and character of the testimony are fully adapted to meet the severity of the scrutiny.

We enjoy a further advantage over ancient Christians in the increased attestation to the Bible by the fulfilment of prophecy, the propagation of Christianity, and the wider demonstration of its beneficial influence. Miracles arrested the attention of men and made converts to the new religion. But if the vivid impression of recent miracles has somewhat faded from the mind by the lapse of time, those other attestations have gained strength, and confirm the assurance that the miracles were wrought by the power of God.

SECTION II. PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE WONDERFUL PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY WAS NOT EFFECTED WITHOUT MIRACLE.

The propagation of Christianity may be regarded as a standing miracle. In considering it, we notice,

I. Its *rapidity* and *extent*. On the fiftieth day after the resurrection of Christ, his apostles commenced their public ministry in obedience to his last command; and in one day three thousand were converted, and added to the church. The number of the disciples continued to increase in Jerusalem, until they were scattered by persecution; and then, by their preaching in the places to which they were driven, other converts were made,

and churches were formed in all the surrounding countries. The New Testament history is limited to the first thirty years of the apostolic ministry, and chiefly to that of Paul; yet it records the success of the gospel in almost all the known countries of the world. The Roman historian Tacitus (49), who wrote about the end of this period, has left testimony that Christianity had extended to Rome, and that a great multitude in the imperial city were so firmly persuaded of its doctrines as to suffer martyrdom for their sake. The testimony of subsequent writers (39 a, 51 a, 53 a, 57 c, 60 a) shows that the Roman Empire became filled with the new religion, that idolatry fell before it, and in about three centuries became a vanishing relic of past times. The catacombs of Rome (71) also furnish testimony of the early and extensive progress of Christianity.

II. *The obstacles.* The new religion had great difficulties to contend with. It was opposed by Jews and Gentiles, by civil and religious powers, by the prejudices of the common people, and the contempt of the learned and great. The holiness of its precepts rendered it unwelcome to the carnal heart; and the respect which it required for the crucified Nazarene, rendered it offensive to human pride. They who entered the Christian ranks were compelled to renounce the world, suffer the loss of all things, endure reproach, persecution, and torture; and multitudes of them were put to death for adhering to the hated religion.

III. *The agents employed.* The propagators of Christianity were not men of learning, renown, or power. The Jews were despised generally by the rest of mankind; and the Galilean Jews were despised by the rest of their own nation. Out of this despised class of men, the agents for the conquest of the world were chosen;

and not from the highest ranks of these people, but chiefly from the fishing-boats on the Lake of Tiberias. And these men engaged in their work without plan. They were slow to understand the spiritual nature of their master's kingdom; and, for a considerable time after they began their work, they did not conceive that their mission extended to uncircumcised Gentiles. They at first confined their ministry to Jerusalem, and it was not their own plan, but the persecution of their enemies which enlarged the boundaries of their labors.

IV. *The means employed.* The first ministers of Christ did not adopt any of the measures which the policy of crafty men would have suggested. They made no effort to ward off popular prejudices, or to insinuate their doctrine quietly among persons whose influence, if gained over to their cause, would have conducted to its success. Without the least effort to adapt their doctrine to the acceptance of mankind, they proclaimed it authoritatively, and required men to receive it as the word of God.

V. *Time and place.* Christianity was introduced in the Augustan age, one of the most enlightened periods in the history of the world. Had it been an imposture the time was most favorable for detecting it. In Judea where it originated, the attestations necessary to establish the divine authority of a religion were better understood than in any other country. At Jerusalem before Jewish doctors, and at Rome before the brightest geniuses of the world, the new religion exhibited its pretensions and gained many converts.

VI. *Character of the converts.* Among the converts were persons of all ranks and conditions of life. Among the Jews no one was better qualified than Saul of Tarsus to decide on the claims of Christianity, and

among the Romans the deputy Sergius Paulus, who the Jewish sorcerer endeavored to turn away from the faith,¹ was an intelligent judge of the evidence on which the religion challenged acceptance. While great men bowed in humility before the doctrines of the cross, multitudes who had been degraded by their vices, felt the power of the divine word, and exhibited its sanctifying influence in lives of sobriety and virtue.

VII. *Grand design.* The propagation of Christianity was not a successful accident. It had been foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament, as the glory and blessing of the coming age. Christ repeatedly foretold it as the success of his mission into the world. He pre-faced his last commission to the feeble band of his apostles with the declaration, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth,"² and the promise which accompanied the commission, pledged his presence to give success to his cause to the end of the world. The feeble agents employed were to go forth in the strength of their Lord, and conquer the world in his name, and bless all nations with the gospel of his grace. No similar design was ever conceived by the founder or the propagators of any other religion. The Jews made proselytes to their party, and Mahomet sought to increase his power, by multiplying his followers: but the grand design to propagate a religion through the earth for the purpose of diffusing blessings everywhere among all nations, ranks, and conditions of mankind, is peculiar to the Author of Christianity.

VIII. *Omnipotence displayed.* In the propagation of Christianity, the power of God has been as truly dis-

¹ Acts, xiii. 8.

² Matt. xxviii. 18.

played, though in a different manner, as in the miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles. The miracles have ceased, but the edifice of Christianity reared by the hand of the Almighty, stands before us as a perpetual miracle. In the power to which the first ministers of the gospel trusted for the success of their ministry, the foundation of the edifice was laid, and the same power has built and defended the superstructure. Papal corruptions, state alliances, worldly conformity, and false doctrines, would have destroyed Christianity if divine power had not preserved it.

In viewing the propagation of Christianity as a great miracle, some difficulty arises from the distinction which has been usually made between the ordinary spiritual influence by which regeneration is produced, and those extraordinary operations of the Holy Spirit by which miracles were anciently wrought. The ordinary regenerating influence has not usually been called miraculous. It operates everywhere, and at all times, in connection with the faithfully-preached gospel, and with so much uniformity as to resemble the laws of nature in their unvarying course, rather than an occasional and miraculous suspension of these laws. Moreover, the effect of the truth on the mind is precisely that which it ought to produce, and which it would produce if the heart were rightly disposed. No new powers are conferred; no new revelation is made; and no law of the mind appears to be suspended. The mode of operation is to us inscrutable: and, though not usually styled miraculous, may with propriety be called supernatural. But for all the purposes of the present argument, the distinction between things miraculous and things supernatural is merely verbal. If men believe according to the working

of God's mighty power,¹ the production of faith is a work of omnipotence, and affixes the seal of omnipotence to the truth believed. Hence the propagation of Christianity, even if it had been throughout effected without any miracle in the restricted sense of the term, is nevertheless a display of divine power. Paul says, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase;"² and, in another place, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation."³

But the gospel cannot have been propagated without miracle in the restricted sense of the term. It was received from the lips of the apostles, as confirmed by the miracles which they wrought; and the multitude who saw the miracles believed in their reality with a conviction which death itself could not shake. Now, either the miracles were real, or some miraculous change must have been wrought on the senses or intellectual powers of the beholders. In which of these ways the miracle occurred, that is, whether it was objective or subjective, is a matter of no importance in the present argument. In either view, Christianity was not propagated without miracle.

SECTION III. MIRACLES OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.

CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES WROUGHT NUMEROUS MIRACLES.

We have seen that it is not irrational to admit the possibility that miracles may have been performed; and we have seen, in the fulfilment of prophecy and the propagation of Christianity, displays of the Deity before

¹ Eph. i. 19.

² 1 Cor. iii. 6.

³ Rom. i. 16.

the eyes of all men, equally as supernatural as the power necessary to work miracles. We are therefore prepared to enter, unbiassed by scepticism, on an examination of the facts in the New Testament history which have been considered miraculous.

The history contained in the four Gospels affirms that Christ wrought numerous works which were deemed miraculous, and particularly notices the following: 1. Water turned into wine at Cana.¹ 2. A nobleman's son healed at Capernaum.² 3. Miraculous draught of fishes.³ 4. A demoniac healed in the synagogue.⁴ 5. Peter's wife's mother healed.⁵ 6. A leper healed.⁶ 7. A paralytic healed.⁷ 8. An infirm man healed at the pool of Bethesda.⁸ 9. A withered hand healed.⁹ 10. A centurion's servant healed.¹⁰ 11. A widow's son raised.¹¹ 12. A demoniac healed.¹² 13. Tempest stilled.¹³ 14. Two demoniacs of Gadara dispossessed.¹⁴ 15. A diseased woman healed.¹⁵ 16. Jairus' daughter raised.¹⁶ 17. Two blind men healed.¹⁷ 18. A dumb spirit cast

¹ John, ii. 1-12.

² John, iv. 46-54.

³ Luke, v. 1-7.

⁴ Mark, i. 21-28; Luke, iv. 31-37.

⁵ Matt. viii. 14, 15; Mark, i. 30, 31; Luke iv. 38, 39.

⁶ Matt. viii. 2-4; Mark, i. 40-45; Luke, v. 12-14.

⁷ Matt. ix. 2-8; Mark, ii. 1-12; Luke, v. 17, 18.

⁸ John v. 1-15.

⁹ Matt. xii. 9-14; Mark, iii. 1-6; Luke, vi. 6-11.

¹⁰ Matt. viii. 5-13; Luke, vii. 1-10.

¹¹ Luke, vii. 11-17.

¹² Matt. xii. 22; Luke, xi. 14, 15.

¹³ Matt. viii. 23-27; Mark, iv. 35-41; Luke, viii. 22-25.

¹⁴ Matt. viii. 28-34; Mark, v. 1; Luke, viii. 26-40.

¹⁵ Matt. ix. 20-22; Mark, v. 25-35; Luke viii. 43-48.

¹⁶ Mark, v. 22-43; Luke, viii. 41-56.

¹⁷ Matt. ix. 27-31.

out.¹ 19. Five thousand fed.² 20. Jesus walked on the water.³ 21. A Syro-Phœnician woman's daughter healed.⁴ 22. A deaf and dumb man healed.⁵ 23. Four thousand fed.⁶ 24. A blind man healed.⁷ 25. A demoniac healed.⁸ 26. Tribute-money miraculously provided.⁹ 27. Ten lepers cleansed.¹⁰ 28. A man born blind healed.¹¹ 29. Lazarus raised.¹² 30. An infirm woman healed.¹³ 31. Two blind men healed.¹⁴ 32. Fig-tree cursed.¹⁵ 33. Miraculous draught of fishes.¹⁶

Besides these miracles which the evangelists have particularly noticed, they inform us that Christ wrought many others. Thus, on the same evening on which he healed Peter's wife's mother, it is said, "At even, when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city was gathered together at the door. And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him."¹⁷ On another occa-

¹ Matt. ix. 32, 33.

² Matt. xiv. 15-21; Mark, vi. 35-45; Luke, ix. 12-17; John, vi. 5-14.

³ Matt. xiv. 22-36; Mark, vi. 45-56; John, vi. 15-21.

⁴ Matt. xv. 21-28; Mark, vii. 24-30.

⁵ Mark, vii. 32-35.

⁶ Matt. xv. 32-38; Mark, viii. 1-9.

⁷ Mark, viii. 22-26.

⁸ Matt. xvii. 14-21; Mark, ix. 14-29; Luke, ix. 37-43.

⁹ Matt. xvii. 24-27.

¹⁰ Luke, xvii. 11-19.

¹¹ John, ix. 1-41; x. 1-21.

¹² John, xi. 1-46.

¹³ Luke, xiii. 10-13.

¹⁴ Matt. xx. 29-34; Mark, x. 46-52; Luke, xviii. 34-43.

¹⁵ Matt. xxi. 18-22; Mark, xi. 13-21.

¹⁶ John, xxi. 4-6.

¹⁷ Mark, i. 32-34; Matt. viii. 16; Luke, iv. 40-41.

sion it is said, "Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain and sat down there. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them; Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel."¹ Moreover, there are numerous general notices that he healed multitudes as he journeyed from place to place during his ministry. "Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease, among the people. And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them."² "Great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all."³ "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil."⁴

Of the miracles wrought by the apostles before the crucifixion of their master, we have no particular accounts, but when sent forth by him during his personal ministry, they were commissioned "to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick:" and it is said "they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing everywhere."⁵ After the resur-

¹ Matt. xv. 29-32.

² Matt. iv. 23, 24; Mark, i. 39.

³ Matt. xii. 15; Mark, iii. 7-12.

⁴ Acts, x. 38.

⁵ Luke, ix. 2, 6.

rection of Christ, the miracles wrought by the apostles must have been exceedingly numerous. This is manifest from such passages as the following: "Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by, might overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed every one."¹ "God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul: so that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."²

There were also miracles connected with the person of Christ, which are not included in the preceding enumeration; such as his miraculous conception, his transfiguration, and his resurrection. Voices from heaven distinguished his person from other men; the Holy Spirit descended visibly upon him after his baptism in Jordan; angels announced his birth to the shepherds of Bethlehem, and ministered unto him in the wilderness, and in the garden of Gethsemane; an angel rolled the stone from the sepulchre; and angels first announced his resurrection.

On this record of miraculous works we make the following observations:—

I. The account of works deemed miraculous forms so large a part of the history, and is so interwoven with the rest, that the credibility of the whole must stand or fall together. Many of the discourses recorded grow out of the miracles, and many of the actions of both friends

¹ Acts, v. 15, 16.

² Acts, xix. 11, 12.

and foes are occasioned by them. Above all, if the miracle of the resurrection is not true, the preaching and faith of Christians, as Paul has decided, are vain, and the apostles were false witnesses.¹ But if this one miracle be admitted, the admission involves the credibility of the other miracles. All the arguments which establish the truthfulness of the sacred historians, decide that the miraculous facts which they record either actually occurred, or were believed to have occurred, by friends and foes, just as is affirmed or implied in the history. The monuments now existing as standing witnesses confirming the gospel history, have special reference to its miracles. The Christian Sabbath commemorates the resurrection of Christ, and baptism and the Lord's Supper imply a belief of it. The inscriptions (71 *a*) on the graves of Christian martyrs, testify their belief in the miracles recorded in the gospel, especially in that of Christ's resurrection.

II. The miracles recorded were so numerous and various, and the circumstances in which they were wrought were so numerous and various, that the supposition of imposture or mistake is completely excluded. If any one miracle really occurred, it establishes the existence of a power by which this miracle was wrought, and prepares the way for accrediting all the rest. All sorts of objects were brought into subjection to the miraculous power: winds, waves, trees, fishes, demons, diseases, withered limbs, blind eyes, dead bodies, &c., &c. The number of the witnesses in the several cases varied greatly. Thousands of persons were fed in the wilderness by the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes, and could not be mistaken as to the facts

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15.

that they saw, handled, and ate the food, and had their hunger satisfied. Many persons were present when Lazarus and the widow's son at Nain were raised to life; and, if it should be objected that the presence of a multitude was less favorable to a careful observation of the facts, the daughter of Jairus was raised in the presence of a few chosen witnesses. Of those three who were restored to life, the circumstances were various. One had just died, another was on the way to interment, and the third had lain in the grave four days.

The subjects of the miracles were not chosen by the operator, and therefore the suspicion of imposture is excluded, as collusion was impossible. The widow's son was accidentally met as the body was borne to the grave; the paralytic was brought into the presence of Christ by urgent and persevering effort; Bartimeus and the Syro-Phœnician woman obtained the blessings sought by earnest importunity; the woman cured by touching the hem of Christ's garment approached him stealthily; and the demoniacs of Gadara met him as he landed on their coast.

III. The miraculous facts were firmly believed by friends and admitted by foes. Multitudes testified the sincerity of their faith in them by enduring toil, suffering, and death; by the renunciation of worldly interests and hopes; and by patient and steadfast adherence to the practice of a holy and self-denying religion. The enemies who opposed the religion, and persecuted the Master and his disciples, did not deny the miraculous facts, but attributed them to diabolical influence, or magic; or, without attempting to account for them or disprove them, endeavored to suppress the publication of them by threats and force.

IV. The witnesses did not form their judgment

hastily, and under the influence of high momentary excitement; and were not deceived by a highly wrought expectation of the events. Hesitation and doubt appear in the case of Thomas and the disciples, to whom Jesus said, "Handle me and see me." There was highly excited fear when Jesus was seen walking on the sea; but it was not their fear which induced the belief that the object beheld was Jesus; and that the judgment formed was not a mere work of the imagination, Peter's walking on the water to meet Jesus fully demonstrates. Some of the miracles were solicited and expected, but others came unexpected. The effects of most of them were permanent, and gave full opportunity for calm and repeated examination. Lazarus, when restored to life, did not return after a few short moments to the grave, but lived, and conversed, and ate with many, and gave opportunity to friends and foes to know the reality of his resurrection. The man born blind did not see for a few moments, and then return to his former blindness; but continued to see, and gave opportunity to the Jews to push their inquiries into the fact and manner of the wonderful change.

V. The facts were not only believed to be miracles, but were truly so. They did not relate to unusual philosophical experiments, developing new laws of nature; but to matters of daily experience among common men, and about which common men sufficiently understand all the laws of nature to form a correct judgment whether the events were natural or supernatural. Laws of nature unknown to the ancient Christians, have since been discovered, but with all our superior advantages, we sit in judgment on the facts, and find no power of nature adequate to their production, save that of nature's author. They conform to no law which philosophy has

ever discovered; and are therefore to be referred to special exhibitions of divine power.

SECTION IV. ATTESTATION GIVEN BY THESE
MIRACLES.

THE MIRACLES OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AFFIX THE SEAL OF OMNIPOTENCE TO CHRISTIANITY, AND BY CONFIRMING ITS DIVINE ORIGIN, ESTABLISH ITS TRUTH.

I. Jesus Christ wrought miracles for the express purpose of establishing his divine mission and authority. When about to heal a paralytic, he explained the design with which he performed the miracle: "That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy) I say unto thee, arise, take up thy bed, and go thy way unto thine house."¹ He frequently referred to his miracles for proof that he came from God, and operated by the power of God.

II. Miraculous powers were conferred by Christ on his apostles, for the purpose of confirming their testimony, and establishing the divine authority of their ministry.²

III. The apostles appealed to their miracles for proof of their mission and apostolic authority. They themselves wrought miracles, and, by the laying on of their hands, conferred miraculous powers on others. Paul claimed that these signs of an apostle had been exhibited by him, and from them he argued the divine authority of the gospel which he preached.³

IV. Miracles were a suitable attestation of the new religion. It had been predicted that the Messiah would

¹ Mark, ii. 10, 11.

² Mark, xvi. 17.

³ 2 Cor. xii. 12; Heb. ii. 4.

perform miracles, and that they would accompany the revelation of gospel times.¹ This fact rendered them particularly suitable; but besides this, there is a general suitability in the proof which they furnish, that the power of God is manifested in the works. Miracles are a suspension of the laws of nature, and therefore require a power superior to these laws, a power which no one but the author of nature possesses. The manner in which miracles were wrought showed clearly that the supernatural power was not exerted accidentally, but such words preceded them as fully indicated the design of the operator, and his design could have effected nothing, if God had not co-operated with him. It is in this way precisely that the Scriptures explain the attestation which miracles gave to the ministry of the apostles. "The Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following."² "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost?"³

A miracle affixed a divine attestation to whatever it was intended to confirm. In the case of the paralytic before referred to, Christ did not work the miracle to prove that the sick man's sins were forgiven, but to prove that the Son of man had power on earth to forgive sins. To this general truth the miracle affixed a divine attestation. It was not necessary that every word or proposition uttered by Christ and his apostles should be accompanied with a separate miracle; but each

¹ Joel, ii. 28-32; Acts, ii. 17-21.

² Mark, xvi. 20.

³ Heb. ii. 3, 4.

miracle was made a proof, that the system of doctrine which they taught, was from God: and the proof was as conclusive for the entire system, as for any particular instructions that may have immediately accompanied the miracles.

The persons by whom miracles were wrought, were in general good men, having no inclination to use their miraculous powers for any unholy purpose; but in some cases God appears to have wrought miracles by unregenerate men, and to have made them instruments in gloryfying him, and advancing his cause. A miracle, by whatever instrumentality it was wrought, was always God's work; and the wisdom and holiness of God give full assurance, that no miracle can ultimately promote falsehood and imposture. If the wicked instruments that he may sometimes choose to employ, should desire to effect some wicked purpose by miracles, it cannot be supposed that God would lend his omnipotence for the accomplishment of their design. All his agents are completely under his control; and we may be assured that all miracles wrought by unholy agents, will be so controlled as ultimately to promote the cause of truth and holiness. The miracles wrought by Christ and his apostles form a vast mass of evidence in favor of Christianity; and no miracle of Judas, or any other wicked agent, has been permitted to operate to its disadvantage. If Balaam and Judas had invented a system of false religion, and if Providence had permitted it to come down to us, with attempted confirmation by the prophecy of Balaam, and by miracles wrought by Judas, and without any controlling evidence against the imposture, the case would create embarrassment in estimating the value of evidence from miracles, but God had these wicked men under his control and compelled one of them

to bless Israel, and the other to bear testimony to the innocence of Jesus. As the magicians of Egypt¹ were made to honor Moses; so false prophets and false apostles have been made to honor the true religion; and no system of false religion has ever been able to claim the divine attestation of prophecy and miracle.

The apostles wrought miracles before they understood that the gospel had to be preached to the uncircumcised; and Peter wrought miracles before he received the deserved rebuke of Paul for dissimulation. The miraculous power co-existed in them with imperfection of knowledge and virtue, and hence the proof from miracles is not dependent on the knowledge and virtue of the agents by whom the miracles were wrought. God is able to accomplish his purpose by imperfect instruments; and so to manage these instruments, that their imperfections shall not mar his work. Apostolical imperfection has left no imperfection in the teachings of the New Testament on the questions whether the gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, and whether the dissimulation of Peter ought to be approved and imitated.

In estimating the argument from miracles we are

¹ The argument applies to apparent as well as to real miracles. The feats of the Egyptian magicians, whether performed by legerdemain, or by the aid of wicked spirits, were not real miracles, since they proceeded from the natural powers of the evil agents, and were not works of God. So the serpent's conversation with Eve, and the actions and utterances of the demoniac, were not in the proper sense miracles, and did not even claim divine origin; nor were they pretended or understood to be proofs of any divine revelation. Lying wonders may be wrought to deceive men, and may succeed in deceiving those who have not the love of the truth; but any one who sincerely desires to know the truth, may safely confide that God will give the means of escape from Satanic delusion. Mark, xiii. 22.

concerned with the inquiry, Was a miracle wrought? and, Was it wrought to confirm a doctrine? If a miracle was wrought God was the author of it, whatever instrumentality he may have chosen to employ: and if it was wrought to confirm a doctrine, that doctrine has divine authority. The proof is complete that Christian miracles in great numbers were wrought, and that they were wrought to confirm the doctrine which was first taught by Jesus Christ, and afterwards by his apostles; and hence this doctrine is from God. Each single miracle establishes that God has undertaken the work of giving instruction to men, and has chosen to confirm his instruction by miracle. What God undertakes to do he will certainly accomplish; and his work is perfect when it fulfils his design. The miracles of the gospel lead our minds from the human agents through whom the gospel was published, to God the author of the system; and give assurance to every inquirer after the divine will, that the system is what God designed that it should be. The miracles are God's seal affixed to the revelation, and claiming for it the respect and confidence due to divine truth.

SECTION V. OLD TESTAMENT MIRACLES.

THE OLD TESTAMENT HAD THE ATTESTATION OF MIRACLES.

Moses wrought many miracles in the sight of Pharaoh, and appealed to them for proof that the command to let Israel go came from God. The passage through the Red Sea, the fire, the voice, and the thundering at Sinai; the descent of manna and quails; the supply of water from the rock, and the passage through Jordan, were miraculous events in which omnipotence was dis-

played, and proof given that the God of the Hebrews was the true God, and the religion of the Hebrews the true religion. Various other miracles were wrought in subsequent times, establishing the divine mission of prophets whom God sent to make revelation of his will to Israel. All these confirm the divine authority of the religion taught in the Old Testament.

The miracles wrought in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the wilderness, and at the passage of the Jordan, were in the presence of many thousands; and they did not consist merely of visual illusions, but the multitudes of Israel ate the manna, drank the water from the rock, heard the thunders of Sinai, and the voice of God speaking from the midst of the fire, and passed alive through the Red Sea and Jordan. It was impossible that these should be mistaken. And it was equally impossible that the record of these miracles should be a forgery palmed upon the Hebrew nation at some period of time subsequent to that in which the miracles are reported to have occurred. The passover was instituted on the night in which they left Egypt, and was designed to commemorate the deliverance of the first-born from the destroying angel. The rite was to be observed annually, and parents were required to explain its meaning to their children from generation to generation. The tables of stone prepared at Sinai were put in the ark, and preserved in the nation from the generation that had witnessed the wonders of the Mount, and heard the sound of Jehovah's voice. The pot of manna was put in the ark at the time when the descent of manna ceased. Stones taken out of Jordan were, immediately after the passage under Joshua, heaped up at his command; and instructions were given that the design of the monument should be explained to subse-

quent generations. The existence of all these monuments from the very date of the events which they commemorated excluded the possibility that the record of these events should be a forgery of some subsequent age; for such a forgery could never have gained credence in any subsequent generation. It could not have been palmed upon the people, for they would say we have never kept the passover, or heard the explanation of it; never have seen the tables of stone, the pot of manna, or the ark said to contain them, and have never seen the pile of stones at Gilgal, or heard their meaning explained.

Together with the passover many religious rites were instituted for the Israelites by Moses, and laws were given to govern them as a nation: and the account of these is included in the same record with that of the miracles. These were recorded by him in obedience to God's command, and the record was left with the people for their study and observance. These records have been preserved by them in their several generations down to the present time. It is impossible that this record should be the work of some forger living after the time of Moses. A forged code could not be palmed upon a nation as a collection of laws which they had received from their ancestors, and which they had been accustomed to observe as their supreme and only rule.

SECTION VI. OBJECTION.

It has been objected by the opposers of Christianity that there are other accounts as credible as those in the Bible, of miracles wrought by men who did not operate by the power of God.

This objection, as urged by modern infidels, is directed

against the sufficiency of the testimony on which the miracles are believed. As to the works themselves, modern infidels believe none of them to have been miraculous. If in the history of pretended miracles they can find a case of what they themselves believe to be imposture, what is their cause benefited if both they and we are unable to explain the imposture? Whatever difficulty may attend the explanation of such a case, the abundant and overpowering evidence of the Christian miracles is unaffected by it. Let infidels select the cases which they suppose most favorable to their cause, and compare the evidence of the pretended miracles with that on which our belief of the Christian miracles rests. The comparison will serve to exhibit in a strong light the truth which we receive by contrasting its evidence with that on which infidels place their acknowledged imposture or delusion. (121, 124)

As urged by the ancient opposers of Christianity, this objection had a different meaning and application. Celsus, Porphyry, Hierocles, and Julian admitted that Jesus had wrought miraculous works; but they attributed them to a magical power which he possessed, and which they believed to be possessed by many other persons. These ancient objectors, therefore, who lived nearer to the source of information, answer the cavils of their modern brethren, as to the sufficiency of the testimony on which the credibility of gospel miracles rests. Their admission proves that the testimony in favor of the Christian miracles was complete; and that no counter testimony existed.

The Jews, who were spectators of the miracles, could not deny¹ their reality; but attributed them to the

¹ Acts, iv. 16.

power of Beelzebub.¹ Christ's reply to this charge was triumphant:—"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"² The benevolence of Christ's miracles was directly opposed to the malice with which the demons tortured the bodies of men, and proved that he was not in alliance with them. In like manner his miracles differed so widely in character, tendency, and end, from all the works attributed to magic, that they cannot be classed with magical performances, even if these be admitted to be without imposture. But the probability is that most if not all of the works attributed to magic are imposture; and that Satan is not otherwise concerned in them than in the moral influence by which he works in the children of disobedience, inclining them to deceive for mercenary and wicked purposes. Egypt appears to have been famed for the magic, and the wonders wrought by the magicians who withstood Moses, and deceived Pharaoh to his ruin, were probably tricks of legerdemain. But if they were superhuman, the end for which they were performed was unholy, and proved their evil origin; and moreover, they were controlled by the superior power which wrought with Moses. Wicked spirits have been permitted to enter swine, to afflict the bodies of men with disease, as in the case of the demoniacs whom Jesus relieved, and sometimes to harm the person and property of men of God, as in the case of Job. But this power has always been limited and controlled, and so overruled as to result in glory to God. The magicians of Egypt

¹ Matt. xii. 24.

² Matt. xii. 25, 26.

were compelled to acknowledge the superiority of Moses; and the demons expelled by Christ were compelled to acknowledge his supremacy over them, and their dread of his power. The miracles of Christ stand forth in their incomparable dignity and grandeur, unlimited and uncontrolled by any superior power, fully accomplishing the high end for which they were wrought, and worthy of the wisdom, power, and holiness of God.

SECTION VII. MAHOMETANISM NOT ATTESTED BY MIRACLES.

MAHOMETANISM HAS NOT THE ATTESTATION OF MIRACLES OR ANY OTHER PROOF OF SUPERHUMAN ORIGIN.

Of all the false religions which have prevailed in the world, no one affords so instructive a comparison with Christianity as Mahometanism. Christianity and Mahometanism agree in having at their origin remarkable individuals as their founders, Jesus Christ and Mahomet, and these are both characters of real history; not belonging to an uncertain region or a fabulous age; but known in history as definitely, both with respect to place and time, as any other individuals whose names appear in the records of the past. The two religions agree in opposing idolatry and in worshipping the same God, the God of the Hebrews. They agree in admitting the divine mission of Moses and the divine authority of the revelation (**125 b**, **126 a**, **128 b**, **149 a**) made through him to the people of Israel. They agree in maintaining that the soul is immortal, that there will be a resurrection, and that the righteous will then be received into perfect and everlasting felicity, and the wicked be punished with everlasting torments; and also in maintaining the obligation of prayer, alms-giving, and many other moral duties. Mahometanism agrees further with Chris-

tianity in admitting the divine mission of Jesus Christ (125 *b*, 126 *a*, 128 *b*), and the excellence of the doctrine which he taught. But it maintains that Jesus Christ was not God or the Son of God (128 *c*); that Christians have corrupted his doctrines; and that, by associating Jesus Christ with God as an object of religious worship, they have become idolaters. Mahomet strenuously maintained the doctrine of God's unity; and claimed that it was his special mission to destroy idolatry in Jews, Christians, and Pagans. He held that the variety of religious sects had rendered a new revelation necessary to determine what was truth amidst the conflict of opinions (139 *c*, 150). Another point of agreement between Christianity and Mahometanism is, that, though they originated with individual founders who, at first, had but few disciples, the systems of religion which they introduced have prevailed very extensively, and have been adopted by millions of mankind.

Though agreeing in so many particulars, Christianity and Mahometanism differ widely in respect of the evidence of divine origin. Both claim to be from God; and, with respect to Christianity, we have seen that the claim rests on a firm foundation. Mahometanism, on the other hand, is totally destitute of any such foundation; and it will be instructive, and greatly to the advantage of Christianity, to institute a contrast between the two religions in this particular. The contrast will exhibit the value of the Christian evidences in a strong light; and will offer just occasion for gratitude to God, that he has affixed his seal so manifestly and fully to the only revelation which he has given to mankind, distinguishing it most clearly from all false revelations. God has permitted one false religion to arise, agreeing with the true religion in so many particulars

as to render comparison possible and convenient, and demonstrating by the comparison that one of them is from beneath, and the other from above. In this arrangement, as in everything pertaining to Christian evidences, we see the manifestation of divinity.

In making revelation to men, God has been pleased to confirm his word with miracles. Moses, and many prophets who succeeded him, Christ, and all his apostles, wrought miracles in proof of their divine mission and of the doctrine which they taught: but Mahomet, though he admitted the truth of their miracles (**128 a**, **141 a**), wrought no miracles himself. His opponents often called on him to give this proof of the revelation which he pretended to bring from God; and in many passages of the Koran he admits (**129**, **135**, **136**, **137 a**, **139 a**, **141 a**, **142**), that he differed from the prophets who had preceded him in not performing miracles. The call of his opponents for a miracle evidently troubled him, and in many passages of the Koran he has attempted to account for this deficiency in his revelation; and all these passages are so many proofs that the false prophet had not power to work miracles. He pretended to have made a miraculous night journey (**137**); but no one besides himself had knowledge of it; and he persuaded his followers that a victory which they obtained in the Valley Bedr (**126 b**) was a miracle. We know from these facts that he was not averse to confirm his pretended revelation by miracles if it had been in his power.

If an obscure passage, which mentions a splitting of the moon (**155**), was intended to signify that Mahomet wrought a miracle on that luminary, the statement is at variance with his repeated admission that he did not work miracles, and gives room for the suspicion that he

sought to avail himself of an eclipse or some other natural phenomenon to satisfy the incessant demand which was made on him for a miracle to confirm his pretended revelation.

There was, however, one miracle alleged by Mahomet in proof of his doctrines ; and this, fortunately for the comparison which we are making, it is in our power to examine at the present time. The Koran itself he claimed to be a miracle (**125 a**, **132**, **133**). He professed to be illiterate (**130**), and to have no aid (**136 b**) from any man capable of writing such a book. He even challenged all men to write such a book, and claimed that the pure Arabic of its diction, and the excellence of its style, furnished sufficient proof of its divine origin. On this last point every reader of the Koran can judge for himself ; and the extracts given in the appendix may be taken by readers who have not access to the book as specimens of its style. It is not necessary for us to determine whether the work was written by Mahomet himself, or by some assistant whom he employed. That its style is manifestly superhuman it is vain to pretend. No advocate of Christianity alleges that the mere style of the Bible is of itself sufficient proof of divine origin ; yet it would be easy to show that the style of the Bible greatly surpasses that of the Koran. Mahomet had access to the Bible, which he held to be a divine revelation ; and many of the stories given in the Koran as new revelations (**134**) from God, are portions of Bible history with variations. A comparison of these with the originals in the Bible will show that the false prophet has not equalled the style which he aimed to improve.

Simplicity and perspicuity are valuable qualities of style for which the Bible is distinguished, and which

are not wanting in the Koran : but for the highest qualities of style we are accustomed to look to the effusions of poetic genius. The Bible abounds with the finest poetry the world has ever known ; but nothing of the sort is found in the Koran. On the contrary, the Koran contains Mahomet's acknowledgment that he was not endowed with poetic talent. (145)

The Bible contains a large amount of useful history, for which the world is wholly indebted to the sacred volume. The Koran contains very little history except what it has taken from the Bible or some apocryphal book. Its extracts from the Bible are given with many variations, some of which consist of puerile fables added (140), and others contradict the true inspired history. These contradictions array the authority of the Bible against the Koran : and since the Koran admits the Bible to have been given by divine revelation, it leaves to itself no other ground for defending its own claim to divine origin than the very improbable conjecture that the Bible history has been greatly corrupted. A very important case in which it contradicts the Bible, is its denial that Jesus was put to death. (127 e) It distinctly affirms that another person was crucified in his stead ; and herein contradicts Scripture and tradition as to a fact clearly ascertained, and fully and indubitably testified by both friends and enemies of Christianity. According to the Koran God rescued Jesus from the power of the Jews by taking him up to himself ; that is, according to the most obvious import of the language, by miraculously translating him to heaven. Unfortunately for the Koran, in this instance, it not only contradicts Scripture and tradition, but it also contradicts itself. In another passage it introduces the infant Jesus miraculously predicting (138) his own

death and resurrection. Now, that this prediction was in due time fulfilled, must be inferred from the admitted prophetic character of Christ, and also from the miraculous manner in which the prediction was uttered: and if the prediction was fulfilled, the statement that Jesus did not die is proved by the book itself to be false.

We have seen that the Bible contains an extensive system of prophecy which has been fulfilled, or is now in progress of fulfilment. Nothing of this sort is found in the Koran. Mahomet predicted that his mission would be successful (**146 a**, **147**), but in doing this he risked nothing, for a failure from any cause would have been as fatal to his pretensions without the prediction as with it. It is alleged that when on his flight to Medina he predicted at Johfa that he would again return to Mecca. (**141 b**) But the chapter which contains the prediction is headed "Revealed at Mecca." If the prophet had already returned to Mecca when the prediction was published, the prediction came too late to establish the prophet's claim to foreknowledge. If the prediction was uttered before he left Mecca, it is merely another case in which he expressed such confidence of ultimate success as any other impostor would be likely to exhibit. He foretold that he would die, but the manner in which he spoke of this event shows that he had no greater foreknowledge respecting it than other men. (**135 a**, **139 b**, **148**, **149 c**, **152**) Jesus, on the contrary, foretold his death with many attendant circumstances, and also his resurrection, with important consequences which were to follow.

About the time of Mahomet's flight to Medina, the Eastern or Greek Empire, then powerful, was at war with Persia, and suffered defeat in a battle. A predic-

tion said to have been delivered on this occasion is recorded in the Koran (143).¹

To render the passage an example of prophecy several things must be proved, among which are—1. That the event accorded with the prediction;—2. That the prediction was published before its fulfilment. If both these points were made out just as Mahometans would wish, the strong probability that the predicted event would at some time occur, and the indefiniteness of the

On this passage the translator of the Koran remarks:—
“The accomplishment of the prophecy contained in this passage, which is very famous among the Mohammedans, being insisted on by their doctors as a convincing proof that the Koran really came down from heaven, it may be excusable to be a little particular.

“The prophecy is said to have been revealed on occasion of a great victory obtained by the Persians over the Greeks, the news whereof coming to Mecca, the infidels became strangely elated, and began to abuse Mohammed and his followers, imagining that this success of the Persians, who, like themselves, were idolaters, and supposed to have no scriptures, and also the Christians, who pretended as well as Mohammed to worship one God, and to have divine scriptures, was an earnest of their own future success against the prophet and those of his religion; to check which vain hopes it was foretold, in the words of the text, that how improbable soever it might seem, yet the scale should be turned in a few years; and the vanquished Greeks prevail as remarkably against the Persians.

“That this prophecy was exactly fulfilled, the commentators fail not to observe, though they do not exactly agree in the accounts they give of its accomplishment, the number of years between the two actions being not precisely determined. Some place the victory gained by the Persians in the fifth year before the Hegira, and their defeat by the Greeks in the second year after it, when the battle of Bedr was fought; others place the former in the third or fourth year before the Hegira, and the latter in the end of the sixth or beginning of the seventh year after it, when the expedition of Al Hodeibiyah was undertaken.”

time allowed for its occurrence, "a few years," are important considerations in determining the character of the supposed prophecy, and fully establish that it possesses not the characteristic marks of certain foreknowledge which are conspicuous in the prophecies of the Bible. This single example of prediction would not have been estimated so highly by the followers of the false prophet, if it had been in their power to adduce other and better examples.

Though the two religions nearly resemble each other as to the extent of their progress, as to the means employed they are wholly dissimilar. Christianity was propagated by preaching, and without the use of carnal weapons; Mahomet frequently claimed to be a preacher only (128 *d*, 135 *a*, 136 *a*, 142, 152); but so long as he relied on preaching only for the establishment of his cause, it made very little progress. It was as a military chief that he succeeded; and those against whom he waged war found that the adoption of his religion was their best security against his sword and oppressive exactions. Christianity, on the contrary, instead of giving security for life and property to its converts, brought both into imminent danger. The love of life and its enjoyments favored the progress of one religion, and opposed that of the other; and since they nevertheless made similar progress, some cause more powerful than the love of life and its enjoyments must have favored the success of Christianity. No other cause than the power of God can account for the wonderful effect.

The doctrine of Mahomet exhibits no internal evidence of superhuman origin in anything that was peculiar to his system. In forming his creed he was aided by the Bible, and derived from it his best notions of

religion and morals. Like modern Unitarians, he held that the Christian doctrine concerning the Trinity is inconsistent with the unity of God (**127 f**, **128 c**) and like modern Unitarians, in rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity, he rejected that of Christ's mediation and atonement. The whole doctrine of sacrifices, so prominent in the Bible, has no place in the Koran; and its only atonement for sin is good works. (**125 f**) While the false prophet professed to honor the law of Moses, he made its whole system of sacrifice unmeaning; and while he professed to honor Jesus as a prophet sent from God, he rejected his priesthood and his teachings concerning the great salvation effected by his death; and led away his followers from the great propitiation, which is the only hope of the guilty and perishing. Erring man is ever prone to self-justification; and hence the Bible scheme of justification by grace through the redemption of Christ, is manifestly superhuman. But the Koran, by preferring man's scheme to that which God had devised, and which the gospel had clearly revealed before the age of Mahomet, is proved to be from corrupt man, and not from God.

While the Koran maintains a system of justification by works, its rule for good works was miserably defective. The virtue to which the highest felicity of heaven was promised, consisted in fighting (**125 d**, **127 d**, **131**, **153 a**) for the Mahometan faith; and the zeal for shedding blood was stimulated by the hope of a sensual paradise. (**146**, **151**, **153 b**) Polygamy and divorce, which had been tolerated under the judicial law of Moses, the law of Christ had rejected as inconsistent with the original institution of marriage: but the Koran more (**127 a**, **127 b**, **127 c**, **125 e**) than re-established the toleration. It extended the allowance of divorce beyond

the permission given by Moses; and it not only tolerated polygamy, but recommended (127 *a*) it as charity to the females for whom it provided homes and sustenance. Many precepts are given in the Koran for the regulation of external conduct; but the law of love to God and man, revealed by Moses and explained and enforced by Jesus Christ, as the foundation of the law and the prophets, is not the basis of the Mahometan code, and does not appear to have attracted the attention of its author, who was not solicitous to provide for the sanctification of the heart. The Koran is not a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and no reader of the book feels that it is disclosing a fountain of corruption in his inmost soul, and teaching him to abhor himself because of his exceeding sinfulness.

The perfect morality of the Bible was fully exemplified in the life of Jesus, who did no sin, but was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. Mahomet, not without just cause, confessed himself to be a sinner (154 *a*), needing divine forgiveness. Jesus labored publicly and privately for the good of mankind; he never did unkindness to any one, but habitually relieved the afflicted and comforted the sorrowful. The benevolence which he practised he taught his disciples to imitate; he reproved them when they asked leave to call down fire from heaven on their enemies; he forbade them to use the sword in his defence; and when Peter had rashly inflicted a wound on the high priest's servant, he instantly healed the wound by a miracle. In administering to others, he endured weariness, hunger, and thirst; but of self-indulgence in any form he was guiltless. In all these particulars what a contrast does the life of Mahomet exhibit! Follow him in his public career to the field of battle. View him mustering his

hosts, and stimulating them by the hope of spoils (**154 b**, **156**), and celestial rewards (**126 c**, **131 a**), to cut off the heads of unbelievers. He proved that his kingdom was of this world, by requiring his servants to fight; and that he was a lover of gain as well as of power, by claiming, in the distribution of the spoils which his armies won, the right to appropriate whatever part he pleased to the use of himself and his kindred. (**156**) From the bloody field follow this pretended prophet of God to his private apartments. Enter his harem, and count the multitude of his wives. Observe the skill with which he controls their love of fine clothes, by a gently-expressed threat of divorce. (**144 b**) Survey his establishment; mark its adaptedness to the wishes of a voluptuary; hear him claim, on the plea of a special grant from Heaven, a larger provision (**144 c**) for sensual indulgence than was allowed to any of his followers. Notice the careful seclusion of his wives from intercourse with the other sex, lest the tranquillity of the prophet's mind should be disturbed by painful emotions of jealousy. (**144 a**, **144 d**, **144 e**) All these arrangements for his undisturbed pleasure were made, as the Koran pretends, by the special care of Heaven; and Heaven was not content to give a general grant of carnal indulgence to its favored prophet, but minutely and specially provided that he should select (**144 d**) at pleasure from the multitude of his wives the individual who should for the time become the companion of his chamber. All this was claimed by the Arabian impostor; and nothing beyond this can be needed to prove that he had not been commissioned by the God of holiness.

We have argued that the religion of the Bible has not the marks of human origin. We have supposed

ourselves sufficiently acquainted with mankind to know what sort of a religion they would invent: but the argument does not rest on probabilities and conjecture. Mahometanism is a religion of human invention, the best and most successful the world has ever known. Our examination of this religion has been far more extended than was necessary for the mere purpose of proving its imposture; but in the ordering of Providence, this remarkable specimen of human religion has been set before us for our instruction, and our careful examination of it ought greatly to strengthen our faith in Christianity, and excite our gratitude to God for the evidences that attend the true revelation with which we are blessed. We are disciples, not of an ambitious and avaricious voluptuary, but of a holy, self-denying, and suffering Redeemer: and while our faith is strengthened by the study of his character, and the other evidences attending his religion, our contemplation of what he has endured for us, especially in his agonies on the cross, ought to move our hearts to the highest possible exercise of grateful love.

Our argument for the divine origin of the Bible is now made out. We have proved that the book is a superhuman production; and that its author possesses benevolence, holiness, wisdom, foreknowledge, and power to control nature: and the book itself contains a direct account of just such a being, whom it calls God, and to whom it attributes its own origin. Our proof is complete. When we study the volume of nature, we find that it also is a superhuman production; and that its author possesses benevolence, wisdom, and power: but this volume contains no direct account of God; and when men, in escaping from the claims of religion,

retreat to sceptical notions, such as that the world is eternal, or that it came by chance, or that it is itself God, it is often very difficult to drive them from these retreats by the arguments which natural religion supplies. But we have never yet heard of a sceptic who has imagined that the Bible is eternal, or that it came by chance, or that it is itself God: and, therefore, the existence of the Bible, and the proofs of divine origin which attend it, furnish the best cure for scepticism.

CHAPTER VIII.

AUTHENTICITY.

SECTION I. NEW TESTAMENT.

THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT NOW IN USE ARE THE GENUINE PRODUCTIONS OF THEIR REPUTED AUTHORS, AND COME TO US WITH THE SANCTION OF APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY.

SOME persons distinguish between authenticity and genuineness,¹ but the distinction is of little importance. All that both of these terms imply, we attribute to the books of the New Testament. They not only have the authority of the persons to whom they are ascribed, but are their composition.

The truth of authorship, which is our present subject, should be distinguished from the truth of the matter contained in the books. The latter is usually called

¹“A book may be genuine that is not authentic—a book may be authentic that is not genuine. The history of Sir Charles Grandison, for example, is genuine, being indeed written by Richardson, the author whose name it bears; but it is not authentic, being a mere effort of that ingenious writer’s invention in the production of fiction. The account of Lord Anson’s voyages, again, is an authentic book, the information being supplied by Lord Anson himself to the author; but it is not genuine, for the real author was Benjamin Robins, the mathematician, and not Walters, whose name is appended to it.”—*Gregory’s Letters*.

their credibility, and is sufficiently sustained by the agreement of the books with the faith of Christians from the first propagation of the religion. The credibility of the facts recorded in the four Gospels does not depend on the proof that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were the authors of the books. The churches established and taught by the apostles, by receiving these books as faithful histories, became witnesses of their agreement with apostolic preaching, and therefore of their credibility; and on their testimony we may accredit the books as truthful history, without inquiring into their authorship.

Most of the New Testament books tell by whom they were written. All the epistles of Paul, except that to the Hebrews, have his express signature. The Gospel of John testifies that it was written by the disciple whom Jesus loved.¹ In all these cases the authenticity of the books is involved in their credibility; for if all the matter which they contain is true, the truth of their authorship is established by their own declaration. It is apparent, from the use of the pronoun "we,"² that the writer of the Acts of the Apostles was one of Paul's companions, and a careful examination of the history confirms the tradition that Luke was the person. The manifest connection of this book with what the writer calls the "former treatise"³ leaves no room to doubt that the Gospel attributed to Luke is really a production of the same author. Thus the authorship of almost all the books of the New Testament may be made out from the volume itself.

It is clear from the New Testament itself that many

¹ John, xxi. 20, 24.

² Acts, xxvii. 2, &c.

³ Acts, i. 1.

of its books were written and in common use before the death of the apostles. We read in the first epistle to Timothy, "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, the laborer is worthy of his reward."¹ According to the natural interpretation of this language, the phrase "The Scripture saith" belongs as much to the last of the two quotations as to the first: and no one imagines the words capable of any other construction, until he has first ascertained that the words "the laborer is worthy of his reward" are not in the Old Testament. But these words are in the Gospel of Luke,² and from this fact arises a strong probability, at least, that the Gospel of Luke was written before the first epistle to Timothy, and was quoted by Paul in this passage, as Scripture of equal authority with the Old Testament. But if this conclusion be thought doubtful, there can be no doubt that Peter has referred to the epistles of Paul as extant and in use, and has recognised them as Scripture, which unlearned and ignorant men "wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."³ Such sanction given by the apostles determined for the church what books were to be received, and the apostles would have been faithless to the commission given them by their divine Master, if they had withheld their testimony on this point; and the churches to whom this apostolic testimony was given could not readily misunderstand it, or soon forget it. John outlived all the other apostles, and he was not at rest in the grave before Christians, whose writings have come down to us, began to make numerous quotations

¹ 1 Tim. v. 18.

² Luke, x. 7.

³ Peter, iii. 15, 16.

from the books of the New Testament, and name their authors. The number of the Gospels is expressly stated by Christian fathers to be four, and various catalogues are made out in their writings of all the books in the New Testament.

The authenticity of the sacred books was a subject of scrupulous investigation among the first Christians. This is manifest from the discussions which they had on the subject, and from the hesitation with which a few of the books were received. Doubts were entertained whether the Epistle to the Hebrews was written by Paul; and the canonical authority of the Epistle of James, the second Epistle of Peter, the second and third Epistles of John, the Epistle of Jude, and the Revelation of John, was questioned by some of the Christian writers. The investigation of the subject, however, produced a general agreement with respect to all the books now received. In this agreement we have the greater cause to acquiesce, because the two most important of all the books about which doubts were ever entertained, contain internal proof of their divine origin. The Revelation of John, which was one of the last to gain universal credence, proves itself by the fulfilment of its prophecies; and the Epistle to the Hebrews proves itself, by giving such an explanation of the Old Testament economy as brings to view the divine wisdom which had been veiled in that mysterious dispensation.

Paul wrote the Epistle to the Galatians with his own hand,¹ but in writing to the Romans he employed Tertius as an amanuensis.² It was his custom to affix to all his epistles written by an amanuensis a salutation

¹ Gal. vi. 11.

² Rom. xvi. 22.

written with his own hand as a token of their authenticity.¹ In declaring this to be his custom, he indicated his desire that the churches should not receive any scriptures which had not proper proofs of authenticity; and in adopting the custom he evinced his care that proper proofs of authenticity should be in the possession of the churches. The other apostles, we cannot doubt, were also solicitous on both these points; and, as a necessary consequence, the apostles, whose duty it was to provide for the teaching of Christ's doctrine and precepts to the end of the world, must have left among the churches the proof needed for determining the authenticity of all the Scriptures which were to be perpetuated as canonical.

The general desire to obtain and circulate all the sacred writings, caused copies of them to be multiplied faster than the proofs of their authenticity were extended. Hence the scrupulous care which the apostles had taught, caused doubt and hesitancy until the proofs of authenticity became generally known. No other means of collecting the sacred writings were needed than the general desire of Christians to possess and circulate them: and no other means of establishing their canonical authority were needed, than the proofs of their apostolic origin.

It is implied in the authenticity of the New Testament books, that they have the authority of the persons by whom they were written. We learn from very ancient testimony, that the Gospel of Mark was written from discourses delivered by Peter; that it received the confirmation of the apostle; and that it was transmitted, after the apostle's death, as a perpetuation of his preach-

¹ 2 Thes. iii. 17.

ing (22 *b*, 22 *c*, 27 *a*). We learn also that Luke, the companion of Paul, wrote with the sanction of that apostle (27 *a*, 27 *b*)—a sanction which Paul himself has committed to record, by quoting the Gospel of Luke as Scripture. All the other writers were apostles; and hence the whole volume was written with apostolic authority.

Some apocryphal Christian writings have been noticed favorably by a few ancient authors; but the quotations from them are very few, compared with those from the canonical Scriptures; and the respect expressed for them differs greatly from that in which the canonical Scriptures were held. Whatever may be the excellence or reputation of any apocryphal book, it has the defect of not having proceeded from the apostles. Of the books not included in the New Testament, no genuine work that has come down to us, claims to have been written by an apostle; and no authority less than that of an apostle, can render a book canonical.

We receive the Holy Scriptures as a divinely appointed rule of faith and practice; and their divine appointment for this purpose, constitutes what is called their canonical authority. The apostles of Christ were chosen and commissioned to teach his religion to the world; and his command invests their teaching with canonical authority. Hence we are bound to receive as canonical, whatever books the apostles delivered to the primitive Christians for instruction in the faith and duties of religion.

It was not necessary for the canonical authority of any book, that it should come forth with the signature of all the apostles. Each apostle, though acting alone, possessed the power of working miracles, and, with this power as the credentials of his high commission, he

spoke and wrote in the name and with the authority of Christ. But the testimony which the several apostles bore to each other's writings, gave them a ready reception among Christians everywhere, and procured for them at once universal respect and confidence.

The canonical authority of the New Testament books is not dependent on the church. The term *church* is properly used as a collective designation of true Christians in all ages and countries. In the first ages, when the sincerity of the Christian professors was tested by persecution, those who rallied around the standard of the cross, were in general true Christians.

A large body of faithful men, who had received the writings of the apostles from the hands of the apostles, transmitted them to succeeding generations; but they never claimed, either individually or collectively, the power of investing any writing with canonical authority. They were witnesses, faithful witnesses, that these books had been received from the apostles; and this their testimony they were willing to confirm with their blood: but they spoke and acted in this matter as witnesses merely. Any church or council which claims the power of investing scripture with canonical authority, proves itself to be antichristian.

The canonical authority of the New Testament books is not dependent on the entireness of the volume. If some books written by the apostles have been lost, the loss of these does not impair the authority of those that remain; and if any book in the volume could be proved to be spurious, the authority of the rest would be undisturbed:

The collection of the books into one volume is not an apostolic work, and has nothing to do with the apostolic

authority that each book possesses, and has possessed from the time that it emanated from the apostles.

The proof that the several books of the New Testament possess canonical authority, may be briefly exhibited thus:—

1. Christ commissioned his apostles to teach his religion to the world; and they failed to execute the commission, if they did not adopt the means necessary for transmitting his doctrine uncorrupt to future generations.

2. History renders it indubitable, that, while the apostles were living, and exercising care over the churches, numerous writings were circulated as authentic documents of the religion, and the Christians were taught to respect them as canonical scripture.

3. The true friends of Christianity, its false friends, and its foes, concurred in forming a chain of testimony, extending from the ministry of the apostles down through succeeding ages, and giving proof, without a dissenting voice, that, among the books circulated as canonical under the apostolic ministry, twenty of our present New Testament books were included.

4. All the other seven books except the Epistle to the Hebrews, claim to have been written by apostles,¹ and therefore all that is necessary to establish their canonical authority, is, to prove that they are not spurious.

After some of the apostles had suffered martyrdom it is not surprising that the writings of those who survived, should meet with some difficulty in obtaining reception in some parts of the Christian community.

¹ The second and third epistles of John, like the first, do not contain the name of their author. He styles himself, not *an* elder, but *the* elder, a title which appropriately designated the apostle John at his very advanced age.

They who had received other canonical scriptures from the hand of an apostle, would be slow to admit to equal respect new works which did not come to them with the personal recommendation of an apostle. Hence a prudent caution in receiving the new works was naturally engendered.

This led to investigations which fully established to the ultimate satisfaction of the whole Christian body, the genuineness and canonical authority of all the books.

5. The propriety of receiving the seven doubted books into full confidence, is greatly confirmed by the fact that the Epistle to the Hebrews, and the book of Revelation, which were the chief subjects of doubt, are found to contain internal evidence of their divine origin.

SECTION II. OLD TESTAMENT.

THE HEBREW BIBLE NOW IN USE IS THE AUTHENTIC SACRED BOOK OF THE HEBREW NATION, AND HAS RECEIVED THE SANCTION OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES.

We have very little means for determining the authorship of the several books which make up the Old Testament, beyond what the volume itself furnishes. But we know that the volume as a whole has been held sacred by the nation, that it received the sanction of Christ and his apostles, and that it has been preserved as a sacred book by both Jews and Christians down to our time. We know from the volume itself, and also from the New Testament, that Moses wrote the chief part of the first five books called the Pentateuch. But since the latter part of Deuteronomy contains an account of Moses' death written by some other hand, it appears that what Moses wrote was considered the

sacred record of the nation, and treated accordingly. By whom this record was extended from time to time, we have no certain means of knowing. Prophets were sent to the people, bearing with them credentials of their divine mission in the miraculous and prophetic gifts with which they were endowed. Rules were given in the law for testing their claim to the prophetic character.¹ The great council of the nation appears to have been invested with some power to sit in judgment on such claims. Either by the decision of this council, or by the general consent of the people, the prophetic character was determined of those whose writings were incorporated into the sacred code. The nation which persecuted the prophets while living, revered their memory when dead, and treasured up their writings as sacred. Thus Providence ordered the enlargement and preservation of the sacred volume; and, though Christ charged the Jews with killing the prophets, and with making void the law through their traditions, he never charged them with destroying, mutilating, or corrupting the Scriptures. By a similar ordering of Providence, the Scriptures of the New Testament come down to us pure, through all the corruption of the papacy.

From what has been said, it seems best to contemplate the authenticity of the Old Testament as appertaining to the entire volume. We receive it from the nation to which, as an appointed guardian, it was committed, and which, however faithless in other particulars, has kept this trust without censure.

SECTION III. PRESERVATION.

In establishing the authenticity of the Scriptures, it

¹ Deut. xiii. 1-5; xviii. 20-22.

is necessary to prove that the several books now forming the sacred volume, are true copies of the works as originally written or dictated by the authors to whom they are ascribed. We have not the autographs with which to compare them; but nevertheless it may be satisfactorily proved that our present books are true copies of these autographs.

The Jews have always been exceedingly careful to preserve the Hebrew scriptures from errors in transcribing: and the purity of the copies which were read in the synagogues every sabbath-day in the time of Christ, is proved by his use of them, and his sanction of their divine authority. He never charged the Jews with having mutilated the oracles of God, either through design or negligence; and when he declared that the Scripture cannot be broken,¹ and that not one jot or tittle can pass away,² he made no exception of corrupt readings; but gave his sanction to the volume just as it was. Since the time of Christ both Jews and Christians have preserved the scriptures of the Old Testament with care. The Jews have preserved the very passages which prove the Messiahship of Jesus, and condemn their rejection of him; and which explain the calamities that have fallen on their nation, as the penalty inflicted for their sins, in violating the covenant of their God. Since these passages have been preserved pure, we may safely conclude that the rest are uncorrupt. The Jews persecuted the Christians of early times; and professed Christians of modern times have persecuted the Jews: but both parties have preserved the same sacred book; and their united testimony leaves no room for any rational doubt, that the book which they have

¹ John, x. 35.

² Matt. v. 18.

handed down to us, is the same that was read in the days of Christ and his apostles. We want no other proof that the scriptures of the Old Testament now in use are authentic.

The books of the New Testament were preserved by an early multiplication of copies. The first Christians were zealous on this point. The introduction of Luke's Gospel¹ shows their early anxiety to have the facts and doctrines of their religion committed to writing. The epistles of Paul were in use even by unlearned and unstable men, before Peter's second epistle was written. From the early ecclesiastical writers, we know that evangelists circulated the scriptures, and that copies of them were numerous. Of no other books were copies so multiplied, and of no other have so many ancient copies come down to our times. Some works of ancient authors are preserved in only a single manuscript, but more than a thousand manuscript copies of the New Testament are known to exist.

Great care has been taken to keep the text of the New Testament pure. Modern critics bestow great labor on the collation of manuscripts, with a view to discover every variation of reading, however slight; and also to determine, where various readings are discovered, which of them are to be accounted genuine. Nor was this useful labor unknown to the ancients. Jerome, A. D. 392, informs us that he made a collation of manuscripts to determine the true reading of the four Gospels, and says expressly that the manuscripts which he used were "ancient." (42 *a, b*) An ancient manuscript in the days of Jerome must have come down from very near the time of the apostles. Tertullian states

¹ Luke, i. 1.

that in his day, A. D. 200, the authentic letters (**31 a**) of Paul were in the churches to which they had been addressed. If this does not mean that the original autographs were there, it must mean that copies were there, which were worthy of entire confidence as accurate transcripts of the originals. These testimonies show the care with which the sacred text was preserved.

The numerous quotations of scripture in the writings of the Christian fathers, prove that the books which they used were identical with ours. These quotations run back to the very time of the apostles. In the small works of Barnabas, Clement, Hermas, Ignatius, and Polycarp, all of whom conversed with the apostles, 192 passages of our scriptures are quoted or alluded to. In the writers who succeeded them, the quotations and allusions are very numerous. We have proof, therefore, that the same books that Christians used from the time of the apostles are now in our hands. And these quotations not only prove the identity of the books, but they also accomplish much in establishing the purity of our present text. The agreement of the passages quoted with our present text, proves that it remains what it was in the days of the several writers: and the passages taken collectively form so large a part of the New Testament, that their purity substantially determines the purity of the whole volume.

Various translations of the New Testament have been made from the Greek into other languages; and some of them are of so ancient date, as to be highly valuable in establishing the purity of our Greek text. They show the state of the text when the translations were made, and are like manuscripts preserved from those times.

As early as A. D. 200 (**32**), catalogues of the New Testament books began to be made. Several of these

catalogues have come down to us, agreeing nearly or exactly with our present canon. That the books which they enumerate were the same as ours, is proved by the quotations from them which are extant, and by early manuscripts and versions, and by the additional fact that in no case has a complaint been heard of fraud, in substituting a fictitious for the authentic work.

These various proofs establish the authenticity of the New Testament books now in use. No one hesitates to receive the books generally ascribed to Cicero, Seneca, Virgil, and Horace, as the genuine productions of these authors; but the proofs of authenticity in the case of these works, are very far inferior to those which attend the books of the New Testament: and for determining the purity of the text in these works, the means are very far inferior to those which are possessed by the critics of the New Testament.

The extensive lists of various readings made out by critics of the New Testament, show the great pains taken, and the abundant means possessed, for determining the genuine text. No other work has been subjected to such scrutiny. Yet, though the various readings discovered are many, the cases are few in which any reasonable doubt remains, on the question which reading preserves the genuine text; and the cases are still fewer in which any important doctrine is affected by a doubtful reading. No man who honestly desires to know what Christianity is, can be in any danger of being misled, even by the least approved of the Greek manuscripts of the New Testament which have been subjected to criticism.

God has by a careful providence guarded his word sufficiently for all practical purposes, if men are willing to study it with the helps which he gives them: but he

has not chosen to work a perpetual miracle, in order to preserve copies of it free from all possible errors of transcribers and printers, merely to satisfy the demands of an unreasonable incredulity.

CHAPTER IX.

INSPIRATION.

THE HEBREW OLD TESTAMENT AND THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT WERE GIVEN BY DIVINE INSPIRATION, AND ARE TO BE RECEIVED AS THE WORD OF GOD.

SECTION I. PLENARY INSPIRATION.

IN the preceding chapters it has been proved that the books of the New Testament were written by truthful men, and contain a faithful account of Christ and the doctrines which he taught. In the present chapter we are to investigate the claim of these writings, and those of the Old Testament, to divine authority. Are these books to be received by us as if immediately written by the finger of God?

It has been fully established that Jesus Christ exhibited satisfactory credentials of a mission from God to institute a religion for the benefit of mankind. Of his character and ministry the New Testament gives us an account, written by men who had the most favorable opportunities for knowing his history and doctrines, and who have left us their written testimony honestly given to the best of their knowledge and belief. The excellence of Christianity, its adaptedness to the general wants of men, and the evidences of its divine origin, make it obligatory on us to treat any credible account of it with respect, and derive from it all possible advantage towards attaining a knowledge of the religion. The

New Testament professes to give full and exact information on the subject ; and it is not only the best source of information, but the only original source on which we can rely. The writers of this book had devoted their lives to the study, practice, and dissemination of the new religion. Their conduct, their principles, their passions, had all been subjected to its rule. No teacher of philosophy or science was ever so devoted to his favorite pursuit. Nor were they unsuccessful instructors : but they taught their religion to hundreds of thousands who became proficient in the knowledge of the system, and gave practical demonstration of their attainments, and of its excellence. Now a written account of the system, prepared by these well-informed and successful teachers, and transmitted to us in a form well adapted to our use, is entitled to our respect, and ought to be highly prized by us. We should thankfully receive it as a benefit which Providence has kindly thrown in our way ; and in consideration of the proof that the religion had a divine origin, we should feel our conscience bound to profit by all the information respecting it which Providence brings within our reach. In this view the New Testament, if regarded merely as a human composition, ought to bind our conscience ; but as everything merely human is necessarily imperfect, it will add much to the confidence with which we bring our consciences to the rule of Scripture, if we can ascertain that the sacred writers were divinely inspired, and that what they have written may be received by us as the word of God, and used as an infallible guide in faith and practice.

Having ascertained that the Scriptures of the New Testament are worthy of our respect and confidence, as giving in general a faithful and true account

of the Christian doctrine, we may safely proceed to inquire what they teach on the question of plenary inspiration.

SECTION II. OLD TESTAMENT.

The books of the Old Testament extant in Hebrew in the time of Christ, constituted the sacred canon of the Jews, publicly read in the synagogues. To it Christ and his apostles often appealed, as a rule of divine authority. Christ commanded to search the Scriptures¹ with a view to learn and receive their testimony as indisputable truth. He charged the Jews with error, "not knowing the Scriptures."² He taught that what the Scriptures had said must be accomplished,³ and, that "the Scriptures cannot be broken."⁴ And he accounted words recorded by Moses in the Pentateuch to be standing declarations of God to the people.⁵ The apostles in like manner ascribe to the Holy Spirit words which were written by David,⁶ and Isaiah.⁷ Though they preached the gospel under the influence of the Holy Spirit, they never claimed higher respect for their words than was due to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but commended the Jews of Berea for testing their teaching by that infallible rule.⁸ The prophecies committed to writing, as well as those orally delivered, are declared by the apostle Peter to have proceeded from the Holy Ghost.⁹ Paul, in writing to the Hebrews,

¹ John, v. 39.

² Matt. xxii. 29.

³ Matt. v. 18; Luke, xxi. 22; xxiv. 44.

⁴ John, x. 35.

⁵ Matt. xxii. 31, 32.

⁶ Heb. iv. 7; Heb. iii. 7; Acts, ii. 30, 31; xiii. 32-37.

⁷ Acts, xxviii. 25.

⁸ Acts, xvii. 11.

⁹ 2 Peter, i. 20, 21.

after saying that God had spoken to the fathers by the prophets, refers to the instructions which they gave as contained in the Scriptures, and so complete does he regard the written rule, that he institutes an argument on its silence, "to which of the angels said he at any time, &c."¹ In another epistle he declares, that the Scriptures in which Timothy had been instructed from his youth, are able to make wise unto salvation,² and expressly affirms that they had been given by inspiration from God.³

It is not necessary to assume the inspiration of the New Testament in order to render the above-cited passages decisive proof that Christ and his apostles accounted the Old Testament divinely inspired. As honest men merely, the apostles could not express other opinions on this subject than those which they really entertained; and on this point the supposition is inadmissible that they could have misunderstood or forgotten the doctrine of their master.

SECTION III. NEW TESTAMENT.

The following arguments prove the plenary inspiration of the New Testament.

I. The revelation of the present dispensation is not less clear and certain than that of the former.

The Old Testament predicted that the new dispensation would be one of superior light, in which the knowledge of the Lord would cover the earth.⁴ Messiah was to be a prophet, like unto Moses, to whom the people were to hearken,⁵ and he was to be a light unto the Gentiles.⁶ It was foretold that extraordinary influences

¹ Heb. i. 13.

² 2 Tim. iii. 15.

³ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

⁴ Isaiah, xi. 9.

⁵ Deut. xviii. 15.

⁶ Isaiah, xlii. 6; xlix. 6.

of the Spirit should be poured out, causing sons and daughters to prophesy.¹ John the Baptist exceeded all the prophets who preceded him; but so superior is the revelation of the new dispensation, that the least of those who enjoy it is superior in spiritual knowledge to John.² But whatever may have been the superiority of the New Testament revelation at its outset, it could not have equalled that of the Old Testament in permanent advantage, if it had not been committed to writing without human error. If the New Testament is not a work of plenary inspiration, we have now less ground for confidence in what we have learned through Christ than in what we have learned through Moses.

II. The authority given by Christ to his apostles rendered plenary inspiration necessary to their office.

It was made the duty of the apostles to preach the gospel, and teach the observance of all things that Christ had commanded them; and the salvation of every creature who should hear them, was made dependent on his belief of their word. They were to determine whose sins should be remitted and retained, and what things should be binding on the consciences of men. Such was the authority with which their ministry was invested; and it therefore became the duty of all men to receive their word as the word of God. The promise which accompanied the commission, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,"³ implies the perpetual force of the commission, and the obligation of men in all generations to receive the word of the apostles; and this obligation must now have respect to their written word, since their oral ministrations have forever ceased.

¹ Joel, ii. 28, 29.

² Luke, vii. 28.

³ Matt. xxviii. 20.

III. The apostles were under an extraordinary influence of the Holy Spirit guiding them into all truth.

Christ promised to his apostles that he would send the Holy Spirit to abide with them,¹ guide them into all truth,² and bring to their remembrance all things that he had taught.³ This was precisely what they needed to qualify them to teach his doctrines and precepts with infallible certainty. And from the day of Pentecost, when the miraculous endowments came upon them, they became truly changed men. The cowardice which induced them to flee when their master was apprehended is now gone; and they boldly preach his gospel, fearless of danger. With new tongues they address the astonished multitudes; and with new skill quote and apply the Scriptures. They proclaim authoritatively on what terms sins shall be remitted, and they authoritatively direct the converts in their course of duty. These walked in the doctrines of the apostles with a full conviction that in so doing they were obeying God.

Less regard cannot now be due from us to the doctrine which we have received from the apostles in writ-

¹ John, xiv. 16.

² John, xvi. 13.

³ John, xiv. 26. It has been objected, that what Paul said when arraigned before Ananias (Acts, xxiii. 3) could not have proceeded from the Holy Spirit, since the apostle afterwards retracted it; and, therefore, that the promise of the Holy Spirit's infallible guidance, as recorded in Mark xiii. 11, was not fulfilled. But this objection is founded on a mistake of fact. The prophetic denunciation uttered against the wicked claimant of the high priesthood was not retracted; but was without doubt approved by God, and in due time executed. If any knowledge not possessed by the apostle would have prevented the utterance, that knowledge was providentially withheld.

ing. The spirit which was given to abide with them did not desert them when they sat down to write, but a perfect remembrance of their master's teaching was not less needed or useful when they committed his doctrines and precepts to writing for the use of distant unborn generations, than when they were engaged in preaching his word.

IV. The apostles claimed that their preaching and writings were with plenary inspiration and divine authority.

In the first writing which the apostles sent forth, they said, "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us;"¹ and they sent forth the decree with divine authority for the observance of all Christians. Paul affirmed that the preaching of himself and other ministers was in demonstration of the spirit,² "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth,"³ and that what he preached was the testimony of God.⁴ He pronounced an anathema on any who should preach any other gospel than that which he had preached,⁵ and he commended those who had received it, not as the word of man, but, as it is, in truth, the word of God.⁶ His epistles did not teach a different gospel, but were sent to confirm the faith, correct the errors, and enlarge the spiritual knowledge of those to whom they were addressed; and he claimed as much respect for the gospel which he committed to writing as for that which he delivered orally. He expected what he wrote to be acknowledged by those who were endowed with spiritual discernment as "the commandments of the Lord."⁷

¹ Acts, xv. 28.

³ Cor. ii. 13.

⁵ Gal. i. 8.

⁷ 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

² 1 Cor. ii. 4.

⁴ 1 Cor. ii. 1.

⁶ 1 Thes. ii. 13.

At the close of the Epistle to the Romans a remarkable passage is introduced, affirming the inspiration and divine authority of the New Testament books; but its meaning is obscured by a faulty translation of the phrase, "the Scriptures of the prophets." In this phrase, as thus translated, the definite article occurs twice, though it is not found at all in the Greek original. The proper sense would be correctly expressed by the simple rendering, *inspired writings*. The entire passage teaches the following particulars:—1. At the age in which Paul lived, a new and greatly enlarged revelation was made to mankind. "According to the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret since the world began, but is now made manifest."—2. This revelation was in part made orally. "According to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ."—3. It was in part made in writing. "And by inspired writings made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." The scope of the passage shows that the writings here referred to are not the books left in the charge of the Hebrew nation by the ancient prophets; but writings which formed a part of the revelation made in the time of Paul, and published to all nations.—4. This revelation was made by divine authority, and was designed to be a rule of faith; "But now is made manifest, and by inspired writings, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith."

No man on earth understood the Christian doctrine concerning inspiration, better than the author of this passage. He was an apostle of Christ, specially commissioned to carry this revelation to the various nations of the Gentiles; and he was himself the writer of many of the New Testament books. It cannot be that he

did not know whether these writings possess such authority to bind the consciences of men, that not to receive them in faith is disobedience to God. What Paul calls "my gospel," consisted of his preaching and writings taken together. He had received a special "commandment of the everlasting God," to teach the gospel to the Gentiles; and the Epistle to the Romans was a compendium of the gospel, sent by him to the metropolis of the gentile world. How suitable it is that in the close of the Epistle he has left a plain statement of the claim which it, in common with the other books of the New Testament, makes on the faith of mankind! Verily God's book comes to us clothed with the full authority of God.

V. The writings of the New Testament are quoted and referred to by the apostles as possessing equal authority with those of the Old Testament.

Paul quotes¹ two passages as Scripture, one from Deuteronomy,² and the other from the Gospel of Luke.³ Peter reckons the epistles of Paul as a part of the Scriptures which men abuse to their own destruction.⁴ Peter, when he wrote his second epistle, and Paul, when he wrote his second to Timothy, had their decease in near prospect.⁵ They evinced much solicitude for those whom they were about to leave behind them, and earnestly recommended the Scriptures as a divinely inspired rule,⁶ an unerring light to guide.⁷ These commendations of the Scriptures doubtless apply to those of the Old Testament, but there is reason to believe that they were designed to apply equally to those of

¹ 1 Tim. v. 18.

² Deut. xxv. 4.

³ Luke, x. 7.

⁴ 2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.

⁵ 2 Tim. iv. 6; 2 Pet. i. 15.

⁶ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

⁷ 2 Pet. i. 19.

the New Testament. Paul had quoted to Timothy the Gospel of Luke as Scripture, and he speaks of faith in Christ Jesus¹ in connection with the Scriptures, which he says are "able to make wise unto salvation, and are profitable to make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." Since Peter, in the same epistle in which he recommends the prophetic revelation of Scripture as a guide, has associated the epistles of Paul with the other Scriptures, we have reason to conclude that he esteemed these also as an unerring guide. When these two apostles wrote these passages, almost the whole of the New Testament was written, and these passages may be taken as apostolic confirmation of the inspiration and authority of all the parts of it which were then in use.

John, who outlived all the other apostles, and wrote the last book of the Bible, has affixed to it a solemn sanction which, if inspiration is homogeneous throughout the sacred volume, may be considered to apply equally to all the other books. "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."²

VI. The fulfilment of prophecy demonstrates the plenary inspiration of the Bible.

This argument applies to the Old Testament as well as to the New. In both, prophecies are recorded which have been fulfilled, and therefore the predictions were divinely inspired. Many of these predictions were not

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 15.

² Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

understood by the prophets who delivered or recorded them; and therefore they must have proceeded wholly from the Spirit which dictated them.

SECTION IV. MODE OF INSPIRATION.

How the Holy Spirit operated on the minds of the sacred writers we are unable to explain. It is enough for us that God acknowledges what they have written to be his word. When he employed the tongues of the apostles to preach, they spoke in human language, and each with the voice peculiar to himself. Even the gift of tongues did not destroy the peculiarity of voice belonging to each, or set aside as useless the muscular power by which the tongue was moved. So the mental powers of the sacred writers were not set aside, but the divine wisdom has used them, and all the peculiarities of style, and modes of thoughts, that distinguished the several writers, and has by means of them prepared just such a book as it was his pleasure to give to mankind.

SECTION V. OBJECTIONS TO PLENARY INSPIRATION.

It is objected that the word inspiration does not necessarily imply the communication of infallibility. We admit the objection, but we maintain that whatever God gives by inspiration is what he intended that it should be. Life was given to man by inspiration, for it is said, "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul."¹ Understanding is given by inspiration, for it is said, "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding."² Life and understanding are what God in-

¹ Gen. ii. 7.

² Job, xxxii. 8.

tended that they should be. Both these were possessed by the apostles, before Jesus breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," and before he said to them, "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." They were commissioned to preach the gospel to the world, and to teach the observance of all things that Christ had commanded; and the new and peculiar inspiration given to them, was designed to qualify them for this work. We may, therefore, conclude that the Scriptures which they have, in pursuance of their commission, left for the instruction of mankind, and which were given by divine inspiration for "instruction in righteousness," are what God intended that they should be.

It is objected that there is a human as well as a divine element in inspiration, and that, as the divine element must be perfect, so the human element must be imperfect. Our reply to this is, that inspiration is not in the proper sense a compound consisting of two distinct elements. God and man were both concerned in making revelation to the world; but their relation to each other was not that of partners. The design was God's, and the contrivance of the method was God's; and man had no partnership in either. When man was introduced into the work, it was not as a partner, but as an instrument; and the whole work was done with human instrumentality. If all with which man was concerned, is man's part, there is no other part left for God. We cannot say of a manuscript, that this portion is the author's part, and that portion the pen's; and, though the instrumentality of man in the work of revelation is different from that of an unconscious pen, it is nevertheless instrumentality. The whole of revelation is the work of God as the author; the whole is the work of

man as the instrument; and the whole has this perfection, that it exactly fulfils the design of him who designed it.

It is objected that inspiration is positive, not negative, imparting truth to the minds of the inspired, without banishing their errors; and that, in this particular, it is like the ordinary influences of the Spirit, which have a sanctifying effect on the believer without annihilating his depravity. It is a fundamental error in this objection, that it contemplates inspiration as designed merely for the benefit of the inspired: whereas it is clear that God gave his word to be spoken and written by prophets and apostles for the instruction and benefit of other men, who were required to receive it, not as the word of man, but as in truth the word of God, attested by miracles. Positively, it is divine truth; negatively, it is not human error.

Infidels allege that the Bible contains mistakes in history and science, and that some parts of it are inconsistent with others; and on these allegations they found their most successful arguments against the credibility of the book. The chief of these alleged mistakes and inconsistencies are examined in other parts of this volume, especially in the next chapter, and in Chapters I. and VI. of the Appendix. The result of the investigation will be found to be a great abatement, if not a complete removal of the difficulties; and it will be seen that the remaining difficulties, whatever may be their magnitude, do not reach the vital question concerning the divine origin of Christianity, but lie merely as objections against the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. If there are imperfections in the Bible, it has in spite of them conferred such blessings on mankind as must have had their source in divine benevolence. If it con-

tains mistakes and inconsistencies, it also contains systems of morality, doctrines, and prophecy, which must have proceeded from superhuman wisdom. And if there is in it an element of human weakness, it contains also a truthful record of miracles which must have been wrought by the power of God, and which were wrought in attestation of the religion that the book teaches. Hence the proper evidences of Christianity are not affected by the alleged imperfection of the sacred record.

Regarding the difficulties from this class of infidel objections, as relating properly to the doctrine of plenary inspiration, the present becomes the proper place for considering them; and it will be proper to inquire how are these difficulties to be disposed of, and what is our duty respecting them. On this subject the following observations are offered:—

1. The investigation which has been made of the alleged facts, not only lessens very greatly the difficulties with which they were thought to embarrass the doctrine of plenary inspiration, but in some cases it furnishes proof of the minute accuracy and truthfulness of the inspired record. It is our duty to prosecute such investigations as we have opportunity, and we have reason to expect that these investigations will continue to lessen the difficulties of the subject, and present the divine authority of the entire Bible in a clear light.

2. The difficulties which past investigations have not already removed, have very little weight when compared with the amount of evidence on which our belief of plenary inspiration rests. A well-balanced mind will yield its judgment to preponderating evidence, and will not give up to universal scepticism, because of the difficulties which everywhere attend belief even of demonstrated truth. Our senses sometimes deceive us; and

even consciousness sometimes permits men to think themselves different from what they really are; but we must not, therefore, wholly reject the testimony of consciousness and the senses, and doubt our own existence and the existence of the world around us. We rightly confide in the testimony of consciousness and the senses, though we may be unable to explain away their possible illusions, and establish their universal credibility; and we ought to receive with unwavering faith the demonstrated truth that the Bible is the word of God, notwithstanding some difficulties respecting it that may remain unexplained.

3. The perfection which the doctrine of plenary inspiration attributes to the Bible, consists in its being what God intended that it should be. Men may sit in judgment on the works of God in creation and providence, and pronounce them in many particulars different from what might rationally be expected to proceed from infinite wisdom, power, and goodness; and, in like manner, they may judge that the Bible contains things that reason decides to be unsuitable to a divine revelation. But, in both these cases, it is our wisdom and duty to let God judge for himself. The evidence that God made the world and the Bible vastly preponderates over all the difficulties of our folly and scepticism. If we cannot account for some things which we meet with in the world and in the Bible, we should be willing to leave them unexplained until we have further light.

4. The perfection of the Bible does not imply that its language is perfect. The language is human, and human language is not a perfect vehicle of thought; but God has chosen to employ this vehicle; and, even if we could assign no reason for his choice, we may rest assured that it was wise, and that his design has not

thereby been frustrated. Our duty is to accept the revelation as he has given it to us, and to apply to it the proper rules for the interpretation of human language, that we may learn from it the divine truth which it conveys.

5. The perfection which our doctrine attributes to the Scriptures, belongs properly to the autographs of the prophets and apostles. God has not judged it necessary to work a continual miracle of inspiration, to preserve all the written and printed copies of his word from every possible error. As he has judged thus, so ought we; and we ought, therefore, thankfully to receive the copies and versions of his holy word, as they have come to us under his overruling providence, notwithstanding any imperfections which may have arisen from the uninspired agency of those who have copied, printed, or translated it. But it is also our duty to employ whatever means may be in our power for approaching as nearly as possible to the precise language and meaning of the inspired originals.

It is our duty thankfully to acknowledge the goodness of God in that the evidences of his religion, and the great truths of his gospel, may be clearly seen, and confidently received, unaffected by the difficulties respecting the comparatively unimportant matters on which the objections now under consideration are founded.

The spirit with which the Bible is opposed may be learned from the character of the objections that are urged against it. As a specimen of these, we may take the objection founded on alleged inconsistencies of the four evangelists with one another. These inconsistencies, when thoroughly examined, are found to be apparent only; and therefore furnish no valid argument

against either the credibility or the inspiration of the sacred narratives. On the contrary, the proof of the Gospels becomes vastly increased in force. Imposture may under a specious covering conceal inconsistencies which nothing but deep search can reveal; but when deep search reveals perfect consistency under an appearance of contradiction, the absence of fraud is rendered certain. Paley's argument from undesigned coincidences has weight in proportion to the evidence that the discovered coincidences were undesigned: but coincidences under the appearance of contradiction have the highest possible proof of being undesigned. Hence if it can be shown that the alleged inconsistencies are apparent only, and that real harmony lies beneath them; they furnish a very strong argument for the truth of the gospel history, and leave the question of its inspiration free from all objections. All this has been accomplished by writers on the harmony of the Gospels, and by commentators on the New Testament; but a brief examination of them, will be found in the sixth chapter of the appendix.

From the character of the objections thus repelled, the spirit of infidelity may be learned. The laws of evidence adopted in courts of justice require that the testimony of credible witnesses should be received, and apparent disagreements harmonized if possible. Infidelity will not apply this law to the case of the evangelists. Their testimony, as was shown in Chapter V., is in the highest degree credible. Yet infidels reject it, because of seeming inconsistency which they take no pains to reconcile. The prominent singularities of the Bible, and the beneficial influence which it has exerted on the morality and happiness of mankind, entitle it to high respect, yet infidels treat it with irreverence, before

they have taken pains to make themselves acquainted with its contents. When they deign to read the book, it is not that they may study, admire, and practise the perfect morality which it inculcates by precept, and exemplifies in the holy character and life of Jesus; nor is it that they may explore its wonderful system of super-human doctrines, and by personal experience test their alleged sanctifying and beatifying power. Nothing is further from their design. They read to discover something at which they may cavil; and it gives them pleasure to find apparent disagreements between Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. These being discovered, they rashly reject the whole volume as a fraud and imposture. The exact fulfilment of innumerable prophecies weighs nothing; and the wonderful propagation of Christianity, and all the miracles of Christ and his apostles, weigh nothing; all rise in the balance when a few apparent inconsistencies between the evangelical witnesses on points of trivial importance, are placed in the opposite scale. Infidels sometimes say that they *cannot* believe the Bible, because of its inconsistencies; but if they would be honest with themselves, and deal honestly with the subject which they forbear to investigate, they would discover that their inability proceeds from an evil heart of unbelief, and is like that of the Israelites to whom Joshua said, "Ye *cannot* serve the Lord, for he is an holy God."¹ The true source of infidelity is an unholy heart. This takes occasion to cavil at seeming inconsistencies: and God has been pleased to allow the existence of the occasion that the awful declaration may be fulfilled, "Because they receive not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God shall send them strong delu-

¹ Josh. xxiv. 19.

sions, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”¹ A candid mind, after contemplating the overpowering evidences of Christianity, would decide that the alleged disagreements of the evangelists cannot furnish a valid objection to the divine origin of the religion, even if the apparent disagreements could not be harmonized. But patient investigation converts these apparent inconsistencies into undesigned coincidences, and finds, in the very ground of infidel cavils, a firm foundation for Christian faith.

¹ 2 Thes. ii. 12.

CHAPTER X.

HARMONY WITH SCIENCE.

THE BIBLE, THOUGH NOT DESIGNED TO TEACH SECULAR SCIENCE, IS IN STRICT HARMONY WITH IT.

MAN'S progress in science is the result of long-continued and laborious effort. Each individual who comes into the world begins the acquisition of knowledge as if nothing had been learned by his predecessors; and great labor on his part is necessary even to reach the boundary of their attainments. All mankind are laboring to learn, and yet the progress in knowledge made by new discoveries which extend the boundaries of human knowledge are few, and made by a few singularly favored individuals.

The labor necessary to acquire knowledge is a discipline which God has wisely assigned to the children of men. It would defeat his design, if a father could impart all his own knowledge to his children at their birth; and still more effectually would his plan have been frustrated, if the Bible, given for the benefit of man, had made a revelation of all the sciences which it is possible for man to learn. The wisdom and benevolence of God have, in the laborious discipline given to man, ends to accomplish which we cannot fully comprehend; but we can clearly see that the Bible harmonizes with the course of Divine Providence, when it leaves the knowledge of secular science to be acquired by human labor.

The silence of the Bible on the subjects of secular science accords with the inferiority of their value. It may seem to us, whose minds are so engrossed with the affairs of the present world, that it would have been highly benevolent if the great Father of all had, in making a revelation to his children, instructed them in agriculture, medicine, civil government, natural philosophy, and in all the arts which now confer so many benefits on civilized life. But every reader of the Bible knows that this formed no part of its design. And why? The book itself explains that a far higher and nobler end was kept in view. Morals and religion so far transcend all secular science in importance, that they fill up the sacred volume, and matters of inferior interest obtain a place only so far as they subserve the grand design.

The moral and religious instructions of the Bible were given to men who were ignorant of modern science; and the design with which it was given would have been frustrated if its language had not been accommodated to their habits of thought. It was not more necessary that God should use human language, than that he should address unlearned men in language which they could comprehend, and therefore not in the technical language of modern science.

But the Bible, though it adopts the language of uninformed men, makes no mistake on scientific subjects. Some of the heathen religions have a false system of geography so incorporated with them, that the falsehood of the whole is detected by correct geographical instruction. Infidels have repeatedly announced that the discoveries of modern science have in like manner overturned the Bible; but their triumph has been vain. (160) On careful examination, the instructions of the holy book are found to harmonize with all true science, and

the completeness of the harmony becomes an argument that the discoveries of modern science were not unknown to the author of the Bible. The instructions given by a scientific father to an infant child do not unfold the doctrines of astronomy, chemistry, or natural philosophy; but if remembered by the child at mature age, may furnish proof that the father understood these sciences. It may be discoverable, in reviewing the manner of his instructions, that he knew more on these subjects than he attempted to impart, and that he avoided errors into which an ignorant father would have fallen. So the scientific reader of the Bible may discover proof in its holy pages that the author of the book was not unacquainted with modern science.

SECTION I. GEOGRAPHY.

In confirming the truth of Bible history, we are not compelled to rely on written testimony exclusively; but numerous monuments of ancient workmanship remain, which carry us back to remote times, and place us in the midst of living and acting generations that have long passed away. In confirming the truth of Bible geography, the monumental species of evidence presents itself abundantly, with all its impressiveness and indubitable certainty. The countries, mountains, valleys, rivers, seas, and islands, which are mentioned in the sacred volume, still remain; and even many of the cities and villages still occupy their ancient sites. Modern travellers visit the places once trodden by patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and by the Son of God himself; and their reports give full confirmation to the truth of Bible geography. In some cases, where cities have perished, and where scepticism would question the possibility of their having ever existed (79), their ruins

have been dug up, and unexpected confirmation has been given so complete as to silence doubt and cavil. While the imperishable features of nature are standing monuments, bearing testimony to the truth of Bible geography, the disinterred ruins of ancient cities testify to the antiquity of the book, and satisfactorily establish the truth of its chronology. Were the Bible a forgery of modern times, these evidences of its faithfulness to antiquity could not exist. Indeed, no forger who hoped to escape detection, would enter so minutely and with so little reserve into geographical representations and allusions extending to all parts of the known world. The writers of the Bible speak out like honest men of things which they knew. A forger would have dealt more in generals; or would have failed in his knowledge at some point, and exposed his forgery to detection.

A few passages in which the situation of places is described in relation to the Jordan, have furnished occasion for infidel objection. For example, it is objected that the following passage falsely locates on the east of the river a territory which in truth lies on the west. "The land of Zebulun, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles."¹ Our reply to this objection is that, according to Septuagint usage, which the New Testament writers follow, the word which is here rendered "*beyond*" signifies *by the side of*, without intending either side as distinguished from the other. That it does not always signify *on the farther side*, is proved by the fact that it occurs in two passages² of the Greek version, where it means *on this side*, and is so rendered in our English

¹ Matt. iv. 15.

² Deut. i. 1; iv. 49.

version. In one verse¹ it occurs twice, referring one time to the west side, and the other to the east. When either side is to be definitely signified, the addition of a phrase *toward the east*, or *toward the sea*, is necessary. This explanation removes all difficulty from the passage, and applies to other passages of the kind.

Another infidel objection is, that Moses speaks of the city Dan,² when no place of that name was in existence; since the city which afterwards received this name, was at that time called Laish.³ We reply, first, that the identity of the place with the city afterwards called Dan is an assumption without proof. It may have been the river Dan, if it be true that a head branch of the Jordan was called by this name; or it may have been some other place of which we have now no knowledge. We reply, secondly, that there is no insuperable difficulty in admitting the city Laish to be intended. The Old Testament is to be considered the sacred book of the Hebrew nation; and, if Moses wrote *Laish*, and later inspired writers for the sake of perspicuity substituted *Dan*, the new name of the same city, neither he nor they can be justly charged with a geographical mistake.

SECTION II. NATURAL HISTORY.

It is objected that Jonah could not have been swallowed by a whale, because the whale's throat is too small to receive the body of a man.

The reply is, that the word employed by the sacred writer denotes a great fish in general. The language is, "The Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah,"⁴ and the New Testament has employed a Greek

¹ Num. xxxii. 19.

² Gen. xiv. 14.

³ Judges, xviii. 27, 29.

⁴ Jonah, i. 17.

word which, though rendered "whale," is not restricted in its signification to the species of fish that technically receives this name. It is supposed that the fish which swallowed Jonah belonged to the species of shark, or dog fish, called *Lamia canis carcharias*. In fishes of this species the bodies of men have been found entire.

It is objected that Noah's ark was not large enough to contain a pair of every species of living creatures in the world, with the food necessary for their sustenance.

Our first reply to this objection is, that the length of the cubit by which the ark was measured is unknown, and therefore the capacity may have been much greater than the objection supposes. A fabric which required one hundred and twenty years for being built must have been of large dimensions. What the arrangements were for stowing away the various creatures, we know not; but we may be assured that they were the best possible, since infinite wisdom directed the plan. Miraculous power must have been exerted, to bring the creatures into the ark; and the same power could preserve them without repeated supplies of food, and in a closely-crowded condition.¹ Nothing is too hard for omnipotence.

Our second reply is, that the deluge may have been universal with respect to the human race only, which may have been confined at the time to a comparatively small part of the earth's surface. On this supposition

¹ We can conjecture that the events may have occurred as follows:—After completing the ark, Noah, in obedience to God's command, collected a supply of food. This being done, the animals, as if moved by instinct, were under divine influence attracted to the food, and, having taken a plentiful meal, they miraculously retired to their proper places in the ark, and slept till the flood subsided.

only so much space was required in the ark, as would preserve the animals needed for man, and for filling up the desolated territory. The catastrophe was caused by the sin of mankind, and that it cut off the whole race with the exception of the few who were preserved in the ark, is manifest from the Scripture account, and from traditions which have been preserved in almost all the nations of the world. (74, 159) It was not necessary for the purpose of the divine vengeance, that animals should be destroyed beyond the boundaries of human habitation. The language of Scripture, if interpreted by the usage of those who speak and write with calm and philosophical accuracy, expresses more than this: but the Bible abounds in figures of speech, and figures of speech are departures from literal truth. When it is said God "is a rock," no sane man will take the proposition for literal truth, or charge the Bible with falsehood for containing it. Among the figures used by rude nations, especially in describing events or objects which excite admiration, the hyperbole is very common; and since the Bible adopts the common language of men, its style has numerous examples of this figure. If all the face of the earth within the horizon of human habitation, was submerged by the deluge, and all the creatures within that limit destroyed, the description of the catastrophe given by Moses, would suitably represent the facts according to the *usus loquendi*. Compare Gen. xli. 56; Deut. ii. 25; Acts ii. 5, &c.

SECTION III. COPERNICAN SYSTEM OF ASTRONOMY.

Among the absurdities of heathenism, the opinion has been held that the earth is borne up by an elephant standing on a tortoise. Considering the age in which

the Bible was written, some such silly notion as this, would probably have had a place in its pages, if the writers had been left to the direction of their own ignorance. But in one of the oldest books in the sacred volume, we find the declaration, "He hangeth the earth upon nothing."¹ This declaration is beautifully consistent with the Copernican system of astronomy, and if it had been found in the writings of some ancient heathen, might have been sufficient proof to an infidel philosopher that the writer understood the true astronomical doctrine. The unlearned overrate the magnitude of the earth, and underrate that of the heavenly bodies. The royal Psalmist, in accordance with better views, contemplated man's littleness, in contrast with the moon and stars,² and Isaiah represents the comparative littleness of the earth in the beautiful language, "Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance."³ The ancients conceived the blue sky to be a solid vault, holding up a supply of water that from time to time descends in rain through openings called the windows of heaven. The Greek translators of Genesis have called it by a name which expresses solidity, and to which our word "firmament" corresponds: but the notion of solidity is not conveyed by the Hebrew word which Moses employed, and which may be better rendered "the expanse." In such language as the ancients could understand, Moses describes the philosophic fact that the atmosphere bears up the vapors that form rain and descend to the earth in showers; but it is a remarkable and instructive fact,

¹ Job. xxvi. 7.

² Psalms, viii. 3, 4.

³ Isaiah, xl. 12.

that his language is free from the philosophical inaccuracy found in that of the seventy translators, though they lived many years after his time.

Joshua's command to the sun to stand still,¹ and various passages of Scripture which attribute stability to the earth, have been thought inconsistent with the received theory according to which the sun is the centre of the solar system, and the earth is in motion perpetually. Yet the language expresses in the most intelligible manner the ideas intended. It is not at all probable that Joshua understood the theory of the earth's diurnal revolution; and if he did, it was nevertheless necessary in speaking before the people, to use the modes of speech with which they were acquainted; as modern astronomers speak of the sun's rising and setting, using popular rather than scientific language. A command to the earth to cease its rotation, would have needed, in order to render it intelligible, an accompanying explanation of the astronomical theory; and this it was not the design of God that either Joshua or the Bible should give to mankind. In like manner the stability attributed to the earth is merely apparent and relative, contrasted with the incessant motion and change visible in other objects.

SECTION IV. GEOLOGY.

The science of geology, which has lately engaged much attention, is thought by some to contradict the first chapter of Genesis with respect to the date of Creation.

The earth's crust contains innumerable deposits of animal and vegetable remains: and from the position of the strata in which they are found, geologists compute

¹ Josh. x. 12.

the dates when they were deposited. These dates, it is alleged, were long anterior to that which the Mosaic account assigns to creation.

The astronomical difficulty before mentioned, concerning the motion of the sun and the stability of the earth, produced as much embarrassment in a former age, as the geological difficulty just stated does at the present time. But the former difficulty has long since vanished; and so in due time will the latter. Nay, there is reason to believe that the new science will, when better understood, confirm rather than contradict the inspired record.

If the human race has existed on the earth for thousands of ages, how has it happened that all the improvements in arts, science, and literature, have been made within the comparatively very short period of which history gives an account; and how has it happened that history itself began its record so recently, and that all monuments of the intelligence, labor, and very existence of generations innumerable, have been so completely obliterated, as to leave not a trace behind? If the computations of geology differ much from the Mosaic account with respect to the antiquity of the human race, they would have history and reason against them as well as the Bible; but they do not differ. By a general agreement of the ablest geologists, no human remains have been found except in the later formations. They agree that many genera and species of animals lived and perished in periods long anterior, when no human being trod the earth. Geology therefore has a record which, if these interpreters of the science read it correctly, affirms in strict harmony with the Mosaic record, that man has not always existed on the earth, but came into being at the last period of creation, and in the midst of previously created animals.

“It is surely worthy of remark, that while in both the sacred and geologic records a strongly defined line separates between the period of plants and the succeeding period of reptiles, and again between the period of reptiles and the succeeding period of mammals, no line in either record separates between this period of mammals and the human period. Man came into being as the last born of creation, just ere the close of that sixth day—the third and terminal period of organic creation—to which the great mammals belong.”—*Miller*.

“There is not in any museum or any private collection in the world a single human fossil that can be traced to any of the older formations.”—*Bachman*.

“A few months later, when he [Sir Charles Lyell] visited Tuscaloosa, I took occasion to relate what Dr. Koch had so solemnly assured me [that he had discovered the fossil remains of a huge monster, the Missouriium, which had evidently been killed by human beings]. He became quite indignant against Dr. K., called him an impostor, and declared his utter disbelief of the whole story.”—*Curtis*.

The supposition that the human race co-existed with the long extinct races of the older geologic age was so much at variance with what he considered the uniform testimony of geologic phenomena, that Lyell could not treat it with respect. Compare Lyell's *Elements of Geology*, p. 170.

But Dr. Curtis says: “What are dates * * to the geological periods which Sir Charles Lyell thinks indicated by the sixty feet of penetrated mud of the Nile, throughout which he finds burnt brick and other evidences of civilized man, without having yet reached the bottom? They appear to prove not less than twelve thousand years and perhaps thirty thousand.”

This learned geologist, while allowing so many years for the existence of man on the earth, believed that a far greater number has passed since the geologic period to which the Missouriium must be referred, and hence he could consistently reject the report of Dr. Koch. But while the discoveries of his science justified this rejection, his discoveries in the deposits of the Nile do not justify the inference respecting the antiquity of mankind, without supposing that the river has made its deposits in undisturbed quiet for thousands of years. Who will suppose this? Who will maintain that no convulsion has occurred to disturb the order of the strata formed by the deposits? For a single case, take the earthquake of A. D. 365, of which Gibbon writes thus:—"The shores of the Mediterranean were left dry by the sudden retreat of the sea; great quantities of fish were caught with the hand; large vessels were stranded on the mud: and a curious spectator amused his eye, or rather his fancy, by contemplating the various appearances of valleys and mountains which had never before, since the formation of the globe, been exposed to the sun. But the tide soon returned, with the weight of an immense and irresistible deluge which was severely felt on the coasts of Sicily, of Dalmatia, of Greece, and of Egypt; large boats were transported and lodged on the roofs of houses, or at the distance of two miles from the shore; the people, with their habitations, were swept away by the waters: and the city of Alexandria annually commemorated the day on which fifty thousand persons had lost their lives in the inundation."

But do very ancient monuments of art incontrovertibly prove a coeval antiquity of our race? When God sent the flood on the earth, if, instead of preserving Noah

and his family to repeople the world, he had chosen to create a new race, it is probable that no record of antediluvian man would have existed, except that which would have been contained in the archives of geology. Now it is conceivable that these archives may contain some record of an extinct pre-Adamic race, capable of producing works of art. The conception, however wild and improbable, cannot be proved to be absurd or impossible: but until this is done, ancient monuments of art found in the geologic formations do not incontrovertibly prove a coeval antiquity of our race.

If geology should furnish proof that, before man was created, there existed an intelligent race of creatures capable of producing works of art, the received doctrine of the science would assign to that race a lower rank in the scale of being than to man. That doctrine is, that in the progress of creation through the countless ages of the past, there has been a steady progress from the lower to the higher orders of animated beings, the inferior races passing away and giving place to superior. Between man and the highest order of brutes now known, there is an interval sufficiently wide to admit an intervening race as the forerunner of man. Of the existing varieties in the human race, some are further removed from brutes than others, but the interval between the highest and lowest varieties is less than that between the lowest variety of man and the highest order of brutes: yet the first interval is filled up with intermediate varieties, while the second is occupied by no creature now known. If geology can show that such a creature once existed, perhaps possessing intelligence without the moral endowments which now distinguish the human race in all its varieties, the discovery might

be consistently admitted among the truths of science, and it would not conflict with revelation.

A few years ago, when Lyell published his *Elements of Geology*, it was a well-established doctrine of the science, that all human remains, and all the monuments of art were confined, not only to the latest or tertiary formations, but to their pliocene or most recent period; and not only to the pliocene period, but to its most recent subdivision, the newer pliocene: and the existence of human remains or monuments of art was regarded as sufficient proof that the formations in which they were found belonged to this most recent period. But some later discoveries, if correctly reported, find monuments of art mingled in the Belgian caves with the fossil remains of the mammoth and other animals belonging to a more ancient period. How they came there is yet to be accounted for. It is remarkable that the remains considered human, which are found in these caves, appear to have belonged to creatures differing from the present race of men, if we may judge from a particular description of one of them:—"The teeth and the skulls of these men are found, and their bones, one of the most ancient, the Neanderthal bones, indicating enormous strength and muscular development, with a skull the most brutal ever discovered."—*Curtis*.

Shall we conclude that the monuments of art were the workmanship of semi-human beings belonging to an extinct race? Or shall we conclude that some rude sons of Adam took up their abode in a cave where ancient animals had left their bones; that they used these bones in manufacturing "bone needles seven or eight inches long," now remaining as monuments of their art; and that they afterwards left their own bones in the same cave to mingle with the mass? The latter

hypothesis agrees best with the general testimony of geologic phenomena.

We wait with patient interest for the opening of each new page in the geological record, and we confidently expect that what God has written in this record will, if properly read, be ultimately found to harmonize with what he has written in the Bible.

Since the preceding was written, the Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution for the year 1867 has come into my hands; and an ably written article published with it, entitled "Man as the Contemporary of the Mammoth and the Reindeer in Middle Europe," is now before me. This article gives an account of geological discoveries made in France, Belgium, and other parts of Europe, from 1828 to 1860, with scientific deductions from these discoveries. These deductions carry back the antiquity of the human race thousands of years before the time of Adam, but they leave undisturbed the received doctrines of geology, that long periods preceded the introduction of man into the world, and that when he appeared, he came forth the last of creation

Most of the recent discoveries in the European caves are manifestly reconcilable with the supposition that the great bones found there were deposited before they lived who cracked them and wrought them into needles. Whether the few discoveries which are thought to be irreconcilable with this supposition have been correctly interpreted, is a question which it will be well to reserve for further scientific examination: and there is still another question which must be determined before the high antiquity claimed for our race can be established.

In a former paragraph a hypothesis is timidly proposed, that a race now extinct, of beings capable of

producing works of art, may have existed before the time of Adam. Let us compare with this hypothesis the following from page 340 of the article before us:—
“The very few ancient skulls hitherto found authorize us to speak only with great reserve of the type of the races of men existing at that remote period. The skull discovered in a cavern of the Neanderthal, near Dusseldorf, exhibits an unusual thickness. The projection of the supra-orbital ridges is enormously great, the forehead narrow and very low. The development of the brain was slight, and similar to that of certain Australians. Carl Vogt is of opinion that this skull and that found by Schmerling, in the cavern of Engis, near Liege, are remains of a race no longer existing in Europe. But scattered discoveries like these scarcely entitle us to such positive conclusions; it were well to await further revelations before resigning ourselves to any settled determination on this point.”

In this extract the timidly proposed hypothesis comes forth with a new aspect: yet no longer appears as a wild and improbable conjecture, but rather as a scientific deduction, confidently made by one geologist, and cautiously submitted by another to the further consideration of scientific men, that its right to be admitted among the established truths of science may be duly examined. The subject which these geologists have left for consideration possesses, it may be, far greater importance than either of them imagined. It may be that the penetration of Carl Vogt has discovered a clue which will guide to a perfect reconciliation between geology and the Bible.

The primitive race appears to have included different varieties, possessing likeness in different degrees to the present race of mankind. The Neanderthal skull pro-

bably belonged to the lowest variety. Another variety is distinguished by the roundness of the skull. Some of the bones indicate enormous strength: others are beneath the ordinary stature of the present race.

The assumption which the article before us everywhere makes, that the primitive race that coexisted with the mammoths were our forefathers, is embarrassed with a perplexing difficulty which is discussed at p. 357 without obtaining a satisfactory solution. Many proofs are found that the race possessed intelligence and skill, and that it made considerable progress in arts and civilization. The delineations of animals found among their works of art compare favorably with the saints and Madonnas of times long since the introduction of Christianity. It is manifest that the improvement in arts and civilization was progressive; and if it began twenty or thirty thousand years ago, how can it be accounted for that so little advance has been made, and that the rise and progress of the arts needed to be repeated after myriads of years? The easiest solution of the difficulty is, that the race has not been continuous. The hypothesis of Carl Vogt appears to have had respect chiefly, if not exclusively, to the lower varieties of the primitive race: but the difficulty now under consideration respects the higher varieties, and affords a strong argument against limiting the hypothesis. Let the hypothesis to which the attention of scientific men is invited be, that the whole primitive race became extinct, like its supposed contemporary the mammoth.

In the hypothesis of a pre-Adamic intelligent race, the conjecture was admitted that they may have been without moral endowments. But if the discoveries made in the cave of Aurignac are rightly interpreted on pp. 341 and 342, funeral rites were celebrated in that cave by men of

the primitive race, and offerings were made to their departed dead, designed for their use in the new state of being on which they had entered. It is hence concluded that these men believed in a future state; and, if so, they probably had a sense of accountability and moral obligation.

Geology gives an impressive view of God's eternity, and reveals his eternal power and Godhead in the creation and preservation of races that have long ceased to exist. Since it thus enlarges our view of his creation and providence, we ought not to be surprised if it should also enlarge our view of his moral government, and bring to our knowledge a race of beings that have finished their probation, and gone to the retributions of eternity. They may have perished in some general catastrophe, which left no Noah surviving to perpetuate the race; or they may have been carried off by a succession of disasters. We cannot expect geology to give us a minute account of the manner in which they closed their lives: but if its records are correctly interpreted on p. 360, they describe in part a calamity which may have extended to the destruction of the race. "But there come days of disaster, and truly disaster is not spared them. A concussion, a sudden downfall drives them from their rocky dwelling. But the end of this oldest of known epochs is at hand. Floods overwhelm the region. The dwellers, driven from their caves, seek refuge in vain on the hills. Death overtakes them; a dark grotto becomes the grave of those hapless fugitives who, as at Furfooz, were witnesses of this great catastrophe. Nothing is spared by the fearful element."

After all it may be that our present purpose has no need of the new hypothesis. If it can be fully made out

from the recent discoveries, that our race at some past time coexisted with the mammoth and reindeer, this will not prove that it existed at the remote period in which these animals were most numerous. The reindeer race is not now wholly extinct; and why may not the recent discoveries be interpreted to prove the lateness of the mammoth's extinction, rather than the great antiquity of man?

In seeking to reconcile geology and the Bible, we ought to bear in mind that, though truth is always consistent with itself, its consistency is often not apparent. It is possible for two truths to seem contradictory of each other, so long as we are ignorant of some intermediate truth which unites and harmonizes them. Take the following for an example:—A. has five children, and B. has three children; yet, when all these children are counted, they are only seven in number. That the Bible is the word of God, is a truth established on irrefragable proof; and on this proof our faith ought to rest without doubting, though we may be unable to see the consistency between the teachings of the Bible and those of science. God has given us the Bible as a revelation from himself; and has accompanied it with such proofs of its divine origin that he authoritatively demands our faith: and we are disobedient to God, unjust to ourselves, and false to truth, if we withhold our faith from the divine testimony, until we are able to reconcile it with the deductions of geology.

The Bible was given for the moral and religious benefit of men, and not to teach them geology. It was needful for us to know our relation to the God that made us, and to understand that the being whom we are required to love and worship, is the Creator of all things. So much knowledge the brief history of crea-

tion, given in the book of Genesis, sufficiently imparts. The question whether long geological periods preceded the creation of man, it neither proposes nor resolves; but leaves, with the question concerning the mechanism of the solar system, to be investigated by human labor and skill.

The first sentence of the Bible very briefly announces the fact that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth;" and the next sentence, "The earth was without form and void," describes a state of things which probably existed immediately after the beginning in which the earth was created; but which may have been reproduced many ages afterwards by some convulsion of nature. It may be that the Mosaic account begins with this last date to describe the series of changes through which the power of the Creator in the work of six days brought the present order of things into existence.

Some geologists think that they find a harmony between the testimony of the rocks and that of the Bible, not only with respect to the fact and date of man's creation, but also with respect to the order in which all other created things were brought into being. In their opinion the geological periods of which the rocks testify, form a succession of progressive changes which are well described by Moses as six days' work of the Creator.¹

¹ It is not a valid objection to this theory, that the sun did not make his appearance in the firmament until the fourth day. Light was created on the first day; but it reached the earth's surface for the first three days through vapors which concealed the sun's disc from view; and Moses has described events as they would have appeared to a beholder at the earth's surface. We have no right to conclude from our present experience, that the sun's disc may not have been concealed by clouds and mists for a long geological period. Geology furnishes proof that there was a long carboniferous period, during which vegetation at-

If this harmony can be clearly and satisfactorily made out, we may conclude that some sufficient reason existed for using the term *day* to denote a long geological period, and the terms *evening* and *morning* to denote parts of the period. The Holy Spirit, in predicting by the prophets changes to take place under divine Providence, has used the term *day* to denote a year; and the same spirit, in revealing past changes which have occurred under the operation of creative power, may have employed the same term in a similar extension of its meaning. Paul in writing to the Hebrews seems to say that God's rest had continued from the creation down to gospel times, and that true believers during all this period had entered into it, and enjoyed fellowship therein with God.¹ If God's day of rest continued for thousands of years, the same may have been true of his days of labor. He now ceases wholly from creating, both in the evening and the morning of this day, which may be periods distinguished from each other by the rising of the Sun of righteousness, that is, by the coming of the Messiah. Perhaps the evening and the morning of the six preceding days may denote alternate periods of cessation and activity in the exercise of creative power.

As the divine origin of prophecy is proved by its fulfilment, so the divine origin of the Mosaic account of creation is proved by its agreement with the discoveries of geological science, and it is no valid objection to either that in both the term *day* is used in an extraordinary sense. The laws of interpretation must admit

tained a rank luxuriance wholly unknown to our times; and the inference is rational that a state of atmosphere of which we have now no experience prevailed during this period.

¹ Heb. iv. 1-11.

words to be used in accommodation to the nature of the subject. A day's work for man is measured by a few hours; but a day's work of God, what is its duration? The historian of the creation seems to have intimated that he did not use the term *day* in its ordinary sense; for after having described the work of six days, he speaks of the whole as the work of one day: "In the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens."¹

The hypothesis that the words "The earth was without form and void" refer to a state of things produced by a great convulsion, allows the term *day* in the Mosaic account of the changes ensuing to be taken in its ordinary sense. But to this hypothesis, it is objected that geology furnishes no proof that such a convulsion occurred. On the contrary, it is alleged that the same genera and species of animals which had long existed before man was created, continued afterwards to inhabit the world with him, and therefore their lines of succession were not broken by any destructive catastrophe. This objection however is not decisive. In the progressive changes of the geological periods, a constant advance is apparent towards higher orders of beings. The advance from the genera and species of animals produced in the last period, was not to higher orders of brutes, but to rational man. If it did not fall in with the Creator's design to make further improvement in brute animals, it was easy for his power to reproduce the same genera and species that may have been destroyed by a convulsion of nature; and such a convulsion may have been as necessary to prepare the earth for the habitation of a rational race, as the general conflagration will hereafter be to render the new heaven and the new earth an abode of righte-

¹ Gen. ii. 4.

ousness. Changes may have been necessary in the elevation of mountains, the extent and position of seas, the course of rivers, the fertility of lands, and the deposit of minerals, to make the globe such a habitation as God was pleased to give to men; but no change may have been necessary in the genera and species of brute animals, and the reproduction of pre-existing genera and species may have been a sort of resurrection, at the beginning of the present world, serving as a type and pledge of the resurrection which is to take place at the end of the world.

Geologists find proof that in the past ages numerous convulsions occurred, rending the earth's crust, and disturbing the order of its strata, sometimes elevating them to mountainous height. These convulsions have been the chief instrumentality by which the earth has been made to change its form, and to become a fit abode for man. When, by these slowly operating natural causes, the materials had been collected, and put together in nearly the order proper to form a habitation for man; and when the time drew nigh for him to be created, and put in possession of it; the Great Architect, to whom nothing is impossible, and whom no labor can weary, may have chosen to perfect and beautify it by a speedy process, taking the work to pieces, readjusting its parts, and reconstructing the whole in such a style that he was willing to pronounce it "good," "very good." So he will at death take to pieces the human body, which is his workmanship by the instrumentality of slowly operating natural causes, and will afterwards, by an instantaneous process, reconstruct it in superior beauty, for the final abode of the immortal spirit.

We have thus seen that there are two modes of harmonizing Moses and geology, without rejecting the facts

and doctrines of the science. Further research will throw more light on the subject, and will more fully elucidate the harmony of which our present discovery is imperfect, though more than sufficient to silence infidel doubts and cavils.

SECTION V. PLURALITY OF WORLDS.

Infidels have objected that the Christian doctrine of redemption is inconsistent with the discoveries of modern astronomy, which, it is alleged, have proved that there are in the universe innumerable worlds of intelligent beings who need the care and compassion of the Creator as much as the inhabitants of the earth. If it was necessary for us, that the Son of God should become incarnate, live more than thirty years on earth, and then die as an expiatory sacrifice, the objection infers that it is necessary for him to perform a like mission to every other world, and make in each a similar oblation. That a divine person should be subjected to a perpetual succession of humiliations and sufferings, is deemed sufficiently absurd to disprove the doctrine from which the conclusion is supposed to follow.

This objection assumes for modern astronomy much more than it can justly claim. The science has ascertained that the other planets of the solar system have like the earth a revolution of seasons and a regular return of day and night. It has also discovered by the telescope innumerable fixed stars which the unaided vision of man cannot see. Between these fixed stars and our sun it has shown that there is an analogy which renders it probable that each fixed star is, like the sun, a centre around which a system of planets is arranged resembling our solar system. Because astronomers have been unable to comprehend for what purpose all

these worlds have been made, they have conjectured that they were designed for the accommodation of rational inhabitants, capable of adoring and serving their Creator. But at the most this is only a probable conjecture, and astronomers have never pretended to prove it. Now, to set aside the irrefragable proofs of divine revelation for an astronomical conjecture, is irrational. If the conjecture cannot be entertained in harmony with divine revelation, we ought not to hesitate for a moment which of the two we should abandon.

The objection assumes that the inhabitants of these innumerable worlds are fallen creatures, needing redemption. On this point astronomy furnishes no data for conjecture. If there are inhabitants, the science has no means of ascertaining their moral character; and on this point natural religion and revelation give it no assistance.

Another assumption of the objection is, that redemption must extend wherever there are fallen creatures, if it be provided for mankind. On this point also astronomy can teach nothing; and natural religion knows nothing about redemption. All our knowledge of it is from revelation; and revelation, instead of giving countenance to the assumption, plainly contradicts it. The angels that kept not their first estate are fallen creatures, and yet no redemption has been provided for them. It is represented as an act of distinguishing grace, that the Son of God should from everlasting have his delights among the sons of men,¹ and that he should take on him the nature of man.² It is moreover represented that in the nature of man he has been invested with power to rule over all creatures for

¹ Prov. viii. 31.

² Heb. ii. 16.

the benefit of his redeemed church; and that their redemption will be his glory and joy through eternity; his redeemed will be from every kindred, tongue, nation, and people of the earth: but that they will be gathered from other worlds than the earth, or other races of apostate beings than man, is a supposition to which revelation gives no countenance, and for which the astronomer cannot pretend to give the faintest shadow of proof.

The Bible doctrine of God's distinguishing favor to the human race involves no impossibility or contradiction, and the proofs are so abundant that we ought gratefully to receive the doctrine, even though we could conceive no reason for it, or find no analogy to it in all the dispensations of God's government. But it is conceivable that the highest honor of the divine government may be connected with some special act of grace, and that some one place in the wide dominions of the universal sovereign should be the chosen spot at which this grace should be displayed, and the monument of it erected. So on the broad surface of the earth there are spots where victories have been achieved, or other events have occurred, with which the chief glory of kingdoms has been connected. So from all the nations of the earth God selected one to be his peculiar people; and from all the places on earth he selected Sion for his peculiar dwelling, and Calvary for the work of redemption: and it is analogous that the earth should be chosen from all the dominions of God for this singular display of wisdom and benevolence. The selection of our little world for the most stupendous of all God's works, whatever mystery may attend it, is therefore not without analogy: and though the reason of it may be undiscoverable by our finite understanding, it was doubtless

clearly perceived and fully comprehended by the divine omniscience.

The objection which we are considering, let it be observed, lies against the matter of revelation, and not against its evidences. It presumes to sit in judgment on the question, whether the distinguishing favor to the human race revealed in the Bible is worthy of him who created all worlds; and having decided that it is not, it rejects the favor itself and the revelation which makes it known. Such are the pride and ingratitude of infidelity, and they are so obviously involved in the objection as to furnish to the well-disposed mind a sufficient refutation of it. But it will be useful to expose its unreasonableness by the two following considerations.

I. What the objection takes for its foundation is one of several possible suppositions, and ought not to be assumed true until the others have been proved false.

The moon, because it is nearer to us than any other heavenly body, has been more thoroughly examined by the telescope. The result of this examination has not been favorable to the supposition that it is fitted for the habitation of animated beings. If the moon is not inhabited, the theory which assigned inhabitants to it may be equally false in its application to other celestial bodies, and may need nothing to disprove it but better telescopes. The moon has other uses than to sustain inhabitants; and the same may be true of all the celestial bodies, even though their uses may never have entered into our imagination. The moon agrees very nearly with the earth in the quantity of light and heat which it receives from the sun: but all the other bodies of the solar system probably differ from our world so much in temperature that they cannot be adapted to creatures resembling man and the other animals of our

globe. If the moon, notwithstanding its agreement in temperature with the earth, is not inhabited, an increased probability arises that the planets which burn under the intense heat of the sun, or freeze at immense distances from him, are without inhabitants. If it be said that God is able to make creatures whose natures shall be adapted to the temperatures of their several habitations, we reply that God is equally able to adapt creatures to other modes of government than that which he has established for man. The objection is compelled to admit that the inhabitants of other worlds are not like man in physical condition, and it has therefore no right to assume a likeness in moral condition.

If the deductions of geology may be relied on, our own globe existed many ages without animated inhabitants, and many ages more before man was created. For what purpose it existed so long without any inhabitant who could adore and serve his Creator, infidelity has no right to require us to say, and we are under no greater obligation to explain the use of the other worlds which astronomy has discovered. The hosts of angels who now visit the earth and who sang together at the creation of our world, may have frequented the earth before man was formed, and may have used it as a temple for their devotions, and contemplated with adoring praise the wonderful works of the Creator's hand; and they may have learned lessons useful to them as moral and religious beings, from the exhibitions by the various races of animals, of brute passions uncontrolled by a moral faculty. So the angels, countless in number, may now visit all the worlds through immense space, and may find in them all new incitements to admire, adore, and love the Great Supreme. The Creator may

be adored and served in worlds that are not the fixed abode of moral beings.

Another supposition is possible. Man, made a little lower than the angels, possesses a nature intermediate between the angels and the brutes. Like the angels he is capable of aspiring to heaven; but, like the brutes, he is fastened to the ground, and hence never visits other worlds as the angels are capable of doing. The glorified body which shall hereafter be given to the saints, and which will be like the body of Christ, will, we have reason to believe, be uncontrolled by the power of gravity. As Christ ascended from Mount Olivet, so the saints in the last day will rise to meet the Lord in the air. Sinful man is now confined by gravity to the earth, as if shut up in prison. It may be, that, if our first parents had stood the probation assigned to them without sinning, they would in due time have been changed, as the saints will be in the last day who are alive on the earth at the coming of Christ, and would have been made like the angels in the power and privilege of going at large through all the works of Jehovah. It may be that whole generations of men might, in regular succession, have passed through a probation resembling, in length, our present life; and, after completing it in innocence, might have been translated, like Enoch and Elijah, without tasting death, and with the privilege of frequently returning to some glorious Tabor for profitable and happy converse with those left behind. Now, if other beings have been formed in some other worlds in whom spirit and matter are united as in man, it may be that they have stood their probation, and have joined the angelic hosts in their delightful visits to all parts of creation; or, if, like man, any of them may have fallen, it may be that God has doomed them to be

companions of the angels that kept not their first estate. Shut up in our prison, we are cut off from intercourse with other parts of the universe; and are, therefore, ignorant respecting them. The infidel conjectures which arise from this ignorance are poor substitutes for the certain knowledge which revelation imparts.

II. The vastness of creation, instead of furnishing a valid objection against redemption, greatly enhances its excellence and glory.

The angels take delight in the work of redemption. They joyfully announced the birth of the Redeemer, and attended him on his ministry. They now serve as ministering spirits to the redeemed, are desirous to understand the mystery of redemption, rejoice when a sinner repents, and learn from the church the manifold wisdom of God. Under Christ the angels, the saints in heaven, and the saints on earth, are all gathered into one community, possessing a common sympathy. He is head over all things to the church: therefore all holy intelligences throughout the universe are, under Christ, included in the common fellowship of which Christ and the redeemed church are the centre; all take delight in the work of redemption, in the character and person of the Redeemer, in the grace bestowed on the redeemed, and in the glory to God which ensues. Redemption will be to all holy intelligences the means of obtaining the brightest discoveries of God's moral perfections; it will, therefore, be to them the source of the highest felicity. The glory of redemption would be great if its benefits extended only to all parts of the little globe which we inhabit; but its excellence and glory are enhanced beyond all computation, if its benefits extend to worlds innumerable throughout the vast dominion of the Almighty.

The exaltation of Christ to universal dominion is the reward conferred on him for his obedience unto death. The glory of redemption may, therefore, be measured by the extent of the dominion granted to him. Satan is styled the god of this world, and the prince of the power of the air. After his successful temptation of our first parents he appears to have claimed the earth as his own, and to have regarded it the stronghold of his power. It seemed good to the infinite wisdom of God that the Son of God should enter the stronghold of the enemy, that the conflict with the prince of darkness should be waged here, and that he should here place his heel on the old serpent's head. When we contrast the littleness of the earth with the vastness of creation, we contrast the dominion claimed by Satan with the dominion actually possessed by the Redeemer, and the contrast redounds immeasurably to the glory of redemption.

It is a subject of painful contemplation that multitudes of our race die in impenitence and are for ever lost. If the moral condition of other worlds in the universe is like that of the earth's inhabitants at present, Satan's cause has been thus far triumphant; and when Almighty wrath shall destroy him and all his adherents, the number of the destroyed will greatly exceed the number of the saved. We are pained at the thought; but our minds find relief in the doctrine that Jesus Christ's dominion is not confined to this little world. Though multitudes on earth will not have him to reign over them, he has obedient subjects in other parts of his empire, who rejoice in his victory over Satan, and delight to do him honor. Great as is the number of those who reject his reign on earth, it may be that it is very small compared with the multitudes of those who

in distant worlds rejoice to render him homage. It may be that when the enemies of his reign shall all perish, their number will not bear a greater proportion to the number of his loyal and happy subjects, than the number of executions for capital crimes in the best of earthly governments bears to that of the orderly and virtuous citizens.

The vastness of creation not only gives relief to the pain which our minds suffer in contemplating the present prevalence of wickedness in the earth, but it also harmonizes delightfully with our hope that the earth itself will be delivered from the power of the adversary. The fact that all the rest of the universe is in the hands of our Redeemer, encourages the hope that the comparatively few enemies of his reign who now on earth reject his authority, will soon be brought into subjection. This world, polluted by sin, has been shut out from the holy fellowship of worlds, like Miriam, shut out for leprosy from the camp of Israel; but the work of redemption is effecting its cleansing. The pollution will ere long be removed, the earth will become an abode of righteousness, and the universal fellowship will be restored, when the New Jerusalem will descend from heaven to earth, and the intercommunion of worlds, which sin has interrupted, shall be re-established.

SECTION VI. UNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE.

The term *race* signifies descendants from a common ancestor, and is varied in its application according as the ancestor is more or less remote. Israelites, Edomites, and Ishmaelites are distinct races, as descended from Jacob, Esau, and Ishmael; and yet they are of one race as descended from the remoter ancestor Abraham. So we speak of Caucasians, Mongolians, and Ethiopians as

distinct races, without intending to intimate any doubt of their having originated from a common ancestor.

In zoological classification man belongs to the class Mammalia, and order Bimana. This order has not distinct genera and species. Cuvier remarks: "Man forms but one genus, and that genus the only one of its order." He considers man as one species; and under the head "Variety of the human species," says: "Three races appear very distinct—the Caucasian, or white, the Mongolian, or yellow, and the Ethiopian, or negro." In explanation of the distinction between species and variety, he says: "The development of organized beings is more or less rapid and more or less extended, as circumstances are more or less favorable. Heat, the abundance and species of nutriment, with other causes, exercise great influence, and this influence may extend to the whole body in general, or to certain organs in particular: thence arises the impossibility of perfect similitude between the offspring and parent.

"Differences of this kind between organized beings, form what are termed *varieties*.

"There is no proof that all the differences which now distinguish organized beings, are such as may have been produced by circumstances. All that has been advanced upon the subject is hypothetical. Experience, on the contrary, appears to prove that in the actual state of the globe, varieties are confined within narrow limits, and go back as far as we may, we still find those limits the same.

"We are thus compelled to admit of certain forms, which, from the origin of things, have perpetuated themselves, without exceeding these limits; and every being appertaining to one or other of these forms, constitutes

what is termed a *species*. Varieties are accidental subdivisions of species.

“Species should be defined *the reunion of individuals descended one from the other, or from common parents, or from such as resemble them as strongly as they resemble each other*. But although this definition is strict, it will be seen that its application to particular individuals may be very difficult, when the necessary experiments have not been made. * * * * * Fixed forms that are perpetuated by generation, distinguish their species, determine the complications of the secondary functions proper to each of them, and assign to them the parts they are to play on the great stage of the universe.”

We have, therefore, the authority of this master in zoological science for considering all human beings as constituting one order, one genus, one species, and for regarding the different races of men as varieties or accidental subdivisions of this species, such as arise from the influence of food and climate on the generation and growth of animals.

The distinction between man and all other animals of the globe, is very strongly marked, inasmuch as he is the only species of his genus, and the only genus of his order. But this distinction, so strongly marked in the anatomy and physiology of his body, is still more strongly marked in the moral and religious constitution of his mind. No other animal on the globe bears any resemblance to him in this particular; and yet in this particular all the varieties of the human species agree. Races and tribes of men may differ greatly in their physical and intellectual peculiarities; but they are all alike in possessing a mental constitution, which renders them capable of moral and religious sentiment.

Though food and climate are known to affect races of

animals, and to produce varieties in the different species, it is, nevertheless, maintained by some that the diversity which exists in the human species, is not to be attributed to natural causes. They deny that the distinct races are descended from one stock, having but one pair of ancestors. This opinion conflicts with Scripture, which teaches that God has made all nations of one blood;¹ that all men fell in Adam;² and that Eve was the mother of all living.³ It is remarkable that another class of scientific opposers of revelation maintain a theory as widely different from this as possible. They hold that not only the varieties, but also the classes, orders, genera, and species of animated beings, have all come into existence, and assumed their various forms, in obedience to the laws of nature; and that creation is only a natural development of various living forms from a few ancient vital organisms of simple structure, perhaps from a single animated fibre. It may be needless to say that both these opposite theories have been advocated with ingenuity; and that their advocates find some phenomena of nature which, when considered alone, give a sort of countenance to their speculations. But true science waits for an extended survey of phenomena, and a wide induction of particulars, before it fixes its principles firmly; and the friends of revelation may justly demand that these scientific opposers of the Bible should settle the differences between themselves, and determine what true science teaches on the point, before they affirm that its teachings contradict the Bible.

We do not claim that zoological science can prove all the races of men to have proceeded from one pair of

¹ Acts, xvii. 26.

² Rom. v. 12.

³ Gen. iii. 20.

ancestors.¹ In the first creation many animals of one species may have been formed; and whether the human species had one pair of ancestors or many, it is beyond the power of the science to determine. But we deny that the science can pronounce the descent of all from one pair impossible. It admits that natural causes produce great variety in animal races; and the extent of this variety it can know from observation only. It cannot decide that in the recondite and mysterious process

¹ It cannot be proved that God, in bringing the numerous races of animals into existence, created only one pair of each species; but Dr. Bachman, in his work on the Unity of the Human Race, has gone far towards establishing the following as truths of natural science:—

1. The division of animals into classes, orders, genera, and varieties, is made by scientific classification, which groups objects according to the resemblances that are found in them; but the division into species was made by nature previous to all scientific investigation, and made with a manifest regard to propagation.

2. Throughout the whole course of propagation, nature preserves the distinction of species as it has existed from the beginning, and never originates a new species. The hybrids which are produced by an unnatural intermixture of two different species, are incapable of propagating an intermediate species.

3. For every distinct species of animals and plants there has been, somewhere on the surface of the earth, a centre of creation, at which it was brought into existence by a power superior to nature, and from which it has spread by the natural process of propagation.

4. Numerous and widely differing varieties have been produced by removal of species from their place of origin; especially in those animals and plants which by domestication and cultivation have come under the power of man, and have accompanied him in his extensive migrations.

5. Different varieties of the same species have not originated at different centres of creation.

of generation, some extraordinary cause may not at some time have operated, producing changes of extraordinary character and rare or singular occurrence. They who maintain that the varieties of the human species must have been generated by more than a single pair of ancestors, refer these varieties to the will and power of the Creator. Now, the Creator is also the God of providence, controlling the operation of natural causes, both ordinary and extraordinary; and, since it was his will that varieties in the human species should exist, it was in his power to produce these varieties by his providence as easily as by his creating hand. They who invoke divine power to account for an effect produced, should not rashly limit that power to a particular mode of its operation.

Cuvier states that there are three distinct races¹ of

¹ These three principal varieties include subordinate varieties; and also, by intermixture with each other, produce intermediate varieties. The classification of varieties may be extended indefinitely, since no two individuals of the race are precisely alike. No one imagines that all these varieties had prototypes in the original creation. Many of them have been produced by natural causes, and why may not all? Why is it that while any two varieties of mankind may combine to propagate a new variety, no one of them combines in like manner with any other species of animals?

The white man and the negro, the extremes of diversity in the human race, have been brought into close proximity in the United States; and it has been demonstrated, by examples without number, that the two varieties are capable of combining to propagate a new variety. It has also been demonstrated by examples without number, that the negro is a moral being, and capable of making high attainments in Christian piety. Scientific infidelity may declare that the chimpanzee has not much further to progress to become a negro than a negro has to become a white man; and that the negro is no more the white

mankind, and tells what parts of the world they respectively inhabit. The Bible represents all mankind as descended from the three sons of Noah, and as dispersed through the earth in near agreement with the present distribution of the three races.¹ A moral consideration drew forth a divine curse on the descendants of Ham ;

man's brother than the owl is the sister of the eagle, or the ass is the brother of the horse. But before such a doctrine can be admitted to a place among the truths of science, it ought to be shown that the negro and the chimpanzee have formed conjugal relations; and that a sprightly progeny has been the result of their union; and, moreover, that the chimpanzee has moral powers susceptible of high culture, and is capable of high attainments in piety, fitting him for honorable membership in a Christian church.

¹ The brief history which is given in the Bible appears to authorize the following conclusions respecting the dispersion of mankind after the flood.

The posterity of Ham removed to the south-western part of Asia, and passed through the Isthmus of Suez into Africa. Egypt, the best known part of Africa, is repeatedly called in Scripture "the land of Ham." The posterity of Japheth settled in the part of Asia which lies between the three seas, the Caspian, the Black and the Mediterranean; and crossing the Bosphorus, they took possession of Europe, called "the isles [transmarine lands] of the Gentiles." Gen. x. 5.

The posterity of Shem remained in Asia, and soon filled its eastern portion with a numerous population. Shem had united with Japheth in filial respect to their father, and received with him the father's blessing. It was his portion to have Jehovah for his God, and to be the means of preserving the true religion in the earth. God accomplished this, not by preserving all his descendants from idolatry, but by calling out Abraham from his idolatrous kindred, and sending him westward into the promised land. The western portion of Shem's descendants inherited the blessing of their father, and falling under the same influences that elevated the character of Japheth's descendants, became a part in the Caucasian division of the human family.

and since the providence and moral government of God are in harmony with each other, it may be that some extraordinary cause was made to impress a physical distinction on the race subject to this curse. The enlargement prophetically granted to the sons of Japheth may have included intellectual elevation; and by an ordering of Providence a seal of this grant may have been affixed on the descendants of this patriarch in the superior beauty of their persons. But without attempting to determine when or how the existing diversity in the human species was produced, we may be sure that causes sufficient to produce it have at all times been under the control of Divine Providence, and we are, therefore, not compelled to refer it to his creating power. Hence the legitimate deductions of science do not contradict the historical testimony of the Bible concerning the original parentage of the human race.

Though we hold that the varieties in the human race have been produced by natural causes, we hold it as a doctrine of science, not of theology: but our belief that all mankind sprung from Adam rests on higher authority than that of human science. We believe it on the testimony of God. No zoologist claims to have learned by his own observation all the facts on which his theories are based: but he receives many of them on the testimony of other men; and he feels bound to modify his theories when a fact inconsistent with them is brought to his knowledge through the credible testimony of any one. Now, on the question of man's origin, no testimony can be so important as that of him by whom man was created; and no zoologist who has duly examined the evidence that the Bible is the word of God, can rationally form theories which contradict the divine testimony. Let science demonstrate, if it can, that

nature has no powers, either ordinary or extraordinary, which are sufficient to produce the existing varieties of the human race, and we will then concur with our opponents in attributing these varieties to an immediate exertion of divine power. But science has never demonstrated that creation is the only miracle that God can work. If he wills that a human being shall exist of a variety which it is beyond the power of nature to produce, he can create such a man out of the dust of the ground; but he can as easily accomplish the same by miraculously changing a man already in existence. If the thing must be referred to the miraculous power of God, the testimony of God ought to be allowed to decide by what species of miracle it was effected. When scientific infidelity has been compelled to admit the agency of the Almighty, it cannot consistently limit his mode of operation.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER I.

HISTORICAL EVIDENCE.

I. SECTION I. DR. LARDNER.

NATHANIEL LARDNER, D. D., was a minister of the gospel among the Independents. He was born June 6th 1684, and died July 24th 1768, in the 85th year of his age. He was a man of talents and learning; but was unsuccessful as a preacher. He was afflicted with so great deafness as to render intercourse with others difficult, and his biographer attributes to his deafness a defect in his elocution which marred his public speaking. These circumstances favored the devotion of his life to literary pursuits, and it was as an author that he gained his high reputation.

The chief work of Dr. Lardner is, "The Credibility of the Gospel History." This he began to publish in February, 1727, at which time appeared in two volumes, octavo, Part I., which he had been several years in preparing. He continued the preparation and publication of the work throughout his life, leaving a small portion of it to be completed by another hand from the materials which he had collected. In this great work he collected from all the writings of antiquity, whether Christian, Jewish, or Pagan, whatever can throw light on the truth of the history contained in the New Testament, and on the authenticity of the New Testament books. Lardner's volumes have furnished a storehouse

of materials for all later authors who have investigated the external evidences of Christianity. Among the English Independents, as among the American Congregationalists, many have adopted the Socinian creed. Dr. Lardner was of this number. It may be regarded as a wise arrangement of Providence that a man of his theological views should have given to the world the ablest historical defence of Christianity. Josephus, an enemy of our religion, was raised up by Providence to contribute by his writings most reliable information, confirming the truth of Christ's predictions; and Gibbon, an infidel historian, has, in like manner, confirmed by his literary labors the exact fulfilment of the predictions contained in the last book of the New Testament. Dr. Lardner, though belonging to that class of professed Christians who are least removed from infidelity, has rendered the most valuable service in establishing the outworks of Christianity. A more fit agent for this service could not have been selected. A deist could not have rendered it consistently with his avowed faith; and an evangelical Christian who should engage in such a work would be liable to the charge of being misled by enthusiasm. The coolness of Lardner's judgment will not be questioned, and no one has accused him of unfaithfulness in his extracts.

SECTION II. AGREEMENT OF NEW TESTAMENT HISTORY WITH JEWISH AND PAGAN WRITINGS.

THE HISTORICAL STATEMENTS AND ALLUSIONS INCIDENTALLY MADE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT COINCIDE WITH THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE TIMES.

Part I. of Dr. Lardner's *Credibility* treats of "the facts *occasionally mentioned* in the New Testament," and shows that these were "confirmed by passages of ancient authors who were contemporary with our Saviour or his apostles, or lived near their time." This part of the *Credibility* is contained in the first volume of Dr. Lardner's *Works*, and an epitome of it is here .

subjoined, in which ninety-six historical facts, taken from Josephus, Philo, Tacitus, Suetonius, and other ancient authors, are enumerated in one series; and another series is added consisting of references to passages of Scripture in which the same facts are incidentally stated or alluded to. A horizontal line across the page separates these two series from each other; and by the arrangement adopted, a comparison of the history contained in the New Testament with that obtained from other sources is rendered easy; and the perfect agreement with respect to these "occasionally-mentioned" facts establishes the truth of the sacred history in the most satisfactory manner.

NOTE.

A. U. is used to signify the year of the city Rome.

A. D. the year of our Lord; that is, the year from the birth of Christ according to the computation in common use, which dates that event in December, A. U. 753, and begins the computation the year following, Jan. 1, A. U. 754. Hence in the date of any event, if 753 be subtracted from the year of the city, the remainder will be the year of our Lord.

2. I. PRINCES AND GOVERNORS.

Jewish and Pagan Writings.

1. Herod reigned over Judea from A. U. 714 to 750 or 751, all the land of Judea being included in his dominion. 2. He was very cruel and put many to death from a jealousy of being supplanted in power. 3. In the latter part of his reign Antipater, the worst of his sons, participated actively in public affairs; but being detected in a conspiracy to poison his father, was put to death by Herod only five days before his own decease. 4. At Herod's death his kingdom was divided among his sons. Galilee fell to Herod Antipas, Idumea to Philip, and Judea to Archelaus, who was the only one that received the title of king or was said to reign. 5. Archelaus was the worst of all Herod's sons after the death of Antipater. 6. On complaint made against him to the Roman Emperor by the Jews he was banished A. U. 759. 7. Judea then became a

province governed by Roman procurators. 8. Herod the tetrarch, when on a visit to his brother Herod Philip, fell in love with his wife Herodias and made proposals of marriage, which she accepted. 9. She had a daughter Salome by her first husband. 10. Lardner finds no instance about this time that a lady of like station with Salome danced at a public entertainment. 11. Herodias was full of ambition and envy; and having a mighty influence on Herod, was able to persuade him to things to which he was not of himself at all inclined. 12. Herod Agrippa, grandson of Herod the Great, was made king by Caligula, A. D. 37, over the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, and afterwards that of Galilee. Claudius afterwards added Judea to his dominion. The last three years of his life is the only time, after the banishment of Archelaus, that Judea was not a Roman province, until A. D. 66, when they revolted from the Romans. 13. He was much disposed to please the Jews. 14. His death is thus described by Josephus: "Having now reigned three whole years over all Judea, he went to the city Cesarea. Here he celebrated shows in honor of Cæsar. On this occasion there was a vast resort of persons of rank and distinction from all parts of the country. On the second day of the shows, early in the morning, he came into the theatre, dressed in a robe of silver, of most curious workmanship. The rays of the rising sun reflected from so splendid a garb, gave him a majestic and awful appearance. In a short time they began in several parts of the theatre flattering acclamations which proved pernicious to him. They called him a god, and entreated him to be propitious to them, saying, 'Hitherto we have respected you as a man; but now we acknowledge you to be more than mortal.' The king neither reproved these persons, nor rejected the impious flattery. Immediately after this, he was seized with pains in his bowels extremely violent at the very first. Then turning himself towards his friends, he spoke

to them in this manner: 'I, your god, am required to leave this world; fate instantly confuting these false applauses just bestowed upon me; I, who have been called immortal, am hurried away to death. But God's appointment must be submitted to. Nor has our condition in this world been despicable; we have lived in the state which has been accounted happy.' While he was speaking these words he was oppressed with the increase of his pains. He was carried, therefore, with all haste to his palace. These pains in his bowels continually tormenting him, he expired in five days' time, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and of his reign the seventh." 15. The children left by Herod Agrippa were Agrippa, then 17 years of age, and three daughters, Bernice, who was married to Herod, her father's brother, being 16 years of age, Mariamne and Drusilla, who were unmarried, the former 10 years old and Drusilla 6. 16. Felix was governor of Judea, and married to Drusilla. 17. He was wicked, had been guilty of abominable villany, and was capable of being bribed. 18. He was succeeded in office by Festus. 19. Agrippa was king over some other parts of the country which had belonged to the family of Herod the Great, but not of Judea. 20. He was trained by his father in the Jews' religion.

1. Matt. ii. 1; Luke i. 5. The true date of Christ's birth, according to the best chronologers, is at least four years earlier than that assigned to it by the reckoning in common use; and, therefore, it occurred before the death of Herod. 2. Matt. ii. 3-16. 3. Matt. ii. 20. The death of both these princes in the short space of six days, accounts for the use of the plural pronoun, "*they* are dead which sought the young child's life." 4. Luke, iii. 1; Matt. ii. 22. 5. The character of Archelaus accounts for Joseph's going to Galilee, Matt. ii. 22, where he was under the dominion of Herod Antipas.

New Testament. { 6. The shortness of Archelaus's reign accounts for the silence of Scripture respecting him except in a single passage. 7. Luke, iii. 1. 8. Matt. xiv. 3, 4; Mark, vi. 17; Luke, iii. 19. 9. Matt. xiv. 6; Mark, vi. 22. 10. The unusualness of the dance which Herod requested, may account for the high remuneration which Herod proposed. 11. Matt. xiv. 8, 9; Mark, vi. 24-26. 12. Acts, xii. 1. 13. Acts, xii. 3. 14. Acts, xii. 19-23. The agreement between Luke and Josephus is here remarkable. 15. Acts, xxv. 13; xxiv. 24. 16. Acts, xxiii. 24; xxiv. 24. 17. Acts, xxiv. 25, 26. 18. Acts, xxiv. 27; xxv. 14. 19. Acts, xxv. 13. The case of Paul was not referred to Agrippa as having authority in Judea. Acts, xxv. 22, 24; xxvi. 31. 20. Acts, xxvi. 3.

3. II. STATE OF THE JEWS IN JUDEA DURING THE MINISTRY OF OUR SAVIOUR AND HIS APOSTLES.

The civil state of the Jews may be considered in four periods:—1. From the preaching of John the Baptist to the resurrection of Christ. 2. From the resurrection of Christ to the time of Herod the king, mentioned Acts, x. 11. 3. During the reign of Herod. 4. From the end of his reign to the close of the evangelical history.

The question whether the Jews of Judea had the power of life and death demands special attention. It is not our inquiry whether Herod of Galilee had this power in his dominions: and the illegal exercise of this power by mobs or violent men does not enter into the consideration.

First Period.

Jewish and Pagan { 21. Pontius Pilate governed Judea from A. D. 26 to A. D. 36. 22. The Romans were accustomed to grant to the nations that they conquered the free exercise of their own religions. 23. The Jews had the regulation of marriage. 24. Excommunication from the synagogue, and beating, were punishments

Jewish and Pagan. { the Jews were allowed to inflict. 25. Tribute was paid to Cæsar, and his coin was in circulation. 26. The Jews had a council which issued orders to apprehend persons whom they thought worthy of capital punishment; but they had not the power of inflicting capital punishment, when they were under provincial government, this power being vested in the governor.

New Testament. { 21. Between these dates, A. D. 26 and A. D. 36, and therefore under the government of Pilate, occurred the whole ministry of John the Baptist and of Christ. Luke, iii. 1, 2; Matt. xxvii. 15, 17. 22. It is apparent throughout the New Testament that the Jews attended their religious festivals, worshipped at the temple, and in their synagogues, made collections for religious service, and in all respects enjoyed unrestricted freedom of religion. That Pilate mingled the blood of some worshippers with their sacrifices was an exception to the general rule. Luke, ii. 42; John, iv. 45; Acts, ii. 46; iii. 2; Matt. xiii. 54; Acts, xv. 21; Mark, vii. 11, 12; Luke, xiii. 1; Matt. viii. 4; Luke, v. 14; Luke, xiii. 1. 23. Matt. v. 31, 32; xix. 3, 10; Mark, x. 2-9. 24. John, ix. 22; Acts, xxii. 19; xxvi. 11. 25. Mark, xii. 15-20; Luke, xx. 20-24. 26. Matt. xii. 14; John, v. 15-18; vii. 1, 25, 32; x. 39; xi. 45, 47, 53; xii. 10. Jesus was apprehended by the order of the Jewish council, with the band of Roman soldiers, and was brought first to trial before the council, but afterwards taken to Pilate. Matt. xxvi. 3, 4, 14, 16; John, xviii. 3; Luke, xxii. 52; John, xviii. 12, 13; Matt. xxvi. 57, 59, 60; Mark, xiv. 64; Matt. xxvii. 1, 2; Mark, xiv. 1; Luke, xxiii. 1; John, xviii. 28, 29. Pilate judged him innocent, but gave sentence against him to gratify the Jews. Luke, xxiii. 4-8, 13-16, 17-24. We may here notice that the only charge on which Jesus was condemned was that of blasphemy in claiming to be the Son of God, and this was an

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offence against the Jewish law. John, xix. 7. But though he was condemned by the council for this the sentence was passed by Pilate, John, xix. 15-19, and his soldiers executed it. Matt. xxvii. 27, 28. These soldiers were under his command exclusively, and responsible to him. Matt. xxviii. 11-14. The Jews expressly declared that they had not the power to put any one to death. John, xviii. 31. But Pilate claims this power. John, xix. 10. The Jews had endeavored to ensnare Christ by inducing him to sanction the infliction of capital punishment, contrary to the restriction which they were under. John, viii. 6, 7, 9.

Second Period.

Jewish and Pagan Writings.

27. The latter part of Pilate's administration was weak through fear of the Jews, and he was finally removed from office on complaint made by them to the emperor. Judea then became annexed to the province of Syria, and was governed by its presidents, Vitellius and Petronius, of whom the former was much inclined to favor the Jews. 28. Under Petronius the Jews had much trouble, which began in an order of the Emperor Caligula to have his image set up in the temple at Jerusalem.

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27. The weakness of Pilate and the indulgence of Vitellius gave opportunity for the Jews to persecute the Christians. Acts, iv. 1-9-30. 28. The troubles under Petronius engrossed the attention of the Jews, and gave a season of rest to the Christians. Acts, ix. 31. The conversion of Saul, Acts, ix. 3-18, could not have been the sole cause of this relief; for there were other persecutors, men of age and authority. He was himself afterwards sorely persecuted by the Jews.

In this period no mention of a Roman governor is found in the New Testament. The Jewish council apprehended the apostles, bound them, put them in

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the common prison, beat them publicly, and took counsel to slay them, but it does not follow that they could have legally put them to death by their own authority, since they did as much with respect to Jesus. Acts, iv. 7-21; v. 17, 18, 41. Stephen was brought before the council, witnesses were heard, and he made a defence, but the opinions of the council were not asked, or a sentence pronounced as in other cases recorded. He was stoned by the enraged multitude without legal condemnation. Acts, vi. 8-15; vii. 1-60. Saul persecuted the saints with authority from the Sanhedrim, according to which he imprisoned them, beat them in the synagogues, and pursued them to distant places. He desired to procure their death, though he may not have been concerned in the killing of any but Stephen. It does not follow that the council claimed the right of putting to death without higher authority. Acts, viii. 1, 3; ix. 1, 2, 13, 14; xxii. 4, 5, 19, 20; xxvi. 9-13.

Third Period.

Jewish and Pagan.

29. This period was during the reign of Herod Agrippa, who of course held the power of life and death.

Fourth Period.

30. After Herod's death Judea again became a province, and was governed as it had been under Pilate. 31. The governors resided at Cesarea.

New Testament.

29. Acts, xii. 1-19. 30. Acts, xxiii. 24. 31. Acts, xxiii. 23, 24; xxv. 4. In the fourth period, which followed the death of Herod Agrippa, occurred the persecution of Paul by the Jewish council, in which it is apparent that the council merely brought the accusation, and that the right of judgment belonged to the Roman governor who might have set Paul at liberty if he had not appealed to Cæsar. Acts, xxi. 26, 34; xxii. 22, 23, 24-30; xxiii. 1-5, 35; xxiv. 1-22, 27; xxv. 1-9; xxiii. 6, 28; xxiv. 5, 6; xxvi. 32.

4. III. STATE OF THE JEWS OUT OF JUDEA.

Jewish and Pagan Writings.

32. The Jews were scattered abroad in almost every place in Europe and Asia, and the islands of the Mediterranean. 33. The Jews were accustomed in various places to have assemblies for religious worship on the shore of rivers or of the sea. 34. Synagogues were numerous in Jerusalem. Many of them were built by Jews living in distant countries to be for their special use when attending the feasts, and also academies were connected with them for the education of their children in their religion. 35. Many Jews were taken to Rome as slaves and afterwards set free: these and their children were called "Libertines." 36. The Jews were zealous to make proselytes to their religion, and sometimes proselyted persons of distinction. 37. There were many proselytes at Antioch.

New Testament.

32. Acts, ii. 5. Frequent mention is made in the Acts of the Apostles that they preached in the synagogues of distant cities. 33. Acts, xvi. 13. 34. John, ix. 22. Acts, vi. 9. 35. Acts, vi. 9. 36. Matt. xxiii. 15. Acts, ii. 10; xiii. 43; viii. 26-28. 37. Acts, vi. 5.

5. IV. JEWISH SECTS AND THE SAMARITANS.

Jewish and Pagan Writings.

38. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were the principal sects among the Jews. 39. They were much opposed to each other. 40. The Pharisees had great influence with the common people and sometimes abused it. 41. The Sadducees had much influence with the rich. 42. The Pharisees were strict in interpreting the law, and in the practice of religious duties. They observed traditions not contained in the law. They believed in the immortality of the soul, and future resurrection; and some of them in the transmigration of souls. 43. The Sadducees, though less numerous, shared with the Pharisees in the administration of public affairs, and

Jewish and Pagan Writings.

were more inclined to severity. 44. The high priest was sometimes of the sect of the Sadducees. 45. The common people were never called Pharisees, though adopting the principles of the sect. 46. There were men honored by the people as skilful interpreters of the law, from whom the young received instruction. 47. The Herodians, not enumerated as a distinct religious sect, were adherents of Herod. 48. The Essenes were few and lived in seclusion, and though they sent sacrifices to the temple, did not worship in person. 49. The Samaritans held Mount Gerizim in high honor, and between them and the Jews there was much enmity.

New Testament.

38. Acts, xxvi. 5. Matt. xvi. 1; xxii. 23. 39. Acts, xxiii. 6-10. 40. Matt. xxiii. 14. Mark, xii. 38-40. Luke, xx. 46. 41. Acts, v. 17. 42. Matt. v. 20; ix. 14. Mark, vii. 3, 4, 9, 13. Luke, xviii. 12. John, ix. 2. Acts, xxiii. 8; xxvi. 58. 43. Acts, xxiii. 6; v. 17. 44. Acts, v. 17. 45. Matt. xxiii. 4. 46. Matt. ii. 4; vii. 29. Luke, xi. 46. 47. Matt. xxii. 16. Mark, iii. 6; viii. 15; xii. 13. 48. Because of the seclusion in which the Essenes lived they had no intercourse with Christ, and hence no notice of them appears in the gospel history. John, xviii. 19, 20. 49. John, iv. 5-9, 20; viii. 48; Luke, ix. 53.

6. V. EXPECTATIONS OF THE JEWS AND SAMARITANS, AND THEIR IDEAS OF THE MESSIAH.

Jewish and Pagan.

50. The Jews were at this time in great expectation of the Messiah as a powerful temporal deliverer. 51. The Jews expected the Messiah to show some sign of deliverance. 52. The Samaritans also were at this time in expectation of some extraordinary divine interposition. 53. The Messiah was expected to be a prophet.

N. Testament. { 50. John, i. 19, 20. Luke, iii. 15; ii. 25, 26; ix. 46; Matt. xx. 21. John, vi. 14, 15. Matt. xxi. 8, 9. John, xii. 13. 51. John, xx. 30. Acts, ii. 22. Matt. xii. 38; xvi. 1. John, vi. 30. 1 Cor. i. 22. 52. John, iv. 25, 26, 29, 42. 53. John, vi. 14, 15.

7. VI. THE CORRUPTION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

J. and P. { 54. Avarice, cruelty, violence, impiety, hypocrisy, and all kinds of wickedness prevailed at this time among the people.

T. { 54. Matt. iii. 7; xii. 39. John, viii. 40-44. Matt. N. { xxiii. 5-23; xxi. 13.

8. VII. CIRCUMSTANCES OF OUR SAVIOUR'S LAST SUFFERINGS.

Jewish and Pagan Writings. { 55. Joseph, who was called Caiaphas, was high priest all the time that Pilate was in Judea. 56. Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea ten years before the death of Tiberius, and was removed by Vitellius A. D. 37. 57. Governors were at this time permitted to take their wives with them into their provinces, contrary to the usage during the continuance of the Roman commonwealth. 58. Herod the tetrarch, being a Jew, attended the feasts at Jerusalem. 59. The high priests sometimes rent their clothes on extraordinary occasions. 60. There were persons called chief priests, besides the individual who held at the time the office of high priest. 61. Though the Roman procurators lived at Cesarea, they were wont to be in Jerusalem for the preservation of order at the time of the feasts, especially of the Passover. 62. Pilate on different occasions found the Jews zealously and firmly attached to their law and disposed to rebel against his authority: and his consciousness of wrongs done in the administration of his government made him fear lest he should be accused to the emperor. 63. Judea belonged to the province of Syria, but had its own governor or procurator who possessed the power of life and death.

64. It was customary to affix "titles" to instruments of punishment setting forth the crimes for which the condemned suffered. 65. It was usual at this time to set up advertisements written in different languages, that they might be read by all. 66. Indignities to condemned persons, and ridicule by mock emblems of royalty, occurred in these times. 67. Scourging before the infliction of capital punishment was usual. 68. It was the constant practice among the Romans for malefactors to carry the cross on which they were to be crucified. 69. To go out of a city for the infliction of capital punishment was conformable with Jewish and Roman custom. 70. The burial of persons put to death was required by Jewish law and usage, and was usually granted by the Romans. 71. It was customary with the Jews to embalm the bodies of dead persons with abundant use of spices.

55. Matt. xxvi. 3, 57. John, xviii. 13, 24-28. 56. Luke, iii. 1, 2; xiii. 1. Matt. xxvii. 2. Luke, xxiii. 12. John, xviii. 33. 1 Tim. vi. 13. 57. Matt. xxvii. 19. 58. Luke, xxiii. 7. 59. Matt. xxvi. 63-65. 60. Matt. xxvi. 59. Mark, xiv. 53. 61. Matt. xxvii. 2. Mark, xv. 1. Luke, xxiii. 1. John, xviii. 29, 39. 62. Pilate feared the resentment of the Jews, if he did not execute on Jesus the sentence of their council. Matt. xxvii. 18. Luke, xxiii. 23. John, xviii. 33, 36-38. John, xix. 1-8, 12. Luke, xxiii. 23-25. Mark, xv. 15. Matt. xxvii. 24, 25. 63. John, xix. 7. John, xviii. 29, 30; xix. 10, 16. The peculiarity above stated would very probably have escaped the notice of a writer who in a subsequent age should have attempted to forge a history of Christ's life. It is therefore an important proof that the Gospels were written by persons who lived at the time of which they give the history. 64. John, xix. 20. 65. John, xix. 20. Luke, xxiii. 38. 66. Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. Luke, xxiii. 11. Matt. xxvii. 27-31. Mark, xv. 16-20. 67. Matt. xxvii. 26. Mark, xv. 15. 68. Mark, xv. 21. John, xix.

New Testament. { 16, 17. Luke, xxiii. 26. 69. Matt. xxvii. 31-33. Mark, xv. 20-22. Luke, xxiii. 26-33. John, xix. 17, 20. Hebrews, xiii. 12. 70. Matt. xxvii. 58-60. Mark, xv. 45, 46. Luke, xxiii. 50-53. John, xix. 31, 38-40. 71. John, xix. 39, 40. Mark, xvi. 1. Luke, xxiii. 55, 56; xxiv. 1.

9. VIII. TREATMENT OF CHRISTIANS BY JEWS AND GENTILES.

Jew. and Pag. Writings. { 72. The Jews regarded the Christians with bitter hatred. 73. The Romans, who were accustomed to grant to conquered nations the free exercise of their religions, on this general principle, and by express decrees of the Senate, protected the Jews in their religious observances. There was nothing which the Romans regarded so necessary to the peace of the empire as the toleration of all religions. 74. The Roman laws prohibited the worship of new gods.

New Testament. { 72. Acts, xvii. 5-9, 13; xviii. 12; xxii. 22; xxiv. 1; xxv. 2, 3. 1 Thess. ii. 14, 15. Gal. v. 11. Acts, xiv. 19; xx. 3; vii. 54. 73. Acts, xviii. 14-16; xix. 24-40; xxiv. 22, 23; xxv. 18, 19; xxvi. 31, 32; xxviii. 16, 30, 31. 74. The Christians worshipped the same God as the Jews. Hence Paul's defence, "so worship I the God of my fathers," Acts, xxiv. 14, was valid. The Roman government had tolerated the different sects among the Jews, and the Christians were regarded as a Jewish sect by the Roman governors: Acts, xvi. 20. Paul was charged at Athens as being a setter forth of strange gods, Acts, xvii. 18, but he skilfully defended himself as the worshipper of the unknown God to whom they had an altar consecrated: verse 23.

10. IX. OPINIONS AND PRACTICES OF THE JEWS.

J. and P. { 75. The Jews from distant countries attended their feasts at Jerusalem, especially the feast of the Passover, and so great was the number that at one feast, there were computed to be present two million

seven hundred thousand persons duly qualified to partake of the feast, besides uncircumcised proselytes and other unclean persons. Another estimate made the whole number present three millions. 76. They who were in Jerusalem went frequently to the temple to worship. 77. The third and ninth hours of the day were stated times of prayer. 78. The Jews were exceedingly zealous for the honor and sanctity of the temple. 79. The Jews had great respect for the law, and could not tolerate indignity offered to it. 80. They were wont to worship in their synagogues every sabbath, and in this service the Scriptures were read, and discourses delivered. 81. The Nazarites' vow spoken of in Num. vi. 18 was observed and was completed by offerings made in the temple. 82. The number of stripes inflicted as a legal punishment was by Jewish usage limited to thirty-nine. 83. It was held that zeal for virtue and religion might justify private persons in killing without legal trial, those who were guilty of idolatry, and other flagrant offences against the divine law; and might even require them to do so. An example of this private zeal was a conspiracy of ten persons to kill Herod. 84. The paying of tribute to the Romans was grievous to the Jews, and hence they disliked the publicans who collected this tribute. 85. Many of the publicans were Jews, and some of them were virtuous men.

75. John, iv. 45; vii. 1-4; xi. 55, 56; xii. 12, 13, 27. Acts, ii. 5. John, vii. 30; xii. 20. 76. Acts, ii. 46; iii. 1-9; v. 20-25. 77. Acts, ii. 13, 15; iii. 1-9. 78. Acts, vi. 13; xxi. 27, 28-32. 79. Acts, xxi. 28. 80. Luke, iv. 17-20. Acts, xv. 21. Matt. xiii. 54. Mark, i. 21. Acts, xiv. 1. 81. Acts, xviii. 18; xxi. 23, 24, 26. 82. 2 Cor. xi. 24. 83. Luke, iv. 28, 29. John, viii. 59. Acts, xx. 3; xxi. 27-31; xxiii. 10-15; xxv. 1-3. 84. Matt. xxii. 17; Mark, xii. 14. Luke, xx. 21, 22; xix. 2, 7. 85. Luke, iii. 12. Matt. xxi. 31, 32. Luke, v. 29. Matt. ix. 10. Mark, ii. 14. Luke, xix. 2, 8.

11. X. ROMAN CUSTOMS.

Jewish and Pagan Writings.

86. The Romans examined suspected persons by torture. 87. Scourging was used in such examinations; but it was not allowed to scourge a Roman citizen. Condemnation and punishment were not allowed without trial. 88. Citizenship was frequently conferred on Jews. 89. Citizenship was given for money, and as a reward for services. 90. The presence of both the accused and the accuser was required at trial. 91. A Roman citizen, though he might not be bound with thongs for the purpose of being scourged, might be bound with chains for the purpose of confinement. The method was to chain the hand of the prisoner to the arm of a soldier. The degree of confinement was dependent on the nature and evidence of the prisoner's crime, and other circumstances. 92. The Emperor Augustus appointed consular persons at Rome to receive appeals from the provinces. Persons were frequently sent from Judea and Samaria to Rome for trial. 93. Prisoners sent from the provinces were usually committed to the captain of the guard, and not to the prefect of the city.

New Testament.

86. Acts, xxii. 24, 25. 87. Acts, xvi. 22-37, xxv. 16. 88. Acts, xxii. 26-29; xxi. 37-39, xxii. 3. 89. Acts, xxii. 28. 90. Acts, xxiii. 33-35, xxiv. 7, 8; xxv. 4, 5, 14-16. 91. Paul's confinement underwent several changes, and was at last greatly mitigated in Rome. Acts, xxi. 32, 33; xxii. 30; xxvi. 29, 28; xvi. 20, 23. 2 Tim. i. 16. Acts, xii. 6; xxiv. 23; xxviii. 16, 23, 30. 92. Acts, xxv. 10, 11, 24, 25. 93. Acts, xxvii. 1; xxviii. 16.

12. XI. THREE REMARKABLE FACTS.

Jewish and Pagan. { 94. Herod the Great began the repair of the temple, and the work was continued after his time, in all more than forty-six years. 95. A famine oppressed the land of Judea in the fourth, fifth, and sixth years of Claudius, and extended to several other countries. 96. Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome.

New Testament. { 94. John, ii. 14-20. 95. Acts, xi. 27-30. "The whole world" should be rendered "the whole land." The connection shows the land of Judea to be intended, and contributions for relief were obtained from other places which were exempt from the famine. 96. Acts, xviii. 1, 2.

13. XII. ALLEGED DISAGREEMENTS.

I. It has been alleged by opposers of revelation that no general taxing of the Roman Empire, in the reign of Augustus, as stated in Luke ii. 1, 2, has been noticed by any Greek or Roman historian.

Lardner thinks that the phrase "all the world"¹ should be rendered "all the land," meaning all the territory included under the reign of Herod the Great. The word "all" was appropriately used because of the division of this land after the death of Herod. It is not surprising that Greek and Roman authors should omit the mention of the census or assessment of Judea: but it is probable, as will be shown hereafter, that Josephus refers to it; and it is mentioned by Justin, Tertullian, and the Emperor Julian.

II. It has been further alleged that the authority

¹ If Luke used the phrase to signify "all the Roman Empire," the widest sense that any critic contends for, it is still most probable that the actual enrolment which he mentions as made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria, intends no more than the fulfilment of the imperial decree *in the land of Israel, the country with which the sacred historian was concerned.*

of Herod in his kingdom precluded the taxing of his subjects by the Roman government.

The word employed by Luke denotes an enrolment or census. The Roman census included: 1. A report given by individuals of their family and possessions; and, 2. An estimate by the censor of the value of these possessions. The term used by Luke denotes an entry, and does not determine whether it was of property or persons. A passage in Josephus probably refers to this census, describing it as an oath of fidelity taken by the people, in which 6000 of the Pharisees did not unite. Herod, in the latter part of his reign, fell under the displeasure of Augustus, and the decree of a census was an indignity to which he quietly submitted. The six thousand Pharisees were fined; and, by explanations made to the emperor as to the cause of his displeasure, he was appeased. Hence it is probable that the taxation, if intended, was not carried into effect. The oath of fidelity mentioned by Josephus required an entry or record of the names, since the number that declined is specified. The entry implied in Josephus's account, even if it had no respect to taxation, states all that Luke's words express.

III. Cyrenius was not the president of Syria until after the banishment of Archelaus. He was then sent to make a census, but the time was ten or twelve years after the birth of Christ; and hence infidels allege that Luke's statement is incorrect.

It is unquestionable that an enrolment was made by Cyrenius after the banishment of Archelaus. This enrolment is referred to by Gamaliel, Acts v. 37, and Josephus gives an account of it in exact agreement with that of Gamaliel. As Luke has recorded Gamaliel's speech, he must be supposed to have known the facts concerning the taxing and the opposition made to it by Judas and his party, all which are cited by Gamaliel as facts well known. The enrolment which Luke mentions in his Gospel, he distinguishes as the "first;" and it is manifest from the context that it was made during the reign of Herod; yet it seems to have been con-

nected in some way with the province of Syria. If it had nothing to do with the government or governor of Syria, it is strange that the evangelist, in describing an enrolment of Herod's subjects, should have adopted the method which he has employed for fixing the date of the event. In what way the enrolment was connected with the governor of Syria it is not easy to determine. If this were ascertained, the whole difficulty in the passage would probably vanish.

Lardner translates the passage in Luke thus: "This was the first assessment of Cyrenius, governor of Syria." He thinks that Cyrenius was not governor of Syria at the time of making the assessment; and that the title affixed by the evangelist was designed merely to identify him as the person bearing this name who afterwards became governor of Syria. Campbell, in his "Four Gospels," translates the passage thus: "This first register took effect when Cyrenius was president of Syria." He thinks that the purpose for which it was begun in the days of Herod was not at that time carried into effect; and that after such corrections of the register as had become necessary, the purpose was accomplished when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.

Lardner has shown that there is no improbability in supposing Cyrenius to have conducted the first enrolment; and a passage which he has quoted from Josephus styles both Saturninus and Volumnius governors of Syria, though the latter was at the time only the procurator of the revenue. If Augustus had it in view to take Herod's kingdom from him, and annex his dominions to the province of Syria, as was afterwards done in the case of Herod's son, Archelaus, it is not improbable that Cyrenius, when commissioned to take the census of Herod's subjects, was constituted assistant-governor of Syria, or procurator of the revenue, at least so far as concerned the contemplated addition to the province. The same man was afterwards, on the banishment of Archelaus, sent to perform the same service or to complete what he had previously begun; and on this second mission from the emperor, he acted as governor of Sy-

ria. The facts as we have supposed them accord with the most literal interpretation of Luke's words, which may be rendered, "This was the first enrolment of Cyrenius governing Syria," or, "This was the first enrolment, Cyrenius governing Syria."¹ In this brief parenthetical sentence, the purpose of the evangelist did not require him to notice the change in the extent of Cyrenius's power from *assessment* governor to *sole* governor. Indeed there was no change so far as concerned the taking of the census, for in this he acted as procurator of the revenue, even while invested with the sole government of the province. The words best agree with the supposition that both enrolments were conducted by him in the execution of his office as procurator of Syria. No difficulty can justly arise from the silence of other historians respecting the agency of Cyrenius in the incipient and ineffectual enrolment, since the enrolment itself has received from them no other notice than the obscure one of Josephus, who has not mentioned in any way the Roman officer to whom it was intrusted.

IV. Infidels allege that Josephus and all other historians omit any mention of the slaughter of infants at Bethlehem. Matt. ii. 16.

The history of Herod's acts of cruelty as given by Josephus and others, and especially of his murder of persons whom his jealousy of power rendered objects of dread, corresponds with the horrid massacre that Matthew has described. No historian records everything, and the silence of each as to some facts is no objection to the narrations of others. Josephus could not have recorded this event without favoring the Christians more than he desired.

¹ If the preposition "of" be omitted in the translation, it will still be naturally supplied in the interpretation. The omission of it makes the words "Cyrenius governing" the case absolute, which might, as in Luke iii. 1, merely fix the date of the event, if the event were not an act pertaining to the government of Syria. To fix the date of an act which a Syrian governor might be expected to perform, by naming the individual who was in office at the time, naturally implies that he was the agent.

V. The silence of Josephus as to those whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices, has been noticed by infidels as an objection to the statement in Luke xiii. 1.

It is a sufficient answer to this objection that silence is not contradiction.

VI. Infidels allege that Jesus was born a considerable time before the death of Herod, and that in the fifteenth year of Tiberius his age was considerably more than that ascribed to him by Luke. Luke iii. 1, 23.

After careful examination of facts the conclusion of Dr. Lardner is that the birth of Jesus occurred about eighteen months before the death of Herod; and about September, 748 or 749, A. U. C. The years of Tiberius may be reckoned from his being made a colleague of Augustus.

Another solution is, that the words of Luke were evidently designed not to give the precise age of Jesus. He expresses it in round numbers with the qualifying word about. It may be therefore that he was thirty two or three years old.

Either of these solutions suffices for the removal of the difficulty.

VII. Luke says, "Annas and Caiaphas being high priests:" Luke iii. 2; but infidels allege that there was only one high priest at a time.

It is clear from Josephus that there were in other cases two persons who held the highest authority under the Romans at the same time. Annas had been high priest, and being father-in-law to Caiaphas is first named, and the two held the places of highest authority.

VIII. Infidels allege that Herodias was the wife, not of Philip the tetrarch, but of Herod, an untitled brother residing in Jerusalem. Matt. xiv. 3; Mark vi. 17; Luke iii. 19.

The evangelists do not affirm that Herodias had been the wife of Philip the tetrarch. No one of them affixes the title, as all of them would probably have done if this had been the person intended. The untitled brother had both names, Herod Philip. His injurious brother, the tetrarch of Galilee, was Herod Antipas.

IX. Infidels allege that Theudas, mentioned by Gamaliel, Acts, v. 34, 36, did not, according to Josephus, rise up until several years after the time when Gamaliel spoke.

The Theudas mentioned by Gamaliel and the Theudas mentioned by Josephus, were different persons. The name was not uncommon. There were several impostors who had the name Simon, and three of the name Judas within ten years. Several impostors arose about the time of Herod's death whose names are not given by Josephus. The Theudas of Gamaliel had four hundred followers, that of Josephus "a great multitude." The points of agreement between the two are fewer and less remarkable than between two impostors named Simon, of whom Josephus gives an account.

X. Infidels allege that the number stated by Luke, Acts xxi. 38, of those who adhered to the Egyptian impostor differs widely from that mentioned by Josephus.

Josephus has given two accounts of this affair in which the numbers differ greatly from each other, as well as from that given by the chief captain in the words recorded by Luke. The three accounts refer to different times in the progress of the transaction. The impostor came from Egypt to Jerusalem, and there succeeded in gaining four thousand followers whom he led out into the wilderness. Having at length increased the number to thirty thousand, he returned to Mount Olivet, where he was attacked by Felix. Most of the company deserted, but a party fled with the impostor, of whom four hundred were killed, and two hundred taken prisoners. All the accounts are thus harmonized; and in many particulars the agreement of Josephus and the chief captain is remarkable.

SECTION III. CHRISTIAN TESTIMONIES.

THE PRINCIPAL FACTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF ANCIENT CHRISTIAN WRITERS.

The first part of Dr. Lardner's "Credibility" treats of facts "occasionally mentioned" in the New Testa-

ment. The second part treats of the "principal facts" on which Christianity is founded. This part of the "Credibility" fills seven volumes, in which testimonies are adduced from Christians, Jews, Heathens, and Heretics. To each of these classes of testimony a section is devoted in this chapter; and therefore the present section with the three following, will exhibit these testimonies as far as I have thought it needful to introduce them into this small volume. In many cases where the testimonies would have occupied too much space, a condensed view of them is given in extracts from Lardner's observations on them. The testimonies are everywhere given in Lardner's translation and the observations in Lardner's words, except where matter is added in brackets. From all the earlier writers Lardner has copied out at length their quotations of Scripture and their allusions to passages of Scripture; and has placed over against them in a parallel column, for the sake of convenient comparison, the words of Scripture quoted or alluded to. These quotations and allusions give abundant proof that the books of the New Testament were well known to the Christian writers, and highly respected by them: but, for the sake of brevity, I have selected one or more of the passages from each writer as a specimen, and have subjoined after the letter N. the number of such quotations and allusions found in his writings by Lardner. Thus, in the short notice which follows of the Epistle of Barnabas, only one quotation made by him from the New Testament appears; but nineteen others are given by Lardner, making the whole number twenty.

14. BARNABAS [the companion of Paul], A. D. 71. "Let us therefore beware, lest it should happen to us as it is written:¹ There are many called, few chosen." N. 20.

[In an epistle of Barnabas, the companion of Paul, probably genuine, certainly belonging to that age, we have (a) the sufferings of Christ, his choice of apostles

¹ Matt. xx. 16.

and their number, his passion, the scarlet robe, the vinegar and gall, the mocking and piercing, the casting lots for his coat, his resurrection on the eighth (i. e., the first day of the week), and the commemorative distinction of that day, his manifestation after his resurrection, and, lastly, his ascension. We have also his miracles generally, but positively referred to in the following words: "Finally, teaching the people of Israel, and doing many wonders and signs among them, he preached to them, and showed the exceeding great love which he bare towards them."—*Paley.*]

15. CLEMENT [mentioned in Phil. iv. 3], A. D. 96. "Take into your hands the epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle. What did he at the first write to you in the beginning of the gospel? Verily, he did by the Spirit admonish you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because that even then you did form parties.¹ 'And let us do as it is written:² For thus saith the Holy Spirit, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom.' Especially remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, which he spake, teaching gentleness and long-suffering. For thus he said: 'Be ye merciful, that ye may obtain mercy;³ forgive, that it may be forgiven unto you.⁴ As you do, so shall it be done unto you; as you give, so shall it be given unto you;⁵ as ye judge, so shall you be judged; as ye show kindness, so shall kindness be shown unto you; with what measure ye mete, with the same shall it be measured to you.' By this command, and by these rules, let us establish ourselves, that we may always walk obediently to his holy words." N. 44.

[In an epistle of Clement, a hearer of St. Paul, although written for a purpose remotely connected with the Christian history, we have (a) the resurrection of Christ and the subsequent mission of the apostles recorded in these satisfactory terms: "The apostles have preached to us from our Lord Jesus Christ from God;

¹ 1 Cor. i. 12.

³ Luke, vi. 36.

⁶ Verse 38.

² Jer. ix. 23, 24.

⁴ Verse 37.

for, having received their command, and being thoroughly assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, they went abroad publishing that the kingdom of God was at hand." (Ep. Clem. Rom. cxliii.) We find noticed also the humility, yet the power of Christ (Ep. Clem. Rom. cxvi.), his descent from Abraham, his crucifixion. We have (b) Peter and Paul represented as faithful and righteous pillars of the church; the numerous sufferings of Peter; the bonds, stripes, and stoning of Paul, and, more particularly, his extensive and unwearied travels.—*Paley.*]

16. HERMAS [mentioned in Romans, xvi. 14], A. D. 100. "Happy are ye, whosoever shall endure the great trial that is at hand, and whosoever shall not deny his life. For the Lord has sworn by his Son, that whosoever shall deny his Son, and him, being afraid of his life, they will also deny him in the world that is to come. But those who shall never deny him, of his great mercy he will be favorable to them."¹ N. 42.

17. IGNATIUS, A. D. 107. "Baptized of John, that all righteousness might be fulfilled by him."² "Be wise as a serpent in all things, and harmless as a dove."³ N. 48.

[In the remaining works of Ignatius, the contemporary of Polycarp, larger than those of Polycarp (yet, like those of Polycarp, treating of subjects in no wise leading to any recital of the Christian history), the occasional allusions are proportionably more numerous. (a) The descent of Christ from David, his mother Mary, his miraculous conception, the star at his birth, his baptism by John, the reason assigned for it, his appeal to the prophets, the ointment poured on his head, his sufferings under Pontius Pilate and Herod the tetrarch, his resurrection, the Lord's day called and kept in commemoration of it, and the eucharist, in both its parts, are unequivocally referred to. Upon the resurrection this writer is even circumstantial. He mentions the apostles' eating and drinking with Christ after he had risen; their feeling or their handling him; from which last circumstance Ignatius raises this just

¹ Matt. x. 32, 33.

² Matt. iii. 15.

³ Matt. x. 16.

reflection; "They believed, being convinced both by his flesh and spirit; for this cause, they despised death, and were found to be above it."—*Paley.*]

18. POLYCARP, a disciple of John, A. D. 108. "Do we not know that the saints shall judge the world, as Paul teaches?"¹ 'For I trust that ye are well exercised in the holy Scriptures.' As in these Scriptures it is said: 'Be ye angry, and sin not. And let not the sun go down upon your wrath.'"² N. 38.

[In an epistle of Polycarp, a disciple of Saint John, though only a brief hortatory letter, we have (a) the humility, patience, sufferings, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, together with the apostolic character of Saint Paul, distinctly recognised. (Pol. Ep. ad Phil. c. v. viii. ii. iii.) Of this same father we are also assured by Irenæus that he (Irenæus) had heard him relate "what he had received from eye-witnesses concerning the Lord, both concerning his miracles and his doctrine."—*Paley.*]

19. POLYCARP'S MARTYRDOM. "All things that went before were done, that the Lord might show us from above (or from the very first) a martyrdom according to the gospel. For he expected to be delivered up, as the Lord also did, that we likewise might be imitators of him."

20. OBSERVATIONS ON THE APOSTOLICAL FATHERS.—

1. "Barnabas has many more passages out of the Old Testament than the New." 2. "Clement has more passages out of the Old Testament, and oftener alludes to it, than the New." 3. "Hermas quotes neither the Old nor the New Testament." 4. "Ignatius does not quote the Old Testament oftener than the New." 5. "Polycarp has alluded above twenty times to texts of the New Testament, or recited the very words of them, and scarce once refers to any passage of the Old Testament."

(a) In the writings of these apostolical fathers there is all the notice taken of the books of the New Testament that could be expected. It is apparent that they

¹ 1 Cor. vi. 2.

² Eph. iv. 26.

have not omitted to take notice of any book of the New Testament, which, as far as we are able to judge, their design led them to mention. Ignatius has made use of terms denoting a code, or collection of "Gospels" and "Epistles."

21. EVANGELISTS IN THE REIGN OF TRAJAN.

QUADRATUS [one of the number]. "The works of our Saviour were always conspicuous, for they were real; both those that were healed, and those that were raised from the dead; who were seen not only when they were healed or raised, but for a long time afterwards; not only whilst he dwelt on this earth, but also after his departure, and for a good while after it, insomuch that some of them have reached to our times."

[From Eusebius.] Among those who were illustrious at that time was Quadratus, who, together with the daughters of Philip, is said to have enjoyed the gift of prophecy. And besides these there were at that time many other eminent persons, who had the first rank in the succession of the apostles; who, being the worthy disciples of such men, everywhere built up the churches, the foundations of which had been laid by the apostles; extending likewise their preaching yet further, and scattering abroad the salutary seeds of the kingdom of heaven all over the world. For many of the disciples of that time, whose soul the Divine Word had inspired with an ardent love of philosophy, first fulfilled our Saviour's precepts, distributing their substance to the necessitous. Then travelling abroad, they performed the work of evangelists, being ambitious to preach Christ, and deliver the (a) Scripture of the Divine Gospels.

22. PAPIAS, A. D. 116. "I shall not think much to set down together with my interpretations, what I have learned from the elders [or presbyters], and do well remember confirming the truth by them. For I took no delight, as most men do, in those that talk a great deal, but in those that teach the truth, nor in those that

relate strange precepts, but in them that relate precepts which the Lord has intrusted us with, and which proceed from the truth itself. And if at any time I met with one who had conversed with the elders, I inquired after the sayings of the elders; what Andrew or what Peter said, or what Philip, what Thomas, or James had said; what John or Matthew or what any other of the disciples of the Lord were wont to say; and what Aristion or John the presbyter, disciples of the Lord, say; for I was of opinion, that I could not profit so much by books as by the living."

Eusebius, who quotes the above from Papias, adds, "It will be worth while to add here to the fore-cited words of Papias some other of his passages, in which he mentions some miracles, and other things which had come to him by tradition. That Philip the apostle resided with his daughters at Hierapolis, has been shown in some things we have already produced. Now we are to observe how Papias, who lived at the same time, mentions a wonderful relation he had received from Philip's daughters. For he relates, that in his time (a) a dead man was raised to life. He also relates another miracle of Justus, surnamed Barsabas: that he drank deadly poison, and by the grace of the Lord suffered no harm. Now that this Justus, after the ascension of our Saviour, was sent forth by the holy apostles together with Matthias, and that they prayed that one of them might be allotted to fill up their number in the room of Judas the traitor, the Scripture of the Acts relates in this manner, ch. i. 23, 24, "And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed and said." And other things the same writer has related, which he received by unwritten tradition, and some strange parables of our Saviour, and sermons of his, and several other things of a fabulous kind. Among which he says likewise, that there shall be a thousand years after the resurrection of the dead, wherein the kingdom of Christ shall corporally subsist upon this earth. Which opinion, I suppose, he was led into by

misunderstanding the apostolical narrations; and for want of seeing into those things which they spoke mystically, and in figures. For he was a man of no great capacity, as may be conjectured from his writings. Yet he gave occasion to a great many ecclesiastical writers after him to be of the same opinion, who respected the antiquity of the man; as Irenæus, and the rest who have maintained that opinion. In the same writings he delivers many other narrations of the fore-mentioned Aristion, of the words of the Lord, and traditions of John the presbyter; to which we refer the curious reader.

But it is requisite, we should subjoin to his fore-cited passages a tradition which he has concerning (b) Mark, who wrote the Gospel, in these words: "And this the presbyter [or elder] said, Mark being the interpreter of Peter, wrote exactly whatever he remembered; but not in the order in which things were spoken or done by Christ. For he was neither a hearer nor a follower of the Lord; but, as I said afterwards, followed Peter, who made his discourses for the profit of those that heard him, but not in the way of a regular history of our Lord's words. Mark, however, committed no mistake in writing some things, as they occurred to his memory. For this one thing he made his care, to omit nothing which he had heard, and to say nothing false in what he related."

(c) "When Peter had come to Rome they were so inflamed with love for the truths of Christianity that they entreated Mark the companion of Peter, and whose Gospel we now have, praying him that he would write down for them, and leave with them, an account of the doctrines which had been preached to them; and they did not desist from their request until they had prevailed on him, and procured his writing that which is now the Gospel of Mark. When Peter came to know this he was, by the direction of the Holy Spirit, pleased with the request of the people, and confirmed the Gospel which was written for the use of the churches."

"Matthew (d) wrote the divine oracles in the Hebrew tongue, and every one interpreted them as he was able."

He also brings testimonies out of the first epistle of John, and of Peter in like manner.

23. JUSTIN MARTYR, A. D. 140. "For Christ was the Passover who was afterwards sacrificed for us."¹ In his oration to the Greeks: "Be you as I am, for I also was as you are."² N. 17.

OBSERVATIONS.—It is time we sum up the evidence of this writer. He has numerous quotations (a) of our Gospels, except that of St. Mark, which he has seldom quoted. He quotes them as containing authentic accounts of Jesus Christ and his doctrine. He speaks of "memoirs" or records written by "apostles" and "their companions;" plainly meaning the apostles and evangelists, Matthew and John; and by companions, or disciples of apostles, Mark and Luke. These Gospels were read and expounded in the solemn assemblies of the Christians, as the books of the Old Testament were; and as they had been before in the Jewish synagogues. Whether any other books of the New Testament were so read he does not inform us. (b) This reading of the Gospels he mentions in his first Apology to Antoninus the Pious. He must have been well assured of the truth of what he says; and it is likely knew it to be the ordinary custom of the Christian churches he had visited in his travels. If it had not been a general practice, or had obtained in some few places only, he must have spoken more cautiously and made use of some limitations and exceptions. For if there were Christian churches in which the "memoirs" he speaks of were not read; upon inquiry made by the emperor, or his order, he had run the hazard of being convicted of a design to impose upon all the majesty of the Roman empire; and that not in an affair incidentally mentioned, but in the conduct and worship of his own people, concerning whom he professeth to give the justest information. The general reading of the Gospels, as a part of divine worship, at that time, about the year 140, or not very long after, is not only a proof that they were well known,

¹ 1 Cor. v. 7.

² Gal. iv. 12.

and allowed to be genuine, but also that they were in the highest esteem.(c) These Gospels were not concealed. Justin appeals to them in the most public manner, and they were open to all the world—read by Jews and others.

The other passages of Justin here alleged relate to the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistle to the Romans, the first to the Corinthians, the epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, the second to the Thessalonians, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second of Peter, and the book of the Revelation; which last he ascribes expressly to John the apostle of Christ. I shall leave it to the reader to consider how many of the references to any of the other books are full and clear. I think it was not the method of Justin to use allusions in his style so often as some other writers do.

[From Justin's Works, which are still extant, might be collected a tolerably complete account of Christ's life, in all points agreeing with that which is delivered in our Scriptures; taken indeed in a great measure from those Scriptures, but still proving that this account, and no other, was the account known and extant in that age.(e) The miracles in particular which form the part of Christ's history most material to be traced, stand fully and distinctly recognised.—*Paley.*]

24. THE EPISTLE TO DIOGNETUS.—“The apostle says, Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.”¹ N. 14.

25. TATIAN, A. D. 172. “This is what is said: The darkness comprehendeth not the light, and the word [or reason] is the light of God: the ignorant soul is darkness.”² N. 4.

26. THE EPISTLES OF THE CHURCHES OF VIENNA AND LYONS, A. D. 177. “Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by the Lord, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God service.”³ N. 13.

27. IRENÆUS, A. D. 178. “For we have not received the knowledge of the way of our salvation by any others

¹ 1 Cor. viii. 1.

² John i. 5.

³ John, xvi. 2.

than those by whom the gospel has been brought to us; which gospel they first preached, and afterwards by the will of God committed to writing, that it might be for time to come the foundation and pillar of our faith. For after that our Lord rose from the dead, and they [the apostles] were endowed from above with the power of the Holy Ghost coming down upon them, they received a perfect knowledge of all things. They then went forth to all the ends of the earth, declaring to men the blessing of heavenly peace, having all of them, and every one alike, the gospel of God. Matthew then among the Jews, wrote a gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome, and founding a church there. And after their exit [death], or departure, Mark (a) also, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, delivered to us in writing the things that had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the gospel preached by him [Paul]. Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, who also leaned upon his breast, he likewise published a Gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia. And all these have delivered to us that there is one God, the Maker of the heaven and the earth, declared by the law and the prophets, and one Christ, the Son of God. And he who does not assent to them, despiseth indeed those who knew the mind of the Lord; but he despiseth also Christ himself the Lord; and he despiseth likewise the Father, and is self-condemned, resisting and opposing his own salvation, as all heretics do."

"Nor can they pretend that Paul is not an apostle, when he was chosen to this end; nor can they show that Luke (b) is not to be credited, who has related to us the truth with the greatest exactness. . . . And possibly God has for this reason so ordered it, that many parts of the gospel should be declared to us by Luke, which all are under a necessity of receiving; that so all might receive likewise his subsequent testimony, which he has given concerning the acts and doctrine of the apostles, and might have a sincere and uncorrupt rule of truth and be saved. Therefore his testimony is true."

OBSERVATIONS.(c)—Thirteen epistles of Paul are expressly quoted as his by Irenæus, and most of them frequently, except the epistle to Philemon, which is not quoted at all. The quotations of Paul's epistles are so numerous, that they must be acknowledged by all who but cast an eye upon this father's writings. . . . The first epistle of Peter is quoted as his more than once. . . . The first and second epistles of John are expressly cited as John's, the disciple of the Lord. . . . The Apocalypse, or Revelation, is often quoted by him as the Revelation of John, the disciple of the Lord. . . . He knew the Epistle to the Hebrews, but was not satisfied that it was Paul's.

28. ATHENAGORAS, A. D. 178. "For whosoever says he shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery."¹ N. 19.

29. THEOPHILUS OF ANTIOCH, A. D. 181. "And it [the divine word] teacheth to render to all all things; honor to whom honor, fear to whom fear, tribute to whom tribute; to owe no man anything; but only to love all men."² N. 31.

30. CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 194.

OBSERVATIONS.—I shall now sum up the testimony given by Clement to the books of the New Testament. He has expressly owned the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles, which he also ascribes to Luke. He owns, likewise, all the fourteen epistles of Paul, except the epistle to Philemon, which he has nowhere mentioned, that we know of; but this omission may be very well supposed owing to no other reason but the brevity of that epistle. He has also quoted the first epistle of Peter, the first and second epistles of John, and the epistle of Jude, and the book of the Revelation; but we have not found any quotations of the epistle of James, the second of Peter, or the third of John, or any evidences that these were owned by him.

31. TERTULLIAN, A. D. 200. "Well, if you be willing

¹ Luke, xvi. 18.
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² Rom. xiii. 7, 8.

to exercise your curiosity profitably in the business of your salvation, visit the apostolical churches, in which the very chairs of the apostle still preside; in which their very authentic letters (a) are recited, sounding forth the voice, and representing the countenance, of each one of them. Is Achaia near you? You have Corinth. If you are not far from Macedonia, you have Philippi, you have Thessalonica. If you can go to Asia, you have Ephesus. But if you are near to Italy, you have Rome, from whence we also may be easily satisfied."

OBSERVATIONS.—There are in Tertullian plain testimonies to all the books of the New Testament, commonly received by Christians at this time, except the epistle of James, the second of Peter, the second and third of John. The epistle to the Hebrews he supposed to have been written by Barnabas. . . . Tertullian affords proof that there was in his time a Latin (b) version of some or all the books of the New Testament. . . . The scriptures of the New Testament were (c) open to all, and well known in the world, in the time of Tertullian. (d) . . . We have now seen a very valuable testimony to the scriptures of the New Testament in the remaining works of Tertullian, written in the latter part of the second and the beginning of the third century. It is considerable for the number of the books cited by him, almost all those which are now received by Christians as canonical, without so much as a suspicion of placing any other in the same rank with them, and for the large and numerous quotations of them. There are perhaps more and larger quotations of the small volume of the New Testament in this one Christian author, than of all the works of Cicero, though of so uncommon excellence for thought and style, in the writers of all characters for several ages. And there is a like number of quotations of the New Testament in St. Irenæus and St. Clement of Alexandria, both writers of the second century. Tertullian's testimony is considerable too for the evident tokens of that high (e) respect which was paid to these Scriptures. Indeed, they would not have been so much quoted if they had not been generally esteemed. Nor have the

differing sentiments of those called heretics done us any lasting prejudice. The contest which they occasioned has increased our proof of the genuineness, authority, and integrity of the evangelical and apostolical Scriptures.

32. CAIUS, A. D. 212.

[From Eusebius.] “There is also come to our hands a dialogue [or disputation] of Caius, a most eloquent man, held at Rome in the time of Zephyrinus, with Proculus, a patron of the Cataphrygian heresy; in which also, reproving the (a) rashness and audaciousness of the adversaries, in composing new writings [or Scriptures], he makes mention of but thirteen epistles of the holy apostle, not reckoning that to the Hebrews, with the rest. And, indeed, to this very time, by some of the Romans this epistle is not thought to be the apostle’s.”

OBSERVATIONS.—Upon this occasion Caius gave a list or catalogue of the apostle Paul’s epistles received by himself and the church in general. . . . It would have been a great pleasure to see thirteen of St. Paul’s epistles expressly named, with the churches, or particular persons, to whom they were sent; or however described, at least by their several characters, in the order then used, all together in one catalogue, composed by this ingenious writer, at the beginning of the third century. And I cannot but think that Eusebius deserves to be censured for this omission.

[A fragment, supposed to be a part of the lost dialogue of Caius, was discovered in 1740, was published in 1814, and afterwards translated in Wilson’s Evidences of Christianity, vol. 1, p. 98. This fragment, after mentioning the Gospels of Luke and John, and the Acts of the Apostles, enumerates all the epistles of Paul, now received, except that to the Hebrews; also the epistle of Jude and two epistles of John, as accounted genuine in the Catholic Church. It says, “The Apocalypses of John and Peter are the only ones we receive, which last some Christians do not allow to be read in the church.” After mentioning the epistle of Jude and the two epistles of John, a sentence is strangely introduced, having the appearance of interpolation. “And

the Book of Wisdom, written by the friends of Solomon in honor of him.”]

33. ORIGEN, A. D. 230.

OBSERVATIONS.—Origen received as divine Scripture the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles, written by the evangelist Luke; thirteen epistles of the apostle Paul, and likewise the epistle to the Hebrews, which he continually quotes as Paul’s, though in one place he delivers his opinion that the sentiments only of the epistle were the apostle’s, the phrase and composition of some one else, whose he did not certainly know. He received likewise the first epistle of Peter, and the first of John. We learn from him also that the epistle of James, the second of Peter, the second and third of John, and the epistle of Jude, were then well known, but not universally received as genuine; nor is it evident that Origen himself received them as sacred Scripture. He owns the book of the Revelation for the writing of John the apostle and evangelist; he quotes it as his without hesitation; nor does it appear that he had any doubt about its genuineness or authority. Origen does mightily recommend the reading (a) of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, received in the churches as sacred and divine. From the large collection here made of his quotations of ecclesiastical and apocryphal (b) writings, and from the observations that have been made upon them, I presume it appears that none of these were esteemed by him as books of authority, from whence doctrines might be proved; or Scripture, in the highest sense of that word. Indeed it is not evident that Origen received as sacred books of the New Testament, all that we now receive; but that he admitted no other beside those in our present canon, may be reckoned certain, or, however, in the highest degree probable. If this has been made out to satisfaction, it is a material point, and worth all the labor of this long chapter; though I hope it may likewise answer some other good purposes. Particularly, we may perceive hence, as well as from other parts of this work, that this was not with Christians an age (c)

of gross darkness; at least the ministers of Christ did not encourage sloth and ignorance in the people, but earnestly excited all men to a diligent pursuit of religious knowledge, according to their several abilities and opportunities, especially by studying the holy Scriptures.

34. DIONYSIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 247.

OBSERVATIONS.—Dionysius received as sacred and divine scriptures, the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles, the epistles of Paul, and particularly the epistle to the Hebrews, as a writing of that apostle. Concerning the seven catholic epistles, we do not certainly know his judgment, but he has mentioned expressly and often the three epistles of the apostle John; the first as unquestionably genuine and received by all, the other two as well known. And it may be justly taken for granted that he received the first epistle of the apostle Peter, it having been all along universally received by Catholic Christians. As for the rest, we can say nothing positively as to his opinions about them. The Revelation he allowed to be the work of John, a holy and divinely inspired person; but he was not satisfied that it was written by John, the son of Zebedee, apostle and evangelist. However, in his argument concerning that book, he lets us know that it was then generally received by Christians as written by John the apostle. In Dionysius we have seen, likewise, evidences of that peculiar respect (a) showed by Christians to the sacred scriptures; which they looked upon as the rule of judgment in things of religion, by which all points in controversy were to be decided. And what those scriptures were, he shows by these general titles and divisions of them: "The Law and the Prophets, the Gospels and Epistles of Apostles." Nor have we perceived, in the remaining works and fragments of this great and learned Bishop of Alexandria, any marks of respect for any Christian apocryphal (b) writings.

35. CYPRIAN, BISHOP OF CARTHAGE, A. D. 248.

OBSERVATIONS.—We have seen in St. Cyprian a large canon of scripture; all the books of the New Testament commonly received by Christians at this present time, except the epistle to Philemon (which may have been omitted for no other reason but that he had no particular occasion to quote it), and the epistle to the Hebrews, and the epistle of St. James, and the second epistle of St. Peter, and the epistle of St. Jude. There is no particular citation of the third epistle of St. John; but, considering its shortness, and that the other two epistles of that apostle are expressly mentioned, there seems not to be any good reason for supposing it to have been rejected by this writer, or unknown to him. Excepting these few, all the other books of the New Testament have an ample testimony given them in the works of St. Cyprian; and they appear to have been esteemed inspired books and writings of authority, the rule of faith and practice to all Christian people. Nor is there in this eminent and celebrated African bishop of the third century one quotation of any Christian, spurious, or apocryphal (a) scriptures.

36. LACTANTIUS. A. D. 306. “*Dei autem præcepta, quia et simplicia et vera sunt, &c.* [because the precepts of God are simple and true, daily experience proves their power on the minds of men. Give me a man who is choleric, abusive, headstrong, and unruly; with a very few words—the words of God—I will render him as gentle as a lamb. Give me an unjust man, a foolish man, a vicious man; and, on a sudden, he shall become honest, wise, virtuous].”

37. ALEXANDER, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 313.

OBSERVATIONS.—Alexander received the epistle to the Hebrews as Paul's. . . . He quotes the second epistle of St. John.

38. CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN EMPEROR, A. D. 306.

OBSERVATIONS.—Taking the sacred books in his own

hands, he attentively read and meditated upon the divine oracles ; and then recited the usual prayers with the whole assembly of his courtiers. . . . He ordained, by an edict, that the Lord's day should be a day of rest throughout the Roman Empire. . . . By Sozomen we are informed that Constantine abolished the punishment of the cross, which had been so long used by the Romans. . . . He forbade the cruel sports of gladiators ; (a) though his authority was not sufficient to abolish them everywhere and entirely. There was need of repeated laws of Christian emperors for that purpose. He likewise appointed that criminals, which had been hitherto usually condemned to act as gladiators in public shows, should rather be sent to work in the mines. . . . Letter to the Bishop of Cæsarea, probably written about the year 332 : "The city that bears our name, through the goodness of Providence, increases daily, and there will be occasion for erecting in it many churches. Wherefore we hope you will approve of our design, and take care to procure fifty (c) copies of the divine scriptures, which you know to be necessary in churches, of fine parchment, legible, and easily portable, that they may be the fitter for use, transcribed by such as are most skilful in the art of fair writing. Directions are given to the receiver-general of the province to furnish you with all things needful. By virtue of this letter you may demand the use of two public carriages, for the more commodious and speedy conveyance of the fairly written books to us. And if you send them by a deacon of your church, he will be made sensible of our bounty. Which orders, as Eusebius says, were immediately obeyed by us. And we sent him ternions and quaternions magnificently adorned, as appears by the emperor's answer contained in a letter sent to us upon another occasion."

39. EUSEBIUS, BISHOP OF CÆSAREA, A. D. 315.

OBSERVATIONS.—What we have seen in the words of this learned and laborious bishop, who flourished at about three hundred years after our Lord's ascension, is an invaluable testimony to the things concerning the

Lord Jesus himself and his apostles, and to the (a) swift and wonderful progress of the gospel and to the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. The former were those received by the Jewish people. The (c) number of the books of the New Testament does not appear to have been in his time settled by any authority that was universally allowed of; but the books following were universally received, the four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen epistles of Paul, one epistle of Peter, and one epistle of John. These, I say, were universally received by Christians in our author's time, and had been all along received by the elders and churches of former times. Beside these, we now generally receive an epistle to the Hebrews, an epistle of James, a second epistle of Peter, a second and third of John, an epistle of Jude, and the Revelation. And it appears from this learned writer, that these books or epistles were then next in esteem to those before mentioned, as universally acknowledged; and were more generally received as of authority than any other controverted writings. Beside these, there was the Gospel according to the Hebrews, made use of by the Jewish Christians; being, probably, a translation of St. Matthew's Gospel, with some additions, and, as it seems, containing little or nothing contrary to the genuine doctrine of Christ and his apostles. The book called the Doctrine, or Doctrines of the Apostles, we have not now a distinct knowledge of; but, probably, it was a small book, containing the rudiments of the Christian religion, and fitted for the use of young people and new converts, and never esteemed a part of sacred scripture. (d) As for the rest, they were not very numerous, and their character is easily determined; for either they were useful ecclesiastical writings, as the epistles of Barnabas and Clement, and the Shepherd of Hermas, which, as we have seen from the quotations of them in the writers of the first three centuries, were never received as of authority, or a part of sacred and canonical scripture; or they were mean, absurd, and fabulous compositions, despised and disliked by the sounder Christians in general, both of

our author's and of former times. To the books of sacred scripture the greatest respect (e) was shown; they were esteemed as of authority and decisive in all points of a religious nature; they were publicly read (f) and explained in the assemblies of Christian people; and they were open (g) to be freely read by all sorts of persons in private, for their instruction and improvement in religious knowledge, and their edification in virtue. Finally, it may be observed, that this learned author makes little use in his works of apochryphal (h) scriptures of the Old Testament; none at all of Christian writings, forged with the names of Christ's apostles, or their companions.

40. ATHANASIUS, BISHOP OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 326.

OBSERVATIONS.—This testimony of Athanasius to the scriptures is very valuable; it appears from the Festal Epistle, and from his other works, that he received all the books of the New Testament that we do, and no other, as of authority. And, considering the time in which he lived, the acquaintance he had with the several parts of the Christian church at that time, and the bishops of it, in Egypt, and its neighborhood, in Europe, in Asia, and the knowledge he had of ancient Christian writings; it must be reckoned of great use to satisfy us, that notwithstanding the frequent quotations of other books, in the writings of divers ancient Christians, they did always make a distinction, and did not design to allege as of authority, and a part of the rule of faith, any books, but those which were in the highest sense sacred and divine.

41. THE COUNCIL OF LAODICEA, A. D. 363. [Last two canons.] That private psalms ought not to be read [or said] in the church, nor any books, not canonical, but only the canonical books of the Old and New Testament. "The books of the Old Testament which ought to be read, are these, 1. The Genesis," &c. &c. . . . "The books of the New Testament are these: The four Gospels, according to Matthew, according to Mark, according to Luke, according to John: the Acts of the

Apostles; the seven catholic epistles: of James one, of Peter two, of John three, of Jude one, the fourteen epistles of Paul: to the Romans one, to the Corinthians two, to the Galatians one, to the Ephesians one, to the Philippians one, to the Colossians one, to the Thessalonians two, to the Hebrews one, to Timothy two, to Titus one, to Philemon one."

OBSERVATIONS.—In this catalogue are omitted, for the Old Testament, the books of Judith, Tobit, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, the Maccabees; and in the New the Revelation, either not reckoning it a work of John the apostle and evangelist, or not esteeming it proper to be publicly read in the church. . . . Finally, it ought to be observed, that this was a particular council only, consisting of thirty or forty bishops of Lydia, and neighboring countries.

42. JEROM, A. D. 392.

OBSERVATIONS.—Here again, we see that there is no notice taken of any books of the Old Testament, beside those of the Jewish canon. The books of the New Testament are the same with those now commonly received and mentioned by Jerom as of authority in his other works, excepting only the epistle of Barnabas. The reason of Jerom's here taking in that epistle, Cotelerius supposes to be, that he followed Origen, from whom the latter part of this work was borrowed, for in other places Jerom reckons the epistle of Barnabas among apocryphal scriptures. . . . It is not easy to forbear taking some particular notice of Jerom's labors concerning the scriptures. He (a) put out a correct Latin translation of the books of the New Testament, amending the Latin version before in use by the Greek original. He corrected the Latin version of the Old Testament, which had been from the Greek of the Seventy: which was before in use in the churches that spake the Latin tongue. He made a Latin translation of all the books of the Jewish scripture from the Hebrew. . . . He expressly says, that he had corrected the Latin translation of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and

John, by the Greek copies, (b) and those ancient,—
 “Igitur hæc præsens præfatiuncula pollicetur quatuor
 tantum evangelia; quorum ordo est Matthæus, Marcus,
 Lucas, Johannes; codicum Græcorum emendata colla-
 tione, sed veterum.”

(c.) *Jerom's Testimony to the character of ancient Christian writers.*

“Let the enemies of our religion, who say the church had no philosophers, nor eloquent and learned men, observe who and what they were, who founded, established, and adorned it; let them cease to accuse our faith of rusticity, and confess their mistake.” . . . [Having observed the learning of Moses, Solomon, and Paul, he in the next place mentions two apologists for the Christian religion in the time of Adrian,—Quadratus and Aristides.]—“The next to them is Justin, also a philosopher, who presented an apology to Antoninus the Pious, and his sons, and the whole senate, against the Gentiles, warding off the ignominy of the cross, and with full freedom and undaunted courage asserting the resurrection of Christ. Why should I speak of Melito, bishop of Sardis, and Apollinarius, bishop of Hierapolis, and Dionysius, bishop of Corinth, and Tatian, and Bardesanes, and Irenæus, successor of Pothinus the martyr; who, in many volumes, have detected the origin of every heresy, and showed from what philosophers they were derived? Next, Pantæus, a philosopher of the Stoic sect, and a man of great reputation for learning. Clement, presbyter of the church of Alexandria, in my opinion, the most learned of all men, wrote eight books of Stromata, or Miscellanies, and other works, in which there is nothing unlearned, nothing which is not fetched from the depths of Philosophy; who was also followed and imitated by his disciple, Origen. Miltiades likewise wrote an excellent book against the Gentiles. Hippolytus and Apollonius, senators of Rome, published some works suitable to their character. There are also the works of Julius Africanus the chronologer, and of Theodore, afterwards called Gregory, a man of apostolical gifts and virtues, and of Dionysius, bishop of Alexan-

dria; as also of Anatolius, bishop of the church of Laodicea; likewise of the presbyters, Pamphilus, Pierius, Lucian, Malchion; Eusebius bishop of Cæsarea, Eustathius bishop of Antioch, Athanasius bishop of Alexandria, Eusebius of Emesa, Triphyllius of Cyprus, Asterius, and Serapion, Titus bishop of Bostra, and the Cappadocian bishops, Basil, Gregory, Amphilocheus; who all have so filled their books with sentiments of the philosophers, and quotations from them, that it is not easy to say, which is more conspicuous and admirable in them, whether skill in profane learning, or the knowledge of the scriptures.

“I come now to the Latins. Who more learned, who more acute than Tertullian? His Apology and book against the Gentiles are filled with all manner of learning. Minucius Felix, a Roman advocate, author of the book entitled Octavius, has left untouched no part of human literature. Arnobius wrote seven books, and his disciple Lactantius as many, beside two other volumes Of the Wrath of God, and the Creation of the World; which whoever reads, will see in them an epitome of the Dialogues of Cicero. If Victorinus was not learned, he did not want a good will to learning, as appears from his works. Cyprian demonstrated the vanity of idols in a concise manner, showing great knowledge of history, and good sense; after whom follow Hilary and Juvencus;” and he omits others he says, “both living and dead, whose performances manifest the like abilities.”

43. AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO REGIUS, in Africa, A. D. 395. “We read in the Acts of Apostles of some who believed, that ‘they searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.’¹ What scriptures, I pray, except the canonical scriptures of the law and the prophets? To them have been since added the Gospels, the Epistles of the Apostles, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Revelation of John. These do you search.” . . . “Our canonical books of scripture, which are of the highest authority with us, have been settled

¹ Ch. xvii. 11.

with great (a) care; they ought to be few, lest their value should be diminished; and yet they are so many, and written by so many persons, that their agreement throughout is wonderful." . . . "Among (b) translations let that be preferred which is most literal and clear; and for correcting all manner of Latin translations recourse should be had to the Greek." . . . "As for the New Testament, there can be no question but that we ought to have recourse to the Greek copies, and especially such as are to be found with churches of the greatest learning and knowledge."

44. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, BISHOP OF CONSTANTINOPLE, A. D. 398. "The doctrines and writings of (a) fishermen, who were beaten and driven from society, and always lived in the midst of strangers, have been readily embraced by learned and unlearned, bondmen and free, kings and soldiers, Greeks and barbarians." . . . "Notwithstanding the absurd opinions and evil practices which had obtained, Christ, in a short time, delivered men from them all; and that not the Romans only, but also the Persians, and the barbarian nations. This he accomplished, not by arms, nor by bribes, nor by wars and battles; but beginning with eleven men, and those poor, mean, illiterate, unexperienced, unarmed, without shoes, and having one coat only, he persuaded great numbers of men in all nations to change their sentiments and manners."

45. SALVIAN, A. D. 440.

OBSERVATIONS.—Salvian assures us, that they who were called heretics received the same scriptures that other Christians did; the same prophets, the same apostles, and evangelists.

46. GENERAL REVIEW.

. . . And may I not add, Let those conceited Christians who unmeasurably despise the primitive times of Christianity, learn to pay some respect to their Christian ancestors, in whom both learning and an honest, fervent zeal were united. . . . If I mistake not, it has appeared,

after a fair and careful examination, that though there were doubts about some of the books now generally received as canonical, yet there were no other beside them which those ancient writers received as part of the rule of faith, and that they alleged them by way of illustration only.

47. RECAPITULATION.

In this second part we have had express and positive evidence that these books were written by those whose names they bear, even the apostles of Jesus Christ, who was crucified at Jerusalem in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, when Pontius Pilate was governor in Judea, and their well-known companions and fellow-laborers. It is the concurring testimony of early and later ages, and of writers of all countries in the several parts of the known world, Europe, Asia, and Africa, and of men of different sentiments in divers respects; for we have had before us the testimony of those called heretics, especially in the third and fourth centuries, as well as Catholics. These books were received from the beginning with the greatest respect, and have been publicly and solemnly read in the assemblies of Christians throughout the world in every age from that time to this. They were early translated into the languages of divers countries and people; they were quoted by way of proof in all arguments of a religious nature, and were appealed to on both sides in all points of controversy that arose among Christians themselves; they were likewise recommended to the perusal of others, as containing the authentic account of the Christian doctrine; and many commentaries have been written upon them to explain and illustrate them; all which affords full assurance of their genuineness and integrity. If these books had not been written by those to whom they are ascribed, and if the things related in them had not been true, they could not have been received from the beginning; if they contain a true account of things, the Christian religion is from God, and cannot but be embraced by serious and attentive men, who impartially examine, and are willing to be determined by evidence.

SECTION IV. JEWISH TESTIMONIES.

THE PRINCIPAL FACTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF ANCIENT JEWISH WRITERS.

48. JOSEPHUS, A. D. 76. "But some of the Jews were of opinion that God had suffered Herod's army to be destroyed as a just punishment on him for the death of John, called the Baptist. For Herod had killed him, who was a just man, and had called upon the Jews to be baptized, and to practise virtue, exercising both justice toward men, and piety toward God. For so would baptism be acceptable to God, if they made use of it, not for the expiation of their sins, but for the purity of the body; the mind being first purified by righteousness. And many coming to him (for they were wonderfully taken with his discourses), Herod was seized with apprehensions, lest by his authority they should be led into sedition against him; for they seemed capable of undertaking anything by his direction. Herod therefore thought it better to take him off before any disturbance happened, than to run the risk of a change of affairs, and of repenting when it should be too late to remedy disorders. Being taken upon this suspicion of Herod, and being sent bound to the castle of Machærus, just mentioned, he was slain there."

[The genuineness of the two following passages, especially of the first, is considered doubtful. They appear in the works of Josephus, but are suspected to be interpolations.]

"At that time lived Jesus, a wise man, if he may be called a man; for he performed many wonderful works. He was a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. This was the Christ. And when Pilate, at the instigation of the chief men among us, had condemned him to the cross, they who before had conceived an affection for him did not cease to adhere to him. For

on the third day he appeared to them alive again; the divine prophets having foretold these, and many other wonderful things concerning him. And the sect of the Christians, so called from him, subsists to this time." "This then being the temper of Ananus, and he thinking he had a fit opportunity because Festus was dead and Albinus was yet upon the road, calls a council of judges; and, bringing before them James, the brother of him who is called Christ, and some others, he accused them as transgressors of the laws, and had them stoned to death."

OBSERVATIONS.—He [Josephus] likewise acknowledges that there was then in Judea a general expectation of a great person to arise among them, who should obtain the empire of the world; and that this expectation was one great occasion of the war with the Romans, and that it was built upon an oracle found in their sacred writings; and that many of their wise men embraced it and acted upon it, in their engaging in the war. . . In the Talmudical writings, (a) Jesus is mentioned; but as Lightfoot, who was well acquainted with them, says, it was chiefly with a view to wound and reproach him. They call his mother by the name Mary, but they have aspersed her character, and have assigned to Jesus a spurious nativity. They have mentioned several of our Saviour's disciples, who, as they say, were put to death. They say our Saviour suffered as a malefactor at one of the Jewish Passovers, or in the eve of it, as the expression is. They seem in some places to acknowledge the power of miracles in Jesus and his disciples; and if they had not known that many miraculous works were ascribed to him, they would not have insinuated that he learned magical arts in Egypt, and brought them thence in a private manner, and then set up himself among his countrymen as an extraordinary person.

SECTION V. HEATHEN TESTIMONIES.

THE PRINCIPAL FACTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF ANCIENT HEATHEN WRITERS.

49. TACITUS, A. D. 100. "But neither all human help, nor the liberality of the emperor, nor all the atonements presented to the Gods, availed to abate the infamy he lay under of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To suppress therefore this common rumor, Nero procured others to be accused, and inflicted exquisite punishment upon those people who were in abhorrence for their crimes, and were commonly known by the name of Christians. They had their denomination from Christus, who in the reign of Tiberius was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, though checked for awhile, broke out again and spread, not only over Judea, the source of this evil, but reached the city also; whither flow from all quarters all things vile and shameful, and where they find shelter and encouragement. At first they only were apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterwards a vast multitude discovered by them; all which were condemned, not so much for the crime of burning the city, as for their enmity to mankind. Their executions were so contrived as to expose them to derision and contempt. Some were covered over with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; others having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set up as lights in the night-time, and thus burned to death. Nero made use of his own gardens as a theatre upon this occasion, and also exhibited the diversions of the circus; sometimes standing in the crowd as a spectator, in the habit of a charioteer, at other times driving a chariot himself; till at length these men, though really criminal and deserving exemplary punishment, began to be commiserated as people who were destroyed, not out of a regard to the public welfare, but only to gratify the cruelty of one man." [A. D. 64.]

OBSERVATIONS.(a)—He [Tacitus] says that Judea was first brought into subjection to the Romans by Pompey. After which he gives a summary account of their affairs under Herod and his sons, the emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero. He mentions Felix, whom he represents as a bad man, and tyrannical in his government. “However the Jews,” he says, “bore the exactions of their governors till the time of their procurator Gessius Florus, under whom the war began. Cestius Gallus, president of Syria, came to his assistance, but he being defeated, Nero sent Vespasian into Judea, who was a general of great merit and reputation; and having also under him good officers, in the space of two years,” meaning the years 67 and 68, he reduced the open country, and all the cities of Judea, excepting Jerusalem. The next year, 69, “was taken up in civil wars;” meaning the time of the short reigns of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, till the accession of Vespasian. “The following year [and the beginning of it] Titus was appointed to attend the affairs of Judea; who now drew near to Jerusalem and besieged it. Tacitus supposeth that Titus was in haste to go to Rome to enjoy the pleasures and splendor of the city. He therefore carried on the siege with the greatest vigor. The army likewise were intent upon plunder, and eager to gratify their revenge. The city, however, was strong by situation, and with good walls and ramparts; the high tower Antonia, conspicuous from afar. The temple itself was like a citadel, well fortified. They had a fountain of water that ran continually, and the mountains were hollowed under ground. Moreover, they had pools and cisterns for preserving rain water. And there was a great confluence of people. For the men of the other cities that had been reduced, and in general all the turbulent and seditious people of the nation, came hither. There were three captains, or heads of factions, “and as many armies, Simon, John, called also Bargioras, and Eleazar, who occupied several parts of the city. Among themselves they had fierce contentions, and therein great quantities of provision were consumed.

Eleazar being killed, they were reduced to two factions. These fought with each other till the near approach of the Romans obliged them to agreement."

50. SUTONIUS, A. D. 110.—"The Christians were punished; a sort of men of a new and magical superstition." [Under Nero]. "There had been, for a long time, all over the east, a prevailing opinion that it was in the fates [in the decrees or books of the fates] that at that time some one from Judea should obtain the empire of the world. By the event it appeared that a Roman emperor was meant by that prediction. The Jews, applying it to themselves, went into a rebellion. At first they had such success that they not only overcame their own governor, but also defeated the proconsular governor of Syria, who came to his assistance. There being now manifest occasion for a general of great reputation, and a numerous army, Vespasian was appointed for that service; who, among other commanders under him, had his eldest son, Titus. Having put his army into good order, he entered upon the war with great vigor, and not without hazard to his person, having been slightly wounded in an attack made at one of their towns, and received several darts upon his shield." . . . "Titus having been left in Judea, to complete the reduction of that country, he, in the last siege of Jerusalem, killed seven of the enemy with as many darts: and he took that city on his daughter's birthday, and was then saluted by the soldiers with the title of emperor."

51. PLINY THE YOUNGER, AND TRAJAN, A. D. 106 and 107. *Pliny's letter to Trajan*.—"Pliny to the emperor wisheth health and happiness. It is my constant custom, sir, to refer myself to you in all matters concerning which I have any doubt. For who can better direct me where I hesitate, or instruct me where I am ignorant? I have never been present at any trials of Christians; so that I know not well what is the subject-matter of punishment, or of inquiry, or what strictness ought to be used in either. Nor have I been a little

perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made on account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike; whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have once been Christians ought to be punished, though they are now no longer so; whether the name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt.

“In the mean time I have taken this course with all who have been brought before me and have been accused as Christians. I have put the question to them whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were, I repeated the question a second and a third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted I ordered away to be punished; for it was no doubt with me, whatever might be the nature of their opinion, that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished. There were others of the same infatuation, whom, because they are Roman citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the city.

“In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under persecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came in my way. An information was presented to me without mentioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who, upon examination, denied that they were Christians, or had ever been so; who repeated after me an invocation of the gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, which for that purpose I have caused to be brought and set before them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover, they reviled the name of Christ. None of which things, as is said, they who are really Christians, can by any means be compelled to do. These, therefore, I thought proper to discharge.

“Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed themselves Christians, and afterwards denied it. The rest said they had been Christians, but had left them; some three years ago, some longer, and one, or more, above twenty years. They all worshipped your image and the statues of the gods; these also reviled

Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their fault or error lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as a god, and bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it. When these things were performed it was their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder; but this they had forborne, since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.

“After receiving this account I judged it the more necessary to examine, and that by torture, two maid-servants, which were called ministers. But I have discovered nothing, beside a bad and excessive superstition.

“Suspending, therefore, all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially upon account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering. For many of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the (a) contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented. And the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims, likewise, are everywhere bought up, whereas for some time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easy to imagine what numbers of men might be reclaimed if pardon were granted to those who shall repent.”

Trajan's reply. “You have taken the right method, my Pliny, in your proceedings with those who have been brought before you as Christians; for it is impossible to establish any one rule that shall hold univer-

sally. They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you, and are convicted, they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is, by supplicating to our gods, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned upon repentance. But in no case of any crime whatever, may a bill of information be received without being signed by him who presents it: for that would be a dangerous precedent, and unworthy of my government."

OBSERVATION.—The genuineness of these letters is unquestioned.

52. EPICTETUS THE STOIC PHILOSOPHER, A. D. 109.

"Is it possible that a man may arrive at this temper, and become indifferent to those things from madness, or from habit, as the Galileans, and yet that no one should be able to know by reason and demonstration that God made all things in the world—?

"Let this preparation of the mind [to die] arise from its own judgment, and not from obstinacy like the Christians."

53. CELSUS, A. D. 176.

RECAPITULATION.—In the passages alleged under the second section we have seen good proofs that the Jewish people had expectations of that great person the Messiah.

In the passages cited under the third section, we have seen many plain references to the Gospels, and to several of St. Paul's epistles, if not also to St. Peter's and St. John's. We are assured by Celsus that there were histories of Jesus written by his disciples, meaning his apostles and their companions; and that those books were well known, and in high esteem with Christians Nor is there so much as an insinuation, that the later Christians, of Celsus's own time, or thereabout, had forged these histories to do honor to Jesus. He only says that they had altered some things; but of that he produced no proof; nor did he allege any particular instances; he only says in the place referred

to, if Origen has taken the words of Celsus exactly, "that some of the believers had taken the liberty to alter the gospel from the first writing."

In the fourth section are many passages of Celsus bearing testimony to the books of the New Testament, and the facts (a) contained in them . . . that by direction of an angel, he [Jesus] was carried by his parents into Egypt for the preservation of his life; where, as Celsus insinuates, Jesus learned the charms practised in that country In the history of Jesus, written by his disciples, he is said to have (b) healed the lame and the blind, and to have raised some dead persons to life; and though he is unwilling to allow that these were real miracles done by the power of God, he dares not to deny their truth, and is troubled to account for them, and was almost reduced to the necessity of allowing the power of magic, though he is supposed to have formerly written against it Though he will not admit, that Jesus rose from the dead, he acknowledgeth (c) the disciples to have related it, and that an angel descended, and removed the stone from the door of the sepulchre, and that he is said by them to have shown himself to one woman, and then to others, and to his disciples So that we have in Celsus, in a manner, the whole history (d) of Jesus, as recorded in the Gospels; for we have traced in him the history of our Lord's birth, life, preaching, miracles, death, and resurrection; all as taken by him from the writings of Christ's own disciples.

In the fifth section we have observed the notice which Celsus takes of some Christian principles in particular, the general resurrection of the dead; as for the moral doctrine he was not able to find any fault with it; but he says the like things had been before taught by the philosophers, and better expressed. He takes notice of the veneration which the Christians had for Jesus, as their master, and the Messiah promised of old. But, he says the Jews were mistaken in expecting such a person at all; and the Christians were mistaken in

thinking he was actually come; though, as he allows, they argued from the ancient Jewish prophets.

In the sixth section we have seen some passages bearing testimony to the great (e) progress of the Christian religion in the world, notwithstanding many difficulties and discouragements. Indeed, this whole work of Celsus is an evidence of the prevailing power of the Christian religion; he has sufficiently acknowledged the great number of Jews and Gentiles, who had been gained over to this belief; and if it had not been still spreading and prevailing, this learned and ingenious man would have saved himself the pains of this laborious argument to confute it.

Under the seventh section we saw how Celsus was disposed to charge the Christians with magical arts and practices.

In the eighth section are some passages relating to Christian worship. It appears from what Celsus says, that they worshipped the one God, creator of all things, and had a high veneration for Jesus Christ; nor would they worship demons, or join in the public sacrifices and festivals of heathen people. . . . He owns they were then sought (f) for to be put to death.

54. LUCIAN OF SAMOSATA, A. D. 176. . . .

“They therefore still worship that great man who was crucified in Palestine, because he introduced into the world this new religion. . . . Moreover, their first lawgiver has taught them that they are all brethren when once they have turned and renounced the gods of the Greeks, and worship that master of theirs who was crucified, and engage to live according to his laws. They have (a) also a sovereign contempt for all things of this world, and look upon them as common, and trust one another with them without any particular security; by which reason any subtil fellow, by good management, may impose upon this simple people, and grow rich among them.”

55. DIOGENES LAERTIUS, A. D. 210.—“At this time [almost six hundred years before the nativity of our

Saviour] the fame of Epimenides was very great among all the Greeks, and he was supposed to be in great favor with the gods. The Athenians being afflicted with a pestilence, they were directed by the Pythian oracle to get their city purified by expiation. They therefore sent Nicias, son of Niceratus, in a ship to Crete, inviting Epimenides to come to them. He coming thither in the forty-sixth Olympiad, purified their city, and delivered them from the pestilence in this manner. Taking several sheep, some black others white, he had them up to the Areopagus; and then let them go where they would; and gave orders to those who followed them, wherever any one of them should lie down, to sacrifice it to the god to whom it belonged. And so the plague ceased. Hence it comes to pass, that to this present time may be found in the boroughs of the Athenians anonymous altars, a memorial of the expiation then made." [Compare Acts, xvii. 23.]

56. DION CASSIUS, A. D. 230. [At the close of his account of the siege of Jerusalem.] "Many were taken prisoners, and among them Bargioras their general; who only was put to death at the time of the triumph. Thus Jerusalem was taken on a Saturday, the day still respected by the Jews above any other. From that time it was appointed, that all who adhere to their religion should annually pay a didrachm to the capitol of Jupiter. Upon this occasion both the generals [Vespasian and Titus] received the appellation of emperor; but neither took the surname of Judaicus, although triumphal arches and other honors, customary after great victories, were decreed to them."

57. PORPHYRY, A. D. 270.

[From Jerom.] "He [Porphyry] says that it [the book of (a) Daniel] was not written by him whose name it bears, but by another who lived in Judea in the time of Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes; and that the book of Daniel does not foretell things to come, but relates what had already happened. In a word, whatever it contains to the time of Antiochus is true history; if

there is anything relating to after-times it is all falsehood; forasmuch as the writer could not see things future, but at the most only make some conjectures about them."

[Quoted from Porphyry by Eusebius.] "Sanchoniathon of Berytus writes the history of the Jews very exactly, and mentions times and places; taking his accounts from the Memoir of Jerombal, priest of the god Jevo; who dedicated his history to Abibal, king of Berytus, by whom, as well as by others, his contemporaries, capable judges of the truth, it was approved. Their age was before the Trojan times, and approaches near to the times of (b) Moses, as is evident from the succession of the kings of Phœnicia. Sanchoniathon, who with great fidelity wrote their ancient history in the Phœnician language, collecting it partly from the registers of cities and partly from the records kept in temples, lived in the time of Semiramis, queen of the Assyrians, who is computed to have reigned before the times of Troy, or about them. The work of Sanchoniathon was translated into Greek by Philo Biblius."

[Quoted by Eusebius.] "And now people wonder (c) that this distemper has oppressed the city so many years, Æsculapius and the other gods no longer conversing with men. For since Jesus has been honored, none have received any public benefits from the gods."

REVIEW.—It manifestly appears that he [Porphyry] was well acquainted with the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. . . . We have observed plain references to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistle to the Galatians; and in his remarks upon that epistle, probable references to others of St. Paul's epistles.

58. HIEROCLES, A. D. 303. [From Lactantius.] "The other [Hierocles] treated the same subject more accurately; he was then one of the judges, and a principal adviser of the persecution; and not contented with that piece of wickedness, he also pursued those with his writings whom he had brought into trouble. For he composed two books, not entitled, Against the Christ-

ians, lest he should seem to bear hard upon them, but 'To the Christians,' that he might be thought to advise them in a kind and friendly manner: in which books he endeavored to show that the sacred (a) scriptures overthrow themselves by the contradictions with which they abound; he particularly insisted upon several texts as inconsistent with each other; and, indeed, on so many and so distinctly that one might suspect he had some time professed the religion which he now exposed. However, the sacred scriptures may have by some accident or other fallen into his hands; but the scriptures are as far from inconsistencies as he was from the truth. But he chiefly reviled Paul and Peter, and the other disciples as propagators of falsehoods; 'who, nevertheless,' as he says, 'were ignorant, and illiterate, and some of them got their livelihood by fishing; as if he was displeased that some Aristophanes or Aristarchus had not handled the subject.' Moreover, this writer endeavors to overthrow Christ's (b) miracles, though he does not deny the truth of them; he aims to show that like things, or even greater, were done by Apollonius: . . . but Apollonius is more able, because, as you say, when Domitian would have put him to death he escaped; whereas Christ was apprehended and crucified."

[From Eusebius quoting Hierocles.] "To what purpose have I mentioned these things? That all may perceive our just and reasonable judgment, and the levity of the Christians; forasmuch as we do not esteem him who did these things a god, but a man favored by the gods:" . . . "It is also reasonable to think that the actions of Jesus have been magnified by Peter and Paul, and others like them, ignorant men, liars and impostors."

59. DIOCLESIAN'S PERSECUTION OF THE CHRISTIANS, A. D. 303-313.

OBSERVATIONS.—In the first edict for the persecution, as we learn from Eusebius, the sacred (a) scriptures were ordered to be burnt; and so far as we know, this is the first imperial edict of that kind. . . . Dioclesian's persecution (b) was very grievous: indeed, it was the

longest and worst that the Christians had ever endured. Sulpicius Severus says, "Never was the world more wasted by any war."

60. THE EMPEROR JULIAN, A. D. 361.

[Quoted by Cyril.] "I think it right for me to show to all men the reasons by which I have been convinced that the religion of the Galileans is a human contrivance, badly put together, having in it nothing divine; but abusing the childish irrational part of the soul, which delights in fable, they have introduced a heap of wonderful works to give it the appearance of truth." . . . "That Moses says, God was the God of Israel only and of Judea, and that they were his chosen people, I shall demonstrate presently; and that not only he, but the prophets after him, and Jesus the Nazarene say the same; yea, and Paul also, who exceeded all the jugglers and impostors that ever were."

"But Jesus having persuaded a few among you, and those the worst of men, has now been celebrated about three hundred years; having done nothing in his lifetime worthy of remembrance; unless any one thinks it a mighty (a) matter to heal lame and blind people, and exorcise demoniacs in the villages of Bethsaida and Bethany."

"But you are so unhappy as not to adhere to the things delivered to you by the apostles, but they have been altered by you for the worse, and carried on to yet greater impiety. For neither Paul, nor Matthew, nor Luke, nor Mark, have dared to call Jesus God. But honest John, understanding that a great multitude (b) of men in the cities of Greece and Italy were seized with this distemper; and hearing, likewise, as I suppose, that the tombs of Peter and Paul were respected and frequented, though as yet privately only, however, having heard of it, he then first presumed to advance that doctrine." . . . "But you miserable people, at the same time that ye refuse to worship the shield that fell down from Jupiter, and is preserved by us, which was sent down to us by the great Jupiter, or our father Mars, as a certain pledge of the perpetual government

of our city; you worship the wood of the cross, and make signs of it upon your foreheads, and fix it upon your doors. Shall we for this most hate the understanding, or most pity the simple and ignorant among you, who are so very unhappy as to leave the immortal gods, and go over to a dead Jew?" . . . "You have killed not only our people who persisted in the ancient religion, but likewise heretics, equally deceived with yourselves; but who did not mourn the dead man exactly in the same manner that you do? But these are your inventions; for Jesus has nowhere directed you to do such things; nor yet Paul. The reason is, that they never expected you would arrive at such power. They were contented with deceiving maid-servants and slaves, and by them some men and women, such as Cornelius and Sergius. If there were then any other men of eminence brought over to you, I mean in the times of Tiberius and Claudius, when these things happened, let me pass for a liar in everything I say."

Letter to Ecditius.—"Some delight in horses, others in birds, others in wild beasts; from my childhood I have been always in love with books. Wherefore you must do for me this private piece of kindness, to get together all George's books. He had a large number of books, many philosophical and rhetorical, and also many concerning the doctrine of the impious Galileans; which I could wish to have utterly destroyed; but lest books of value should be destroyed with them, let these also be carefully sought for. George had a secretary; let him help you. If he serves you faithfully, let him be rewarded with freedom. If he endeavors to conceal any of his master's books, he may be put to the torture. I am not unacquainted with George's books, for when I was in Cappadocia, I borrowed some of them, though not all, in order to have them transcribed, and then returned them to him."

61. LIBANIUS, A. D. 370.

[Panegyric on Julian.] "By the guidance of philosophy he soon wiped off the reproach of impiety, and learned the truth, and acknowledged those for gods,

who were such indeed, instead of him who was only thought to be so. That day I call the beginning of liberty to the world."

[Funeral oration upon Julian.] (a) "Indeed, they who were in wrong sentiments, were filled with fear, and expected pulling out of eyes, beheadings, and rivers of blood, flowing from innumerable slaughters; and that this new lord would find out new ways of torture; and that fire, and sword, and drowning, and burying alive, and amputation of limbs, would be trifling things. Such things had been practised by those who went before; but now more grievous things were expected. But Julian dissented from those who had practised such things, as not obtaining the end aimed at; and he was sensible, that no benefit was to be expected from such violence."

62. ZOSIMUS, A. D. 425.

OBSERVATIONS.—These extracts are authentic monuments of the ancient heathen superstition and credulity, and of the zeal with which the rites of Gentilism were upheld and defended by all sorts of persons, learned as well as unlearned; and by men of high stations, as well as by people of low condition. They did (a) all that lay in their power to check or stop the progress of Christianity. They would gladly have recovered and restored ancient Gentilism.

SECTION. VI. TESTIMONY OF HERETICS.

THE PRINCIPAL FACTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF HERETICS.

63. [From Irenæus.] "Such is the certain truth of our Gospels that the heretics themselves bear testimony to them, every one of them endeavoring to prove his particular doctrine from thence. . . . Since therefore persons of different sentiments agree with us in making use of this testimony, our evidence for the authority of those Gospels is certain and unquestionable."

64. BASILIDES, A. D. 112-123.

OBSERVATIONS.—According to Irenæus, he must have disregarded the Old Testament; or at least he could not give the same authority to that, as he did to the New (a). . . . As to the New Testament, it doth not appear but he received the whole, or at least the greater part of it.

65. CARPOCRATES AND HIS FOLLOWERS, [A. D. 120.]

OBSERVATIONS.—Epiphanius says, “They rejected the Old Testament; perhaps they did: but I do not know that to be certain. Possibly, however, the fact was only this, they did not respect the instructions of Moses and the prophets, equally with those of Christ and his apostles. . . . I apprehend that they received (a) not that Gospel only [Matthew] but the other Gospels likewise, and all the other books of the New Testament, as they were received by other Christians in their time.

66. CERINTHUS, [A. D. 80-101.]

OBSERVATIONS.—Cerinthus received the scriptures of the Old Testament. . . . Upon the whole, it appears highly probable that Cerinthus flourished in the latter end of the first, or very early in the second century. And it is certain, that the Old Testament—and several of the books of the New Testament—were received by him.

67. MARCION AND HIS FOLLOWERS, [A. D. 127-144.]

OBSERVATIONS.—The Old Testament was altogether set aside by him, as proceeding from the Creator, who was, in his estimation, void of goodness, and the author of all that sin and misery which is in the world. . . . Marcion received only eleven books of the New Testament; and these strangely curtailed and altered. . . . By (a) means of this heretic’s rejecting some books entirely, and mutilating others, the ancient Christians were led to examine into the evidence for the sacred writings, and to compare copies together, and on this account to speak of whole books, and particular passages, very frequently in their works; which hath enabled us of later ages to authenticate these books, and to come at the

genuine reading of many texts, in a better manner than we otherwise could have done.

68. LUCIAN, OR LEUCIUS, [A. D. 135–150.]

OBSERVATIONS.—One obvious conclusion to be drawn from this long account of the forgeries of Leucius is, that the scriptures of the New Testament, particularly the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, were then received with distinguished respect (a), and regarded as writings of great authority; otherwise he would not have thought of publishing books under the names of the evangelists and apostles.

Besides, these forged writings do not oppose, but confirm, (b) the general account given us in the canonical scriptures. They all take for granted the dignity of our Lord's person, and his power of working miracles; (c) they acknowledge the certainty of there having been such persons as Matthew and the other evangelists; and Peter and the other apostles. They authenticate the general and leading facts contained in the New Testament. They presuppose that the apostles received from Christ a commission to propagate his religion, and a supernatural power to enforce its authority. And thus they indirectly establish the truth and divine original of the gospel.

69. THE MONTANISTS, [A. D. 171.]

OBSERVATIONS.—Theodoret says, that “Montanus had two women prophetesses, and called their writings prophecies.” Afterwards he says, that “the prophecies of those two women were in greater esteem with the Montanists, than the divine gospel; which surely must be an aggravation.” . . . There can be no good reason to doubt that they received all the books of the Old and New Testament which other Christians did, and with like respect.

[Here end the quotations from Lardner.]

SECTION VII. TESTIMONY OF MONUMENTS.

THE FACTS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ARE CONFIRMED BY EXISTING MONUMENTS.

The church, the Christian sabbath, and the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper, are monuments confirming the principal facts of the New Testament. Some material monuments also exist by which Christian facts are confirmed.

70. COINS AND MEDALS.

[From Wilson's Evidences.] St. Luke terms Philippi a colony, using a word which implies that it was a Latin colony;¹ but as this betokens a favor which such a city had little reason to expect, critics were embarrassed to account for the title, till some coins were brought to light, which expressly mention, that Julius Cæsar himself had bestowed the dignity on it.

Again, the town clerk of Ephesus (states our sacred author²), in order to quell a tumult, thus addressed the Ephesians: "What man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana?" The original word is *ΝΕΩΚΟΡΟΣ*, literally temple-sweeper, equivalent to our churchwarden, an appellation taken by cities which were dedicated to the service of some god or goddess. Now there are medals still extant, on which the front of the temple of Diana is exhibited. In the centre is an image of the goddess; and around the side and bottom is an inscription, in which the Ephesians are called by this very term. Besides the testimony furnished by this medal, there is now extant at Ephesus an ancient Greek inscription, which not only confirms the general history related in Acts, xix., but even approaches to several sentiments and phrases which occur in that chapter.

¹ Acts, xvi. 11, 12.

² Acts, xix. 35.

71. CATACOMBS.

From Rawlinson's Historical Evidences.

As when we tread the streets of Pompeii, we have the life of the old pagan world brought before us with a vividness which makes all other representations appear dull and tame, so when we descend into the Catacombs of Rome we seem to see the struggling, persecuted community which there "in dens and caves of the earth," wrought itself a hidden home; whence it went forth at last conquering and to conquer, triumphantly establishing itself on the ruins of the old religion, and bending its heathen persecutors to the yoke of Christ. Time was when the guiding spirits of our church not only neglected the study of these precious remnants of an antiquity which ought to be far dearer to us than that of Greece or pagan Rome, of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon,—but even ventured to speak of them with contempt, as the recent creations of papal forgers, who had placed among the arenariæ, or sandpits of heathen times, the pretended memorials of saints who were never born, and of martyrs who never suffered. But, with increased and improved wisdom, modern Anglicans have renounced this shallow and untenable theory; and it is at length admitted universally, alike by the Protestant and the Romanist, that the Catacombs themselves, their present contents, and the series of inscriptions which have been taken from them and placed in the papal galleries, are genuine remains of primitive Christian antiquity, and exhibit to us—imperfectly no doubt—but so far as their evidence extends, truly the condition and belief of the Church of Christ in the first ages.

For it is impossible to doubt that the Catacombs belong to the earliest times of Christianity. It was only during the ages of persecution that the Christians were content to hide away the memorials of their dead in gloomy galleries deep below the earth's surface, where few eyes could ever rest on them. With liberty and security came the practice of burying within and around the churches, which grew up on all sides; and though undoubtedly the ancient burial-places would not

have been deserted all at once, since habit and affection would combine to prevent such disuse, yet still from the time of Constantine burying in the Catacombs must have been on the decline, and the bulk of the tombs in them must be regarded as belonging to the first three centuries. The fixed dates obtainable from a certain number of tombs confirm this view; and the style of ornamentation and form of the letters used in the inscriptions are thought to be additional evidence of its correctness.

What, then, is the evidence of the Catacombs? (a) In the first place, it is conclusive as to the vast number of the Christians in these early ages, when there was nothing to tempt men, and everything to disincline them, towards embracing the persecuted faith. The Catacombs are calculated to extend over nine hundred miles of streets, and to contain almost seven millions of graves. The Roman Christians, it will be remembered, are called by Tacitus "a vast multitude"—(*ingens multitudo*)—in the time of Nero; by the age of Valerian they are reckoned at one-half the population of the city; but the historical records of the past have never been thought to indicate that their number approached at all near to what this calculation—which seems fairly made—would indicate. Seven millions of deaths in (say) four hundred years, would, under ordinary circumstances, imply an average population of from five hundred thousand to seven hundred thousand—an amount immensely beyond any estimate that has hitherto been made of the number of Roman Christians at any portion of the period. Perhaps the calculation of the number of graves may be exaggerated, and probably the proportion of deaths to population was, under the peculiar circumstances, unusually large; but still the evidence of vast numbers which the Catacombs furnish cannot wholly mislead; and we may regard it as established beyond all reasonable doubt, that in spite of the general contempt and hatred, in spite of the constant ill usage to which they were exposed, and the occasional "fiery trials" which proved them, the Christians, as early as

the second century, formed one of the chief elements in the population of Rome.

(b) In the next place, the Catacombs afford proof of the dangers and sufferings to which the early Christians were exposed. Without assuming that the phials which have contained a red liquid, found in so many of the tombs, must have held blood, and that therefore they are certain signs of martyrdom, and without regarding the palm branch as unmistakable evidence of the same, we may find in the Catacombs a good deal of testimony confirmatory of those writers, who estimate at the highest, the number of Christians who suffered death in the great persecutions. The number of graves, if we place it at the lowest, compared with the highest estimate of the Christian population that is at all probable, would give a proportion of deaths to population enormously above the average—a result which at any rate lends support to those who assert that in the persecutions of Aurelius, Decius, Diocletian, and others, vast multitudes of Christians were massacred. Further, the word martyr is frequent upon the tombs; and often where it is absent, the inscription otherwise shows that the deceased lost his life on account of his religion. Sometimes the view opens on us, and we see, besides the individual buried, a long vista of similar sufferers—as when one of Aurelius's victims exclaims:—"O unhappy times, in which amid our sacred rites and prayers,—in the very caverns,—we are not safe! What is more wretched than our life? What more wretched than a death, when it is impossible to obtain burial at the hands of friends or relatives? Still at the end they shine like stars in heaven. A poor life is his, who has lived in Christian times!"

(c) Again, the Catacombs furnish a certain amount of evidence with respect to the belief of the early Christians. The doctrine of the resurrection is implied or expressed on almost every tombstone which has been discovered. The Christian is not dead—he "rests" or "sleeps"—he is not buried, but "deposited" in his grave—and he is always "at peace," (in pace). The

survivors do not mourn his loss despairingly, but express trust, resignation, or moderate grief. The Anchor, indicative of the Christian's "sure and certain hope," is a common emblem; and the Phoenix and Peacock are used as more speaking signs of the Resurrection. The Cross appears, though not the Crucifix; and other emblems are employed, as the Dove and the Cock, which indicate belief in the (d)sacred narrative as we possess it. There are also a certain number of pictures in the Catacombs; and these represent ordinarily historical scenes from the Old or New Testament, treated in a uniform and conventional way, but clearly expressive of belief in the facts thus represented. The temptation of Eve—Moses striking the rock—Noah welcoming the return of the Dove—Elijah ascending to heaven—Daniel among the lions—Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego in the fiery furnace—Jonah under the gourd—Jonah swallowed by the whale—and Jonah vomited out on the dry land, are the favorite subjects from the Old Testament; while from the New Testament, we find the adoration of the wise men—their interview with Herod—the Baptism of Christ by John the Baptist—the healing of the paralytic—the turning of water into wine—the feeding of the five thousand—the raising of Lazarus—the Last Supper—Peter walking on the sea—and Pilate washing his hands before the people. St. Peter and St. Paul are also frequently represented, and St. Peter sometimes bears the keys, in plain allusion to the gracious promise of his Master. The parabolic teaching of our Lord is sometimes embodied by the artists, who never tire of repeating the type of the "Good Shepherd," and who occasionally represent the sower going out to sow and the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. In this way, indirect evidence is borne to the historic belief of the early church, which does not appear to have differed at all from that of orthodox Christendom at the present day.

72. SECTION VIII. INTERNAL PROOF.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CONTAINS INTERNAL PROOF OF ITS HISTORIC TRUTH.

Paley, in his excellent work called *Horæ Paulinæ*, has conclusively demonstrated the truth of the New Testament history, by bringing to view undesigned coincidences between the epistles of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles. The value of these coincidences arises from their not being apparent to a careless observer; and hence the investigation of them requires an amount of labor which renders it impossible to condense the work of Paley. The following extract will give a specimen of the mode of argument which he has employed.

No. 1.

The first passage I shall produce from this epistle, and upon which a good deal of observation will be founded, is the following:

“But now I go unto Jerusalem, to minister unto the saints; for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.” Rom. xv. 25, 26.

In this quotation three distinct circumstances are stated—a contribution in Macedonia for the relief of the Christians of Jerusalem, a contribution in Achaia for the same purpose, and an intended journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem. These circumstances are stated as taking place at the same time, and that to be the time when the epistle was written. Now let us inquire whether we find these circumstances elsewhere; and whether, if we do find them, they meet together in respect of date. Turn to the Acts of the Apostles, chap. xx. ver. 2, 3, and you read the following account:—“When he had gone over those parts (*viz.* Macedonia), and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece, and there abode three months; and when the Jews laid wait for him, *as he was about to sail into Syria*, he proposed to return through Macedonia.”

From this passage, compared with the account of St. Paul's travels given before, and from the sequel of the chapter, it appears that upon St. Paul's *second* visit to the peninsula of Greece, his intention was, when he should leave the country, to proceed from Achaia directly by sea to Syria; but that, to avoid the Jews, who were lying in wait to intercept him in his route, he so far changed his purpose as to go back through Macedonia, embark at Philippi, and pursue his voyage from thence to Jerusalem. Here, therefore, is a journey to Jerusalem; but not a syllable of any contribution. And as St. Paul had taken several journeys to Jerusalem before, and one also immediately after his *first* visit into the peninsula of Greece,¹ it cannot from hence be collected in which of these visits the epistle was written, or, with certainty, that it was written in either. The silence of the historian, who professes to have been with St. Paul at the time,² concerning any contribution, might lead us to look out for some different journey, or might induce us perhaps to question the consistency of the two records, did not a very accidental reference, in another part of the same history, afford us sufficient ground to believe that this silence was omission.

When St. Paul made his reply before Felix to the accusations of Tertullus, he alleged, as was natural, that neither the errand which brought him to Jerusalem, nor his conduct whilst he remained there, merited the calumnies with which the Jews had aspersed him. "Now after many years (i. e. of absence) *I came to bring alms to my nation and offerings*; whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude nor with tumult, who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had aught against me." Acts, xxiv. 17-19.

This mention of alms and offerings certainly brings the narrative in the Acts nearer to an accordancy with the epistles; yet no one, I am persuaded, will suspect that this clause was put into St. Paul's defence, either

¹ Acts, xviii. 21.

² Acts, xx. 6.

to supply the omission in the preceding narrative, or with any view to such accordancy.

After all, nothing is yet said or hinted concerning the *place* of the contribution; nothing concerning Macedonia and Achaia. Turn, therefore, to the First Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. xvi. ver. 1-4, and you have St. Paul delivering the following directions: "Concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye; upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come. And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem; and if it be meet that I go also, they shall go with me." In this passage we find a contribution carrying on at Corinth, the capital of Achaia, for the Christians of Jerusalem; we find also a hint given of the possibility of St. Paul going up to Jerusalem himself, after he had paid his visit unto Achaia: but this is spoken of rather as a possibility than as any settled intention; for his first thought was, "Whomsoever you shall approve by your letters, them will I *send* to bring your liberality to Jerusalem;" and in the sixth verse he adds "That ye may bring me on my journey *whithersoever* I go." This epistle purports to be written after St. Paul had been at Corinth; for it refers throughout to what he had done and said amongst them whilst he was there. The expression, therefore, "when I come" must relate to a *second* visit; against which visit the contribution spoken of was desired to be in readiness.

But though the contribution in Achaia be expressly mentioned, nothing is here said concerning any contribution in Macedonia. Turn, therefore, in the third place, to the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. viii. ver. 1-4, and you will discover the particulars which remains to be sought for: "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the *churches of Macedonia*; how that, in a great trial of affliction, the abundance of their joy and their deep

poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality: for to their power, I bear record, yea and beyond their power, they were willing of themselves; praying us, with much entreaty, that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints." To which add, chap. ix. ver. 2: "I know the forwardness of your mind, for which I boast of you to them of Macedonia, that Achaia was ready a year ago." In this epistle we find St. Paul advanced as far as Macedonia, upon that *second* visit to Corinth which he promised in his former epistle: we find also in the passages now quoted from it, that a contribution was going on in Macedonia at the same time with, or soon, however, following, the contribution which was made in Achaia; but for whom the contribution was made does not appear in this epistle at all: that information must be supplied from the first epistle.

Here, therefore, at length, but fetched from three different writings, we have obtained the several circumstances we inquired after, and which the Epistle to the Romans brings together, viz. a contribution in Achaia for the Christians of Jerusalem; a contribution in Macedonia for the same; and an approaching journey of St. Paul to Jerusalem. We have these circumstances—each by some hint in the passage in which it is mentioned, or by the date of the writing in which the passage occurs—fixed to a particular time; and we have that time turning out upon examination to be in all the *same*; namely, towards the close of St. Paul's second visit to the peninsula of Greece.

This is an instance of conformity beyond the possibility, I will venture to say, of random writing to produce. I also assert, that it is in the highest degree improbable that it should have been the effect of contrivance or design. The imputation of *design* amounts to this: that the forger of the Epistle to the Romans inserted in it the passage upon which our observations are founded, for the purpose of giving color to the forgery by the appearance of conformity with other writings which were then extant, I reply, in the first place, that,

if he did this to countenance his forgery, he did it for the purpose of an argument which would not strike one reader in ten thousand. Coincidences so circuitous as this answer not the ends of forgery; are seldom, I believe, attempted by it. In the second place, I observe, that he must have had the Acts of the Apostles, and the two epistles to the Corinthians before him at the time. In the Acts of the Apostles (I mean that part of the Acts which relates to this period), he would have found the journey to Jerusalem; but nothing about the contribution. In the First Epistle to the Corinthians he would have found a contribution going on in Achaia for the Christians of Jerusalem, and a distant hint of the possibility of the journey; but nothing concerning a contribution in Macedonia.

In the Second Epistle to the Corinthians he would have found a contribution in Macedonia accompanying that in Achaia; but no intimation for whom either was intended, and not a word about the journey.

It was only by a close and attentive collation of the three writings, that he could have picked out the circumstances which he has united in this epistle; and by a still more nice examination, that he could have determined them to belong to the same period. In the third place, I remark, what diminishes very much the suspicion of fraud, how aptly and connectedly the mention of the circumstances in question, viz., the journey to Jerusalem, and of the occasion of that journey, arises from the context, “Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you; for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company. *But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints; for it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem.* It hath pleased them verily, and their debtors they are; for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in carnal things. When, therefore, I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I

will come by you into Spain.” Is the passage in *italics* like a passage foisted in for an extraneous purpose? Could anything be more natural than that St. Paul, in writing to the Romans, should speak of the time when he hoped to visit them; should mention the business which then detained him; and that he proposed to set forward upon his journey to them when that business was completed?”

The undesigned coincidences examined by Paley, are, in number, as follows:—

Romans	8
1 Corinthians	12
2 Corinthians	12
Galatians	10
Ephesians	5
Philippians	7
Colossians	4
1 Thessalonians	6
2 Thessalonians	3
1 Timothy	5
2 Timothy	5
Titus	2
Philemon	4
In all	<hr/> 83

In every case the agreement between the historian and the writer of the epistle, is shown to be undesigned on the part of both. The supposition that eighty-three such agreements have all happened by chance, is wholly inadmissible. No supposition remains but that the authors agree with each other because they wrote with truthful regard to facts of which they possessed common knowledge; and therefore these undesigned coincidences establish the truth of the New Testament history by an argument which is perfectly conclusive.

73. SECTION IX. OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY.

THE HISTORY CONTAINED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT COINCIDES WITH THE MOST AUTHENTIC RECORDS AND MEMORIALS OF ANTIQUITY.

In the preceding part of this work the truth of the history contained in the Old Testament was proved by first establishing the divine inspiration of the volume. In the present section proof to the same effect will be adduced from the coincidence of this history with the most authentic records and memorials of antiquity. The former proof is conclusive; but the satisfaction which it affords to the mind will be heightened by the discovery that a different and independent proof of the same truth may be derived from another source.

This section consists chiefly of extracts from "The Historical Evidences of the Truth of the Scripture Records, by George Rawlinson, M. A." These extracts are included within single quotation marks.

74. I. CREATION AND THE DELUGE.

Very few records and memorials of antiquity now exist with which the Mosaic history, contained in the first five books of the Bible, may be compared. 'The only reliable authority that we possess besides the Pentateuch for the history of the period which it embraces consists of some fragments of Berosus, Manetho, an epitome of the early Egyptian history of the latter, a certain number of Egyptian and Babylonian inscriptions, and two or three valuable papyri.'

'Nothing has been said here of (a) Sanchoniathon, in the first place, because it seems more than probable that the work ascribed to him was the mere forgery of Philo Byblius; and secondly, because though called a "Phœnician history," the fragments of the work which remain show it to have been mainly, if not entirely, *mythological*.'

For the earliest history of the world it is especially Babylon which furnishes an account capable of being

compared with that of Moses. The leading facts of this cosmogony and antediluvian history are manifestly, and indeed confessedly, in close agreement with the Hebrew records. . . . Between the first man and the deluge are, in the scheme of Berosus, ten generations, which is the exact number between Adam and Noah; and though the duration of human life is in his account enormously exaggerated, we may see even in this exaggeration a glimpse of the truth, that the lives of the patriarchs were extended far beyond the term which has been the limit in later ages. This truth seems to have been known to many of the ancients, and traces of it have even been found among the modern Burmans and Chinese. . . . The account which Berosus gives of the deluge is still more strikingly in accordance with the narrative of scripture. "Xisuthrus," he says, "was warned by Saturn in a dream that all mankind would be destroyed shortly by a deluge of rain. He was bidden to bury in the city of Sippara (or Sepharvaim) such written documents as existed; and then to build a huge vessel or ark." He proceeds with the history of the deluge, agreeing very nearly with that given by Moses. . . . 'Such is the account of Berosus; and a description substantially the same is given by Abydenus, an ancient writer of whom less is known, but whose fragments are generally of great value and importance. It is plain that we have here a tradition not drawn from the Hebrew record, much less the foundation of that record; yet coinciding with it in the most remarkable way.'

In giving the scriptures by the instrumentality of inspired men, God made room for the use of their mental faculties, their personal memory of events which they had witnessed, and the knowledge which it was in their power to acquire from tradition and written records. The opportunity of Moses to obtain knowledge of primeval history by tradition, was superior to that of any writer with whom he can be compared. 'Adam, according to the Hebrew original, was for two hundred and forty-three years contemporary with Methuselah, who

conversed for one hundred years with Shem. Shem was for fifty years contemporary with Jacob, who probably saw Jochebed, Moses' mother. Thus Moses might, by mere oral tradition, have obtained the history of Abraham and even of the deluge, at third hand; and that of the temptation and the fall at fifth hand.' The piety which prevailed in the ancestors of Moses inclined them to transmit carefully to their descendants correct knowledge of God's dealings with them. Hence, without taking into account the inspiration with which the book of Genesis was written, its records deserve to be received as credible history, and certainly more reliable than any other in the possession of mankind. Moreover, tradition may not have been the only source of information. 'What we know of the antiquity both in Egypt and Babylonia, renders it not improbable that the art of writing was known and practised soon after the flood, if it was not even (as some have supposed), a legacy from the antediluvian world.'

75. 2. *Babel*.—Writers, whose Babylonian history seems drawn directly from him (Berosus), or from the sources which he used, give the following account of the tower of Babel, and the confusion of tongues: "At this time the ancient race of men were so puffed up with their strength and tallness of stature that they began to despise and contemn the gods; and labored to erect that very lofty tower, which is now called Babylon, intending thereby to scale heaven. But when the building approached the sky, behold, the gods called in the aid of the winds, and by their help overturned the tower and cast it to the ground. The name of the ruins is still called Babel; because until this time all men had used the same speech, but now there was sent upon them a confusion of many and diverse tongues."'

76. 3. *Origin of Nations*.—'The Toldoth Beni Noah ["the generations of the sons of Noah," Gen. x.] has extorted the admiration of modern ethnologists, who continually find in it anticipations of their greatest discoveries. . . . On the whole, the scheme of ethnic affiliation, given in the tenth chapter of Genesis, is pro-

nounced "safer" to follow than any other; and the Toldoth Beni Noah commends itself to the ethnic inquirer as "the most authentic record that we possess for the affiliation of nations," and as a document "of the very highest antiquity."

77. 4. *Gen. xiv. 2-12.* 'We obtain a double witness [from the fragments of Berosus and from the monuments] to the remarkable fact of an interruption of pure Babylonian supremacy at this time; and from the monuments we are able to pronounce that the supremacy was transferred to Elam, and that under a king, the Semitic form of whose name would be Chedorlaomer, a great expedition was organized, which proceeded to the distant and then almost unknown west, and returned after "ravaging" but not conquering those regions.'

78. 5. *Exodus of the Israelites.*—'The Exodus of the Jews was an event which could scarcely be omitted by Manetho. It was one, however, of such a nature—so entirely repugnant to all the feelings of an Egyptian—that we could not expect a fair representation of it in their annals. And accordingly our fragments of Manetho present us with a distinct but very distorted notice of the occurrence. . . . We have here the oppression, the name Moses, the national name Hebrew, under the disguise of Abaris, and the true direction of the retreat, which is said by Manetho to have been "into Syria."'

79. 6. *Modern discoveries confirming the Pentateuch.*—If we look to the geography we shall find that till within these few years "Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar,"¹ Caleh and Resen, in the country peopled by Asshur,² Ellasar, and "Ur of the Chaldees,"³ were mere names; and beyond the mention of them in Genesis, scarcely a trace was discoverable of their existence. Recently, however, the mounds of Mesopotamia have been searched, and bricks

¹ Gen. x. 10. ² Gen. x. 11, 12. ³ Gen. xi. 31; xiv. 1.

and stones buried for near three thousand years have found a tongue, and tell us exactly where each of these cities stood, and sufficiently indicate their importance. Again, the power of Og and his "threescore cities," all fenced with high walls, gates, and bars, besides unwalled towns a great many,¹ in such a country as that to the east of the Sea of Galilee, whose old name of Trachonitis indicates its barrenness, seemed to many improbable—but modern research has found in this very country a vast number of walled cities still standing, which show the habits of the ancient people, and prove that the population must at one time have been considerable. So the careful examination that has been made of the valley of the Jordan which has resulted in the proof that it is a unique phenomenon, utterly unlike anything elsewhere on the whole face of the earth, tends greatly to confirm the Mosaic account, that it became what it now is by a great convulsion; and by pious persons will, I think, be felt as confirming the miraculous character of that convulsion. Above all, perhaps, the absence of any counter-evidence—the fact that each accession to our knowledge of the ancient times, whether historic or geographic or ethnic, helps to remove difficulties, and to produce a perpetual supply of fresh illustrations of the Mosaic narrative; while fresh difficulties are not at the same time brought to light, is to be remarked, as to candid minds, an argument for the historic truth of the narrative, the force of which can scarcely be over estimated. All tends to show that we possess in the Pentateuch, not only the most authentic account of ancient times that has come down to us, but a history absolutely and in every respect true.

80. 7. *Joshua's Conquest of Canaan*.—'Moses of Chorêne, the Armenian historian, Procopius, the secretary of Belisarius, and Suidas, the lexicographer, relate that there existed in their day at Tingis (or Tangiers), in Africa, an ancient inscription to the effect that the inhabitants were descendants of those fugitives who

¹ Deut. iii. 5.

were driven from the land of Canaan by Joshua, the son of Nun, the plunderer.'

81. 8. *Sidon and Tyre.*—'The notices of Phœnicia in Scripture are completely in accordance with what we have thus gathered from profane sources. While Sidon alone appears to have been known to Moses (Gen. x. 15), and Tyre occurs in Joshua as a mere stronghold, in marked contrast with imperial Sidon, "great Sydon," as she is called more than once,¹ whose dominion seems to extend along the coast to Carmel, and certainly reaches inland as far as Laish.² In Samuel and Kings the case is changed; Sidon has no longer a distinctive epithet,³ and it is the "king of Tyre," who on behalf of his countrymen makes advances to David, and who is evidently the chief Phœnician potentate of the period.'

82. 9. *Hiram.*—'That Hiram was really a Phœnician name, and one which kings were in the habit of bearing, is certain from the Assyrian inscriptions, and from Herodotus, as well as from the Phœnician historians, Dios and Menander. And these last-named writers not only confirm the name as one which a king of Tyre might have borne, but show moreover that it was actually borne by the Tyrian king contemporary with Solomon and David, of whom they relate circumstances which completely identify him with the monarch who is stated in Scripture to have been on such friendly terms with those princes. They do not indeed appear to have made any mention of David; but they spoke distinctly of the close connection between Hiram and Solomon.'

83. 10. *Solomon.*—'The wealth and magnificence of Solomon were celebrated by Eupolemus and Theophilus, the former of whom gave an elaborate account of the temple and its ornaments.'

84. 11. *Use of Gold.*—'The copious use of gold in ornamentation, which seems to moderns so improbable, was a practice known to the Phœnicians, the Assyrians, and the Babylonians.'

¹ Josh. xi. 8.
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² Judges, xvii. 7, 23.
z.

³ 2 Sam. xxiv. 6.

85. 12. *Phœnicians*.—‘The wealth, the enterprise, the maritime skill, and the eminence in the arts which were the leading characteristics of the Phœnicians in Homer’s time, are abundantly noted by the writers of Kings and Chronicles; who contrast the comparative ignorance and rudeness of their own nation with the science and “cunning” of their neighbors.’¹

86. 13. *Judah and Israel*.—‘The separate existence of the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah is abundantly confirmed by the Assyrian inscriptions.’

87. 14. *Shishak*.—‘The first great event in the kingdom of Judah after the separation from Israel, was the invasion of Judea by Shishak, king of Egypt, in the fifth year of Rehoboam.’² ‘This success is found to have been commemorated by Shishak on the outside of the great temple at Karnac; and here, in a long list of captured towns and districts which Shishak boasts of having added to his dominions, occurs the “Melchi Yuda,” or kingdom of Judah, the conquest of which by this king is thus distinctly noticed in the Egyptian records.’

88. 15. *Ahab*.—‘Ahab, king of Israel, is represented as having sought to strengthen himself in the position which his father had usurped, by a marriage with a foreign princess, and as having made choice for the purpose of “Jezebel, daughter of Eth-Bal, king of the Zidonians.”’³ Here again not only have we a genuine Phœnician name, but we have the name of a king who is proved by the Tyrian history of Menander to have been seated upon the throne exactly at this time.’

89. 16. 1 *Kings*, xx. 1–25.—‘We have in the cuneiform annals of an Assyrian king, a very curious and valuable confirmation of the power of Damascus at this time—of its being under the rule of a monarch named Ben-hadad, who was at the head of a great con-

¹ 1 Kings, v. 6; 2 Chron. ii. 7; 1 Kings, vii. 14; 2 Chron. ix. 26, 27.

² 2 Chron. xii. 3.

³ 1 Kings, xvi. 31.

federacy of princes, and who was able to bring into the field year after year vast armies, with which he repeatedly engaged the whole force of Assyria. . . . The same record further verifies the historical accuracy of the Books of Kings by a mention of Hazael as king of Damascus immediately after Ben-hadad, and also by the synchronism which it establishes between this prince and Jehu, who is the first Israelite king mentioned by name on any inscription hitherto discovered.'

90. 17. *Assyrian Kings*.—'The successors of Pul are represented to us by the Biblical writers, apparently in a continuous and uninterrupted line—Tiglath-Pileser, Shalmeneser, Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esar-haddon, all of them carrying their arms into Palestine, and playing an important part in the history of the favored race. It happens most fortunately (may we not say providentially?) that records of all these monarchs—the greatest which Assyria produced—have been recovered; and these in some cases are sufficiently full to exhibit a close agreement with the sacred narrative, while throughout they harmonize with the tenor of that narrative, only in one or two cases so differing from the Hebrew text as to cause any difficulty.'

91. 18. 2 *Kings*, xviii, 13, 14.—'The annals of Sennacherib contain a full account of this campaign.'

92. 19. 2 *Kings*, xviii. 37.—'It has been generally seen and confessed, that the marvellous account which Herodotus gives of the discomfiture of Sennacherib by Sethos, is the Egyptian version of this event, which was (naturally enough) ascribed by that people to the interposition of its own divinities.'

93. 20. *Transfer of the Empire to Babylon*.—With Esar-haddon the notices of Assyria in the sacred history come to an end. Assyria herself shortly afterwards disappears; and her place is taken by Babylon, which now for the first time becomes a great conquering power. This transfer of empire is abundantly confirmed by profane authorities.

94. 21. *The Captivity*.—‘The fundamental fact of the time—the Captivity itself—is allowed on all hands to admit of no reasonable doubt. Not only do we find, from the monuments of the Assyrian kings and the subsequent history of Persia, that such transfers of whole populations were common in the East in ancient times ; but we have the direct evidence of Josephus to the fact, that Berosus mentioned the carrying off of the Jews by Nebuchadnezzar and their settlement in parts of Babylonia.’

95. 22. *Nebuchadnezzar*.—‘The splendor and magnificence which this prince displayed, his military successes, his devotion to his gods, and the pride which he took in adorning Babylon with great buildings, are noted by Berosus and Abydenus. Nine-tenths of the inscribed bricks from the site of Babylon are stamped with Nebuchadnezzar’s name. The length of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign is stated, without any variety, by Berosus, Polyhistor, and Ptolemy, at forty-three years. The Babylonian monuments go near to prove the same ; for the forty-second year of Nebuchadnezzar has been found on a clay tablet. Here Scripture is in exact accordance.’

96. 23. *Belshazzar*.—Profane history makes Nabonadius the last monarch of Babylon, and states that he was absent when the city was taken. It was difficult to reconcile this account with that given in the book of Daniel, where Belshazzar appears as the last king, and as slain in the capture of the city. Infidels triumphed in the supposed truth that Daniel’s history was fictitious ; but out of all this confusion and uncertainty a very small and simple discovery, made a few years since, has educed order and harmony in a very remarkable way. It is found that Nabonadius, the last king of the Canon, associated with him on the throne during the later years of his reign his son, Bil-shar-nzur, and allowed him the royal title. There can be little doubt that it was this prince who conducted the defence of Babylon, and was slain in the massacre which followed upon the capture ; while his father, who was at the time in Borsippa, sur-

rendered, and experienced the clemency which was generally shown to fallen kings by the Persians. . . . Sir H. Rawlinson made this important discovery in the year 1854, from documents obtained at Mugheir, the ancient Ur. The fact that two persons were at the time associated in the exercise of regal power, accords with and explains the promise of Belshazzar to Daniel to make him "the *third* ruler in the kingdom."¹

97. 24. *Conquest of Babylon.*—'The fact of the sudden and unexpected capture of Babylon by a Medo-Persic army during the celebration of a festival, and of the consequent absorption of the Babylonian into the Medo-Persic Empire, is one of those manifest points of agreement between Scripture and profane authors which speak for themselves, and on which all comment would be superfluous.'

98. 25. *Duration of the Captivity.*—'It can be clearly shown from a comparison of Berosus with Ptolemy's Canon, that, according to the reckoning of the Babylonians, the time between Nebuchadnezzar's first conquest of Judea in the reign of Jehoiakim, and the year following the fall of Babylon, when Daniel made his prayer, was sixty-eight years, or two years only short of the seventy which had been fixed by Jeremiah as the duration of the Captivity.'²

99. 26. *Religiousness of the Persians: Ezra, i. 2, 3; vi. 8-10; vii. 12, 13. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23.*—'Two things are especially remarkable in these passages: first, the strongly marked religious character very unusual in heathen documents; and, secondly, the distinctness with which they assert the unity of God, and thence identify the God of the Persians with the God of the Jews. Both these points receive abundant illustration from the Persian cuneiform inscriptions, in which the recognition of a single supreme God, Ormazd, and the clear and constant ascription to him of the direction of all mundane affairs, are leading features. In all the

¹ Dan. v. 16.

² Dan. ix. 19.

Persian monuments of any length, the monarch makes the acknowledgment that "Ormazd had bestowed on him his empire." Every success that is gained is "by the grace of Ormazd." The name of Ormazd occurs in almost every other paragraph of the Behistun inscription. No public monuments with such a pervading religious spirit have ever been discovered among the records of any heathen nation as those of the Persian kings; and through all of them, down to the time of Artaxerxes Ochus, the name of Ormazd stands alone and unapproachable as that of the Supreme Lord of earth and heaven.'

100. 27. *Ahasuerus* [Xerxes in Greek history.]—'Proud, self-willed, amorous, careless of contravening Persian customs; reckless of human life, yet not actually bloodthirsty; impetuous, facile, changeable—the Ahasuerus of Esther corresponds in all respects to the Greek portraiture of Xerxes, which is not (be it observed) the mere picture of an Oriental despot, but has various peculiarities which distinguish it from the other Persian kings, and which, I think it may be said, individualize it. . . . We know far too little of the domestic history of Xerxes from profane sources to pronounce the position which Esther occupies in his harem impossible or improbable.'

101. 28. *Persian Customs*.—'The intimate acquaintance which the book of Esther shows in many passages with Persian manners and customs, has been acknowledged even by De Wette, who regards it as composed in Persia on that account.'

CHAPTER II.

FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY.

102. SECTION I. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE prophecies of the Old Testament are so numerous and extensive that a complete account of their fulfilment would make a history of the world. The examination of the subject in Chapter VI. was necessarily restricted to the most important predictions, and to a very brief notice of these. (a) For proof of the historical facts there mentioned as fulfilments of prophecy, the reader is referred to Bishop Newton's "Dissertations on the Prophecies," in which valuable work he will find the subject treated at length, and with great ability. Two extracts from it are here subjoined, illustrating two very ancient prophecies; and a third explaining the division of the Roman empire into ten kingdoms. Many other useful extracts might be added, if space for them could be allowed.

103. ENLARGEMENT OF JAPHETH.

The territories of Japheth's posterity were indeed very large, for, besides all Europe, great and extensive as it is, they possessed the lesser Asia, Media, parts of Armenia, Iberia, Albania, and those vast regions towards the north which anciently the Scythians inhabited, and now the Tartars inhabit; and it is not improbable that the New World was peopled by some of his northern descendants passing thither by the straits of Anian. The enlargement of Japheth may also denote a numerous progeny as well as ample territory; and if you consult the genealogies of the three brothers comprised in the following chapter, you will find that Japheth had seven sons, whereas Ham had only four, and Shem only

five; and the northern hive (as Sir William Temple denominates it) was always remarkable for its fecundity, and hath been continually pouring forth swarms, and sending out colonies into the more southern parts, both in Europe and in Asia, both in former and in latter times.

104. THE ISHMAELITES UNSUBDUED AND PRESERVED.

The next great conquerors of the east [after the Egyptians and Assyrians] were Cyrus and the Persians; but neither he nor any of his successors ever reduced the whole body of the Arabs to subjection. They might some of the exterior, but never reached the interior parts of the country. . . . Alexander the Great overturned the Persian Empire and conquered Asia. The neighboring princes sent their ambassadors to make their submissions. The Arabs alone disdained to acknowledge the conqueror, and scorned to send any embassy, or to take any notice of him. This slight provoked him to such a degree, that he meditated an expedition against them, and the great preparations he made for it showed that he thought them a very formidable enemy; but death intervened and put an end to all that his ambition or resentment had framed against them. Thus they happily escaped the fury of his arms, and were never subdued by any of his successors. . . . The Romans invaded the East, and subdued the countries adjoining, but were never able to reduce Arabia into the form of a Roman province. . . . Such was the state and condition of the Arabs to the time of their favorite prophet Mohammed, who laid the foundations of a mighty empire; and then for several centuries they were better known among the European nations by the name of the Saraceni or Saracens, the Aracensi of Pliny, and the Hagarenes of the Holy Scripture. . . . After their empire was dissolved, and they were reduced within the limits of their native country, they still maintained their liberty against the Tartars, Mamalucs, Turks, and all foreign enemies whatever. Whoever were the conquerors of Asia, they were still unconquered, still continued their incursions, and preyed upon

all alike. . . . Who can fairly consider and lay all these particulars together, and not perceive the hand of God in this whole affair from the beginning to the end? . . . Who but God, or one raised and commissioned by him, could describe the genius and manners, not only of a single person before he was born, but of a whole people from the first founder of the race to the present time? . . . How could a single nation stand out against the enmity of the whole world for any length of time, and much more for near four thousand years together? The great empires around them have all in their turn fallen to ruin, while they have continued the same from the beginning, and are likely to continue the same to the end; and this in the natural course of things was so highly improbable, if not altogether impossible, that as nothing but a divine prescience could have foreseen it, so nothing but a divine power could have accomplished it. . . . These are the only people besides the Jews, who have subsisted as a distinct people from the beginning.

105. DIVISION OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE INTO TEN KINGDOMS.

The Roman empire, as the Romanists themselves allow, was by means of the incursions of the northern nations, dismembered into ten kingdoms; and Machiavel, little thinking what he was doing (as Bishop Chandler observes), hath given us their names; 1. the Ostrogoths in Mœsia, 2. the Visigoths in Pannonia, 3. the Sueves and Alans in Gascoigne and Spain, 4. the Vandals in Africa, 5. the Franks in France, 6. the Burgundians in Burgundy, 7. the Heruli and Turingi in Italy, 8. the Saxons and Angles in Britain, 9. the Huns in Hungary, 10. the Lombards at first upon the Danube, afterwards in Italy.

Mr. Mede reckons up the ten kingdoms thus in the year 456, the year after Rome was sacked by Genseric, king of the Vandals: 1. the Britons, 2. the Saxons in Britain, 3. the Franks, 4. the Burgundians in France, 5. the Wisigoths in the south of France and part of Spain, 6. the Sueves and Alans in Gallicia and Portu-

gal, 7. the Vandals in Africa, 8. the Alemanes in Germany, 9. the Ostrogoths whom the Longobards succeeded in Pannonia, and afterwards in Italy, 10. the Greeks in the residue of the empire.

[After giving enumerations from other authors, showing that at different periods the number *ten* agreed well with the division of the empire—] Not that there were constantly ten kingdoms, they were sometimes more, and sometimes fewer; but as Sir Isaac Newton says, “whatever was their number afterwards they are still called the ten kings from their first number.”

106. SECTION II. IN THE GOSPELS.

Having established in Chapter V. that the New Testament is a book of “truthful history,” we refer to it for proof (a) that Christ’s predictions were fulfilled concerning his death and resurrection, the labors and sufferings of his apostles, and the extensive spread of the gospel. The facts which prove the exact fulfilment of the remarkable prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, (b) have been stated at length by Lardner¹ and Newton,² and confirmed by quotations from Josephus and other authors. A few testimonies on this subject have been quoted in Chapter I. of this appendix, articles 49 a, 50, 56, but for a full account the reader is referred to the “History of the Jewish War” by Josephus, who was an eye-witness of the event, and an actor in its scenes.

The most doubtful part of the testimony given by Josephus respecting the destruction of Jerusalem, is the following passage:—

107. PRODIGIES PRECEDING THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

“Thus was this miserable people deceived by impostors, who spoke lies in the name of God. But they did not attend nor give credit to those prodigies which evidently foretold their future desolation; but like men infatuated, who have neither eyes to see nor minds to consider, they disregarded the divine denunciations.

¹ Vol. VI. pp. 392-479.

² Diss. 18-21.

There was a star, a comet resembling a sword, which stood over the city and continued for a year. And before the rebellion, and before the war broke out, when the people were come together in great multitudes to the feast of unleavened bread on the eighth day of the month of April, at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone round the altar and the temple, that it seemed to be bright day: which light continued for half an hour. This, to the unskilful, seemed to be a good sign; but, by the sacred scribes, it was judged to portend what has since happened. And at the same festival a heifer, as she was led by the high priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner court of the temple, which was of brass, and very heavy, which was not without difficulty shut in the evening by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and was fastened with bolts that went deep into the floor which was made of one entire stone; was seen to open of its own accord at the sixth hour of the night: whereupon they who kept watch at the temple went to the captain and told him of it. He then came thither, and not without difficulty had it shut again. This also appeared to the vulgar a good sign: as if thereby God opened to them the gates of happiness. But the wiser men concluded the security of the temple was gone, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies; and they said it was a signal of the desolation that was coming upon them. Besides these, a few days after that festival, on the one-and-twentieth day of May there appeared a wonderful phenomenon, almost exceeding belief; and the account of it might seem fabulous if it had not been related by those who saw it, and if the following events had not been answerable to such signs: for before sunset chariots and troops in armor were seen carried upon the clouds, and surrounding cities. And at the festival, which we call the Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple, as the custom was, to perform their ministrations, they first felt, as they said, a shak-

ing, accompanied by a noise, and after that a sound as of a multitude, saying, 'Let us remove hence.' But, which is still more awful, there was one Jesus, son of Ananus, of a low condition, and a countryman, who four years before the war began, when the city enjoyed profound peace and flowing prosperity, came up to the festival, in which it is the custom for us all to make tabernacles, who on a sudden began to cry out in the temple: 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides, a voice against the whole people.' This was his cry, as he went about both by day and by night, in all the lanes of the city. Some of the chief men were offended at this ill-boding sound, and, taking him up, laid many stripes upon him, and had him beaten severely. Yet he said not a word for himself, nor made any peculiar complaint to them that beat him; but went on repeating the same words that he had said before. Hereupon, the magistrates, thinking it to be something more than ordinary, as indeed it was, bring him before the Roman governor; where he was whipped till his bones were laid bare. All which he bore without shedding any tears or making any supplications; but with a mournful voice at every stripe, cried out, 'Woe to Jerusalem.' Albinus, the governor, asked him who he was, and whence he came, and why he uttered those words. To all which he made no answer, but continued making his mournful denunciations to the city. Albinus, thinking him to be mad, dismissed him. And, thenceforward, to the time of the war, he did not go to any of the citizens; nor was he seen speaking to any; but only went on with his mournful denunciation, as if it had been his premeditated vow: 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem.' He did not give ill-language to those who beat him, as many did frequently; nor did he thank those who gave him food: but went on repeating to all the doleful presage. But especially at festivals, his cry was the loudest. And so it continued for seven years and five months, without his growing hoarse, or being

tired therewith, till he saw his presage in the siege; then he ceased: for going round upon the wall, with his utmost force he cried out: 'Woe, woe once more to the city, and to the people, and to the temple.' And then at last he added: 'Woe, woe to myself also.' At which instant there came a stone out of one of the engines that smote him, and killed him immediately; and whilst he was uttering these mournful presages, he gave up the ghost."

On this passage the following remarks are offered:—

1. It corresponds with Christ's prediction that there would be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.¹
 2. No one can suppose that Josephus, a Jew and an enemy of Christianity, wrote this passage to prove the fulfilment of Christ's prophecy. 3. Though some of the prodigies related by Josephus may be justly discredited, the whole account cannot be rationally rejected. Some of the alleged facts must have been witnessed by multitudes, if they occurred as the historian has related: and if they did not, he knew, when he penned his history, that there were multitudes who could bear witness to its falsehood. 4. No one has a right to assume that there were no supernatural events attending this extraordinary judgment of God. 5. But if none of the prodigies were supernatural there may still have been "fearful sights and great signs from heaven." As the sun and moon are "signs"² in heaven, and the rainbow in the cloud "a token"³ of mercy; so extraordinary meteors in the sky, filling men's minds with terror, may, even though not miraculously produced, have been used by Providence to awaken men from security, and warn them of approaching evil.

SECTION III. IN THE REVELATION OF JOHN.

The following extracts from Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* show the fulfilment of prophecies contained in the book of Revelation. A marginal analysis is added, with references to the several

¹ Luke. xxi. 11.

² Gen. i. 14.

³ Gen. ix. 13.

prophecies. If the propriety and expressiveness of the symbols used in the prophecies should not be apparent to the reader, he will do well to consult Barnes's Notes on the Book of Revelation.

EXTRACTS.

108. 1. If a man were called to fix a period in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian to the accession of Commodus. The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm but gentle hands of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded universal respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws. Such princes deserved the honor of restoring the republic, had the Romans of their days been capable of enjoying a rational freedom. The praises of Alexander, transmitted by a succession of poets and historians, had kindled a dangerous emulation in the mind of Trajan. Like him, the Roman emperor undertook an expedition against the nations of the East. . . . The success of Trajan, however transient, was rapid and specious. The degenerate Parthians, broken by intense discord, fled before his arms. . . . Every day the astonished senate received the intelligence of new names and new nations that acknowledged his sway. They were informed that the kings of Bosphorus, Colchos, Iberia, Albania, Osrhoene, and even the Parthian monarch himself, had accepted their diadems from the hand of the emperor; that the independent tribes of the Median and Carduchian hills had implored his protection; and that the rich countries of Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria were reduced into the state of provinces.

The Roman Empire prosperous, and enlarged by conquest. Rev. vi. 2.

109. 2. When Commodus had once tasted human blood, he was incapable of pity or remorse. The tyrant's rage, after having shed the noblest blood of the senate, at length recoiled on the principal instrument of his cruelty. . . . His cruelty proved at last fatal to himself. He had shed with impunity the best blood of Rome; he perished as soon as he was dreaded by his own domestics. . . . After a reign of sixty-six days, Julian was beheaded in a private apartment of the baths of the palace. [After a detailed account of the two civil wars against Niger and Albinus, rival competitors for the empire, both of whom were vanquished, and both of whom were put to death in their flight from the field of battle.] Although the wounds of civil war were apparently healed, its mortal poison still lurked in the vitals of the constitution. . . . It was computed that, under the vague appellation of the friends of Geta, above twenty thousand persons of both sexes suffered death. . . Caracalla was the common enemy of mankind. Every province was by turns the scene of his rapine and cruelty. In the midst of peace and repose, upon the slightest provocation, he issued his commands at Alexandria, in Egypt, for a general massacre. From a secure post in the temple of Serapis, he viewed and directed the slaughter of many thousand citizens, as well as strangers, without distinguishing either the number or the crime of the sufferers.

Massacres and
civil wars.
Rev. vi. 4.

[Then follows the account of the assassination of Caracalla; then, and in consequence of that, of the civil war which crushed Macrinus, and raised Elagabalus to the throne; then of the life and follies of that wretched voluptuary, and of his massacre by the pretorian guards; then, after an interval of thirteen years, of the murder of his successor, the second Severus, on the Rhine; then of the civil wars excited against his murderer and successor, Maximin, in which the two emperors of a day, the Gordians—father and son—perished in Africa, and Maximin himself and his son in the siege of Aquileia; then of the murder at Rome of

the two joint emperors, Maximus and Balbinus; and quickly after that an account of the murder of their successor in the empire, the third and youngest Gordian, on the banks of the river Aboras; then of the slaughter of the next emperor, Philip, together with his son and associate in the empire, in the battle near Verona;—and this state of things may be said to have continued until the accession of Diocletian to the empire, A. D. 284.]

110. 3. Nor was the rapacious son of Severus [Caracalla] contented with such a measure of taxation as had appeared sufficient to his moderate predecessors. Instead of a twentieth, he exacted a tenth of all legacies and inheritances; and during his reign he crushed alike every part of the empire under the weight of his iron sceptre. . . . [After noticing some relief by Alexander from the excessive taxation.] But the noxious weed, which had not been totally eradicated, again sprung up with the most luxuriant growth, and in the succeeding age darkened the Roman world with its deadly shade. In the course of this history we shall be too often summoned to explain the land tax, the capitation, and the heavy contributions of corn, wine, oil, and meat which were exacted of the provinces for the use of the court, the army, and the capital. . . . About that time the avarice of Galerius [who, as Cæsar, acted under the authority of Diocletian; who excited Diocletian to the work of persecution; and who, on the abdication of Diocletian, assumed the title of Augustus], or perhaps the exigencies of the state, had induced him to make a very strict and rigorous inquisition into the property of his subjects for the purpose of a general taxation, both on their lands and on their persons. A very minute survey appears to have been taken of their real estates; and wherever there was the slightest concealment, torture was very freely employed to obtain a sincere declaration of their real wealth.

Care of oil and wine. Rev. vi. 6.

[A particular order, under this oppressive system of taxation, was sent forth in the following words]:—If any one shall sacrilegi-

ously cut a vine, or stint the fruit of prolific boughs, and craftily feign poverty in order to avoid a fair assessment, he shall immediately, on detection, suffer death, and his property be confiscated.

111. 4. [Speaking of the period embracing the reigns of Decius, Gallus, Æmilianus, Valerian, and Gallienus:] From the great secular games celebrated by Philip to the death of the emperor Gallienus, there elapsed twenty years of shame and misfortune. During this calamitous period, every instant of time was marked, every province of the Roman world was afflicted by barbarous invaders and military tyrants, and the wearied empire seemed to approach the last and fatal moment of its dissolution. . . . The whole period [speaking of the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus] was one uninterrupted series of confusion and calamity. The Roman empire was, at the same time, and on every side, attacked by the blind fury of foreign invaders and the wild ambition of domestic usurpers. . . . A long and general famine was a calamity of a more serious kind. It was the inevitable consequence of rapine and oppression, which extirpated the produce of the present, and the hope of future harvests. . . . Famine is almost always followed by epidemical diseases, the effect of scanty and unwholesome food. Other causes must, however, have contributed to the furious plague, which, from the year two hundred and fifty to the year two hundred and sixty-five, raged without interruption in every province, every city, and almost every family in the Roman empire. During some time, five thousand persons died daily at Rome; and many towns that had escaped the hands of the barbarians were entirely depopulated. . . . [After computing the deaths at Alexandria]. Could one venture to extend the analogy to the other provinces, we might suspect that war, pestilence, and famine had consumed in a few years the moiety of the human species.

Great mortality from war, famine, and pestilence. Rev. vi. 8.

112. 5. The design of Diocletian's persecution was

Persecution of
Christians.
Rev. vi. 9-11.

the destruction of Christianity. . . . The edict against Christians was designed for a general law of the whole empire. . . . The resentment, or the fears of Diocletian, at length transported him beyond the bounds of moderation, which he had hitherto preserved, and he declared, in a series of edicts, his intention of abolishing the Christian name. By the first of these edicts, the governors of the provinces were directed to apprehend all persons of the ecclesiastical order; and the prisons, destined for the vilest criminals, were soon filled with a multitude of bishops, presbyters, deacons, and exorcists. By a second edict, the magistrates were commanded to employ every method of severity which might reclaim them from their odious superstition, and oblige them to return to the established worship of the gods. This rigorous order was extended, by a subsequent edict, to the whole body of Christians, who were exposed to a violent and general persecution. Instead of those solitary restraints which had required the direct and solemn testimony of an accuser, it became the duty as well as the interest of the imperial officers to discover, to pursue, and to torment the most obnoxious among the faithful. Heavy penalties were denounced against all who should presume to save a proscribed sectary from the just indignation of the gods and of the emperors.

113. 6. A. D. 365. In the second year of the reign of Valentinian and Valens, on the morning of the twenty-first day of July, the greatest part of the Roman world was shaken by a violent and destructive earthquake. . . .

Consternation
in the apprehension
of divine judgments.
Rev. vi. 12-17.

The impression was communicated to the waters; the shores of the Mediterranean were left dry by the sudden retreat of the sea; great quantities of fish were caught with the hand; large vessels were stranded on the mud; and a curious spectator amused his eye, or rather his fancy, by contemplating the various appearances of valleys and mountains, which had never before, since the formation of the globe, been exposed to the sun. But the tide soon returned, with the weight of an im-

mense and irresistible deluge, which was severely felt on the coasts of Sicily, of Dalmatia, of Greece, and of Egypt: large boats were transported and lodged on the roofs of houses, or at the distance of two miles from the shore; the people with their habitations were swept away by the waters; and the city of Alexandria annually commemorated the day on which fifty thousand persons had lost their lives in the inundation. This calamity, the report of which was magnified from one province to another, astonished and terrified the subjects of Rome; and their affrighted imagination enlarged the real extent of the momentary evil. They recollected the preceding earthquakes which had subverted the cities of Palestine and Bithynia; they considered these alarming strokes as the prelude only of still more dreadful calamities, and their fearful vanity was disposed to confound the symptoms of a declining empire and a sinking world. . . . In the disastrous period of the fall of the Roman empire, which may justly be dated from the reign of Valens, the happiness and security of each individual was personally attacked; and the arts and labors of ages were rudely defaced by the barbarians of Scythia and Germany. . . . [Describing the consternation produced by the invasion of Alaric, king of the Visigoths], The apprehensions of each individual were increased in just proportion to the measure of his fortune; and the most timid, who had already embarked their valuable effects, meditated their escape to the island of Sicily, or to the African coast. The public distress was aggravated by the fears and reproaches of superstition. Every hour produced some horrid tale of strange and particular accidents; the pagans deplored the neglect of omens, and the interruption of sacrifices; but the Christians still derived some comfort from the powerful intercession of the saints and martyrs.

[Speaking of the time of Constantine], The threatening tempest of barbarians, which so soon subverted the foundations of Roman greatness, was still repelled, or suspended on the frontiers.

Tempest suspended. Rev. vii. 1-3.

114. 7. The correspondence of the nations was, in that age, so imperfect and precarious, that the revolutions of the North might escape the knowledge of the court of Ravenna; till the dark cloud, which was collected along the coast of the Baltic, burst in thunder upon the banks of the Upper Danube. The king of the confederate Germans passed, without resistance, the Alps, the Po, and the Apennines; leaving on the one hand the inaccessible palace of Honorius securely buried among the marshes of Ravenna; and on the other the camp of Stilicho, who had fixed his head-quarters at Ticinium, or Pavia, but who seems to have avoided a decisive battle till he had assembled his distant forces. Many cities of Italy were pillaged, or destroyed. The senate and people trembled at their approach within a hundred and eighty miles of Rome; and anxiously compared the danger which they had escaped, to the new perils to which they were exposed. . . The king of the Goths, who no longer dissembled his appetite for plunder and revenge, appeared in arms under the walls of the capital; and the trembling senate, without any hope of relief, prepared, by a desperate effort, to delay the ruin of their country. But they were unable to guard against the conspiracy of their slaves and domestics; who either from birth or interest were attached to the cause of the enemy. At the hour of midnight, the Salarian gate was silently opened, and the inhabitants were awakened by the tremendous sound of the Gothic trumpet. Eleven hundred and sixty-three years after the foundation of Rome, the imperial city, which had subdued and civilized so considerable a part of mankind, was delivered to the licentious fury of the tribes of Germany and Scythia. . . . This scene of peace and plenty [along the banks of the Rhine] was suddenly changed into a desert; and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man. The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed; and many thousand Christians were inhumanly massacred in the church. Worms perished after a long and

Invasion by the
Goths. Rev.
viii. 7.

obstinate siege; Strasburg, Spire, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke; and the consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greatest part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their houses and altars.

115. 8. The experience of navigation, and perhaps the prospect of Africa, encouraged the Vandals to accept the invitation which they received from Count Boniface [to aid him in his apprehended difficulties with Rome, and to enter into an alliance with him by settling permanently in Africa]; and the death of Genseric [the Vandal king] served only to forward and animate the bold enterprise. In the room of a prince, not conspicuous for any superior powers of the mind or body, they acquired his bastard brother, the terrible Genseric, a name, which, in the destruction of the Roman empire, has deserved an equal rank with the names of Alaric and Attila. . . . The discovery and conquest of the Black nations [in Africa], that might dwell beneath the torrid zone, could not tempt the rational ambition of Genseric; but he cast his eyes towards the sea; he resolved to create a naval power, and his bold resolution was executed with steady and active perseverance. The woods of Mount Atlas afforded an inexhaustible supply of timber; his new subjects were skilled in the arts of navigation and ship-building; he animated his daring Vandals to embrace a mode of warfare which would render any maritime country accessible to their arms; the Moors and Africans were allured by the hope of plunder; and after an interval of six centuries, the fleets that issued from the port of Carthage again claimed the empire of the Mediterranean. The success of the Vandals, the conquest of Sicily, the sack of Palermo, and the frequent descents on the coast of Lucania, awakened and alarmed

Depredations of
the Vandals.
Rev. viii. 8, 9.

the mother of Valentinian, and the sister of Theodosius. Alliances were formed; and armaments, expensive and ineffectual, were prepared for the destruction of the common enemy, who reserved his courage to encounter those dangers which his policy could not prevent or elude. The revolutions of the palace, which left the Western empire without a defender, and without a lawful prince, dispelled the apprehension, and stimulated the avarice of Genseric. He immediately equipped a numerous fleet of Vandals and Moors, and cast anchor at the mouth of the Tiber. On the third day after the tumult [A. D. 455, on the death of Maximus], Genseric boldly advanced from the port of Ostia to the gates of the defenceless city. Instead of a sally of the Roman youth, there issued from the gates an unarmed and venerable procession of the bishop at the head of his clergy. But Rome and its inhabitants were delivered to the licentiousness of the Vandals and the Moors, whose blind passions revenged the injuries of Carthage. The pillage lasted fourteen days and nights; and all that yet remained of public or private wealth, of sacred or profane treasure, was diligently transported to the vessels of Genseric.

116. 9. The favorite of Mars [as Attila was regarded] soon acquired a sacred character, which rendered his conquests more easy and more permanent; and the barbarian princes confessed, in the language of devotion or flattery, that they could not presume to gaze, with a steady eye, on the divine majesty of the king of the Huns. . . . In the reign of Attila, the Huns again became the terror of the world; and I shall now describe the character and actions of that formidable barbarian who alternately invaded and insulted the east and the west, and urged the rapid downfall of the Roman empire. . . . The indignant lover [Attila] took the field, passed the Alps, invaded Italy, and besieged Aquileia with an innumerable host of barbarians. . . . A large breach was made in the part of the wall where the stork had taken her flight; the Huns marched to the assault with irresistible

Attila's invasion. Rev. viii. 10, 11.

fury; and the succeeding generation could scarcely discover the ruins of Aquileia. After this dreadful chastisement, Attila pursued his march; and as he passed, the cities of Altinum, Concordia, and Padua, were reduced into heaps of stones and ashes. The inland towns, Vicenza, Verona, and Bergamo, were exposed to the rapacious cruelty of the Huns. Milan and Pavia submitted, without resistance, to the loss of their wealth, and applauded the unusual clemency which preserved from the flames the public, as well as the private buildings, and spared the lives of the captive multitude. The popular traditions of Comum, Turin, or Modena, may be justly suspected, yet they concur with more authentic evidence to prove that Attila spread his ravages over the rich plains of modern Lombardy, which are divided by the Po, and bounded by the Alps and the Apennines. . . . The revolution, which subverted the empire of the Huns, established the fame of Attila, whose genius alone had sustained the huge and disjointed fabric.

117. 10. Odoacer led a wandering life among the barbarians of Noricum, with a mind and fortune suited to the most desperate adventures; and when he had fixed his choice he privately visited the cell of Severinus, the popular saint of the country, to solicit his approbation and blessing. The lowness of the door would not admit the lofty stature of Odoacer; he was obliged to stoop; but in that humble attitude the saint could discern the symptoms of his future greatness; and addressing him in a prophetic tone, "Pursue," said he, "your design; proceed to Italy; you will cast away the coarse garment of skins; and your wealth will be adequate to the liberality of your mind." The barbarian, whose daring spirit accepted and ratified this prediction, was admitted into the service of the Western empire, and soon obtained an honorable rank in the guards. His manners were gradually polished, his military skill improved, and the confederates of Italy would not have elected him for their general unless the exploits of Odoacer had established a high opinion of his courage and

The supreme power transferred to barbarians. Rev. viii. 12.

capacity. Their military acclamations saluted him with the title of king; but he abstained during his whole reign from the use of the purple and diadem, lest he should offend those princes, whose subjects, by their accidental mixture, had formed the victorious army which time and policy might insensibly unite into a great nation. . . . Odoacer was the first barbarian who reigned in Italy, over a people who had once asserted their superiority above the rest of mankind.

. . . . Pope Gelasius was a subject of Odoacer; and he affirms with strong exaggeration, that in Aemelia, Tuscany, and the adjacent provinces, the human species was almost extirpated. One-third of those ample estates, to which the ruin of Italy is originally imputed, was extorted for the use of the conquerors.

118. 11. One hundred years after his [Mohammed's] flight from Mecca, the arms and reigns of his successors extended from India to the Atlantic ocean, over the various and distant provinces, which may be comprised under the names of Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain.

[*Order given to the Saracens when invading Syria.*—Remember that you are always in the presence of God, on the verge of death, in the assurance of judgment, and the hope of paradise. Avoid injustice and oppression, consult with your brethren, and study to procure the love and confidence of your troops. When you fight the battle of the Lord, acquit yourselves like men,

without turning your backs; but let not the victory be stained with the blood of women or children. Destroy no palm trees, nor burn any fields of corn. Cut down no fruit trees, nor do any mischief to cattle only such as you kill to eat. When you make any covenant or article, stand to it, and be as good as your word. As you go on you will find some religious persons who live retired in monasteries, and propose to themselves to serve God in that way; let them alone and neither kill them.] . . . In the siege of Tayaf, sixty miles from Mecca, Mahomet violated his own laws, by the extirpation of the fruit

The Saracens.
Rev. ix. 1-11.

Vegetation and
human life
spared. Rev.
ix. 4, 5.

trees. . . . The means of persuasion had been tried, the season of forbearance was elapsed, and he was now commanded to propagate his religion by the sword, to destroy the monuments of idolatry, and without regarding the sanctity of days or months, to pursue the unbelieving nations of the earth The fair option of friendship, or submission, or battle, was proposed to the enemies of Mohammed. . . . A victorious line of march had been prolonged above a thousand miles from the rock of Gibraltar to the mouth of the Loire; the repetition of an equal space would have carried the Saracens to the confines of Poland, and the highlands of Scotland. The Rhine is not more impassable than the Nile or the Euphrates, and the Arabian fleet might have sailed without a naval combat into the mouth of the Thames. Perhaps the interpretation of the Koran would now be taught in the schools of Oxford, and her pulpits might demonstrate to a circumcised people, the sanctity and truth of the revelations of Mahomet. . . . The calm historian who strives to follow the rapid course of the Saracens, must study to explain, by what means the church and state were saved from this impending and, as it should seem, inevitable danger.

Idolaters destroyed. Rev. ix. 4.

[A change under the reign of the caliph Abdalrahman.] The luxury of the caliphs, so useless to their private happiness, relaxed the nerves, and terminated the progress of the Arabian empire. Temporal and spiritual conquest had been the sole occupation of the successors of Mahomet; and after supplying themselves with the necessaries of life, the whole revenue was scrupulously devoted to that salutary work. The Abassides were impoverished by the multitude of their wants, and their contempt of economy. Instead of pursuing the great object of ambition, their leisure, their affections, and the powers of their minds, were diverted by pomp and pleasure: the rewards of valor were embezzled by women and eunuchs, and the royal camp was encumbered by the luxury of the palace. A similar temper

Power of tormenting at length terminated. Rev. ix. 5, 10.

was diffused among the subjects of the caliph. Their stern enthusiasm was softened by time and prosperity; they sought riches in the occupations of industry, fame in the pursuits of literature, and happiness in the tranquillity of domestic life. War was no longer the passion of the Saracens; and the increase of pay, the repetition of donatives, were insufficient to allure the posterity of those voluntary champions who had crowded to the standard of Abubeker and Omar for the hopes of the spoil of paradise. . . . Their mutual designs or declarations of war evaporated without effect; but instead of opening a door to the conquest of Europe, Spain was dis severed from the trunk of the monarchy, engaged in perpetual hostility with the East, *and inclined to peace and friendship with the Christian sovereigns of Constantinople and France.*

119. 12. Twenty-five years after the death of Basil [the Greek emperor], his successors were suddenly assaulted by an unknown race of barbarians, who united the Scythian valor with the fanaticism of new proselytes, and the art and riches of a powerful monarchy. (a) The myriads of Turkish horse overspread a frontier of six hundred miles, from Taurus to Arzeroum, and the blood of one hundred and thirty thousand Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet. Yet the arms of Togrul did not make any deep or lasting impression on the Greek empire. The torrent rolled away from the open country; the sultan retired without glory or success from the siege of an Armenian city; the obscure hostilities were continued or suspended with a vicissitude of events; and the bravery of the Macedonian legions renewed the fame of the conqueror of Asia. The name of Alp Arslan, the valiant lion, is expressive of the popular idea of the perfection of man; and the successor of Togrul displayed the fierceness and generosity of the royal animal. He passed the Euphrates at the head of the Turkish cavalry, and entered Cesarea, the metropolis of Cappadocia, to which he had

The Turks.
Rev. ix. 13-20.

Myriads of
horsemen.
Rev. ix. 16.

Heads of lions.
Rev. ix. 17.

Loosed from the
Euphrates.
Rev. ix. 14.

been attracted by the fame and wealth of the temple of St. Basil. . . . The more rustic, perhaps the wisest, portion of the Turkmans, continued to dwell in the tents of their ancestors; and from the Oxus to the Euphrates, these military colonies were protected and propagated by their native princes. . . . As the supreme head of his family and nation, the great sultan of Persia commanded the obedience and tribute of his royal brethren: the thrones of Kerman and Nice, of Aleppo and Damascus; the Atabeks and emirs of Syria and Mesopotamia, erected their standards under the shadow of his sceptre, and the hordes of Turkmans overspread the plains of Western Asia. After the death of Malek, the bands of union and subordination were gradually relaxed and dissolved; the indulgence of the house of Seljuk invested their slaves with the inheritance of kingdoms, and in the Oriental style, a crowd of princes arose from the dust of their feet.

Among the implements of destruction, he [the Turkish sultan] studied with peculiar care the recent and tremendous discovery of the Latins; and his artillery surpassed whatever had yet appeared in the world. [At the siege of Constantinople,] The incessant volleys of lances and arrows were accompanied with the smoke, the sound, and the fire of their musketry and cannon. . . . The long order of the Turkish artillery was pointed against the walls; fourteen batteries thundered at once on the most accessible places; and of one of these it was ambiguously expressed that it was mounted with one hundred and thirty guns, and that it discharged one hundred and thirty bullets. . . . From the lines, the galleys, and the bridge, the Ottoman artillery thundered on all sides; and the camp and city, the Greeks and the Turks, were involved in a cloud of smoke which could only be dispelled by the final deliverance or destruction of the Roman empire.

First use of gun-
powder in bat-
tle. Rev. ix.
17, 18.

120. 13. It was after the Nicene Synod, and un-

The Pope re-
stores the Wes-
tern Empire.
Rev. xiii. 12.

der the reign of the pious Irene, that the popes consummated the separation of Rome and Italy [from the Eastern empire] by the translation of the empire to the less orthodox Charlemagne. They were compelled to choose between the rival nations; religion was not the sole motive of their choice; and while they dissembled the failings of their friends, they beheld with reluctance and suspicion the Catholic virtues of their foes. The difference of language and manners had perpetuated the enmity of the two capitals [Rome and Constantinople]; and they were alienated from each other by the hostile opposition of seventy years. In that schism, the Romans had tasted of freedom and the popes of sovereignty; their submission would have exposed them to the revenge of a jealous tyrant, and the revolution of Italy had betrayed the impotence as well as the tyranny of the Byzantine court. . . . [Charlemagne was selected]. . . . “The title of patrician was below the merit and greatness of Charlemagne; and it was only by reviving the Western empire that they could pay their obligations, or secure their establishment. By this decisive measure they would finally eradicate the claims of the Greeks; from the debasement of a provincial town the majesty of Rome would be restored; the Latin Christians would be united under a supreme head in their ancient metropolis; and the conquerors of the West would receive their crown from the successors of St. Peter. The Roman church would acquire a zealous and respectable advocate; and, under the shadow of the Carovingian power, the bishop might exercise, with honor and safety, the government of the city. . . . If we retrace the outlines of the geographical picture, it will be seen that the empire of the Franks extended, between the east and the west, from the Ebro to the Elbe, or Vistula; between the north and the south, from the duchy of Beneventum to the river Eyder, the perpetual boundary of Germany and Denmark. Two-thirds of the Western empire were subject to Charlemagne, and the deficiency was amply supplied by his command of the inaccessible

or invincible nations of Germany." . . . On the festival of Christmas, the last year of the eighth century, Charlemagne appeared in the church of St. Peter; and, to gratify the vanity of Rome, he exchanged the simple dress of his country for the habit of a patrician. After the celebration of the holy mysteries, Leo suddenly placed a precious crown on his head, and the dome resounded with the acclamations of the people, "Long life and victory to Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned by God the great and pacific emperor of the Romans!" The head and body of Charlemagne were consecrated by the royal unction; his coronation oath represents a promise to maintain the faith and privileges of the church; and the first fruits are paid in rich offerings to the shrine of the apostle. In his familiar conversation the emperor protested his ignorance of the intentions of Leo, which he would have disappointed by his absence on that memorable day. But the preparations of the ceremony must have disclosed the secret; and the journey of Charlemagne reveals his knowledge and expectation: he had acknowledged that the imperial title was the object of his ambition, and a Roman senate had pronounced that it was the only adequate reward of his merit and services. . . . From that memorable era [the conquest of Italy by Otho], two maxims of public jurisprudence were introduced by force, and ratified by time:—I. That the prince who was elected by the German Diet, acquired from that instant the subject kingdoms of Italy and Rome. II. But that he might not legally assume the titles of Emperor and Augustus, till he had received the crown from the hands of the Roman pontiff.

CHAPTER III.

121. PRETENDED MIRACLES.

THE ancient heathen opposers of Christianity admitted the miracles of Jesus, but attributed them to magic, and labored to adduce examples of like miracles wrought by others, who were supposed to possess magic power. So Hierocles compared the works of Jesus with those of Apollonius Tyanæus, who, it was alleged, cured demoniacs, stopped a plague at Ephesus; raised a dead female to life in Rome, understood the language of beasts and birds, and knew all human languages without having learned them. No infidel of modern times will maintain that Apollonius really wrought miracles; and the only question with which we are now concerned is, whether the testimony on which these alleged miracles were accredited is equal to that on which the miracles of Jesus were believed.

Hierocles accredited the miracles of Apollonius on the sole testimony of Philostratus, who did not claim to have had any personal knowledge of them, but who, a hundred years after the time of the magician, wrote an account of him to please Julia and Caracalla, the former of whom supplied, in part, the documents from which the account was prepared. How unlike is this to the testimony of those who were eye-witnesses of Christ's miracles, and who recorded what they had seen, not to please the rulers and great ones of the earth, but in the face of their frowns, and threats, and persecuting rage!

Apollonius was a Pythagorean philosopher, who lived in the time of Vespasian. No writer of his age, either pagan or Christian, has noticed the miracles attributed to him by Philostratus; and yet if such miracles had been wrought at Rome and Ephesus, they must have attracted public attention. Moreover, Celsus and Porphyry, who wrote against Christianity before Hiero-

cles, have failed to notice the miracles of Apollonius, though an argument from them, if they had believed their truth, would have admirably suited their purpose. Even Philostratus himself, in speaking of the chief miracle, the raising of the young woman to life, expresses doubt whether she were really dead. And Hume, in enumerating the pretended miracles with which he sought to disparage the history of Christ's miracles, has not included those attributed to Apollonius.

From Paley's Evidences.

They with whom we argue have undoubtedly a right to select their own examples. The instances with which Mr. Hume has chosen to confront the miracles of the New Testament, and which, therefore, we are entitled to regard as the strongest which the history of the world could supply to the inquiries of a very acute and learned adversary, are the three following:—

I. The cure of a blind and of a lame man of Alexandria, by the Emperor Vespasian, as related by Tacitus.

II. The restoration of the limbs of an attendant in a Spanish church, as told by Cardinal de Retz; and

III. The cures said to be performed at the tomb of Abbé Paris, in the early part of the present century.

122. I. The narrative of Tacitus is delivered in these terms: "One of the common people of Alexandria, known to be diseased in his eyes, by the admonition of the god Serapis, whom that superstitious nation worship above all other gods, prostrated himself before the emperor, earnestly imploring from him a remedy for his blindness, and entreating that he would deign to anoint with his spittle his cheeks and the balls of his eyes. Another, diseased in his hand, requested, by the admonition of the same god, that he might be touched by the foot of the emperor. Vespasian at first derided and despised their application; afterwards, when they continued to urge their petitions, he sometimes appeared to dread the imputation of vanity; at other times, by the earnest supplication of the patients, and the persua-

sion of his flatterers, to be induced to hope for success. At length he commanded an inquiry to be made by the physicians whether such a blindness and debility were vincible by human aid? The report of the physicians contained various points: that in the one, the power of vision was not destroyed, but would return if the obstacles were removed; that in the other, the diseased joints might be restored if a healing power were applied; that it was perhaps agreeable to the gods to do this; that the emperor was elected by divine assistance; lastly, that the credit of the success would be the emperor's, the ridicule of the disappointment would fall upon the patients. Vespasian, believing that everything was in the power of his fortune, and that nothing was any longer incredible, whilst the multitude which stood by eagerly expected the event with a countenance expressive of joy, executed what he was desired to do. Immediately the hand was restored to its use, and light returned to the blind man. They who were present relate both these cures, even at this time, when there is nothing to be gained by lying."

Now, though Tacitus wrote this account twenty-seven years after this miracle is said to have been performed, and wrote at Rome of what passed at Alexandria, and wrote also from report: and although it does not appear that he had examined the story, or that he believed it (but rather the contrary), yet I think his testimony sufficient to prove that such a transaction took place, by which I mean, that the two men in question did apply to Vespasian: that Vespasian did touch the diseased in the manner related; and that a cure was reported to have followed the operation. But the affair labors under a strong and just suspicion that the whole of it was a concerted imposture, brought about by collusion between the patients, the physicians, and the emperor. This solution is probable, because there was everything to suggest, and everything to facilitate such a scheme. The miracle was calculated to confer honor upon the emperor and upon the god Serapis. It was achieved in the midst of the emperor's flatterers and followers; in

a city and amongst a populace beforehand devoted to his interest and to the worship of the god; where it would have been treason and blasphemy together to have contradicted the fame of the cure, or even to have questioned it. And, what is very observable in the account is, that the report of the physicians is just such a report as would have been made of a case in which no external marks of the disease existed, and which, consequently, was capable of being easily counterfeited, namely, that in the first of the patients the organs of vision were not destroyed, that the weakness of the second was in his joints. The strongest circumstance in Tacitus' narration is, that the first patient was "notus tabe oculorum," remarked or notorious for the disease in his eyes. But this was a circumstance which might have found its way into the story in its progress from a distant country, and during an interval of thirty years; or it might be true that the malady of the eyes was notorious, yet that the nature and degree of the disease had never been ascertained; a case by no means uncommon. The emperor's reserve was easily affected; or it is possible he might not be in the secret. There does not seem to be much weight in the observation of Tacitus, that they who were present continued even then to relate the story when there was nothing to be gained by the lie. It only proves that those who had told the story for many years persisted in it. The state of mind of the witnesses and spectators at the time is the point to be attended to. Still less is there of pertinency in Mr. Hume's eulogium on the cautious and penetrating genius of the historian; for it does not appear that the historian believed it. The terms in which he speaks of Serapis, the deity to whose interposition the miracle was attributed, scarcely suffer us to suppose that Tacitus thought the miracle to be real: "by the admonition of the god Serapis, whom that superstitious nation (*dedita superstitionibus gens*) worship above all other gods." To have brought this supposed miracle within the limits of comparison with the miracles of Christ, it ought to have appeared that a person of a low and private sta-

tion, in the midst of enemies, with the whole power of the country opposing him, with every one around him prejudiced or interested against his claims and character, pretended to perform these cures, and required the spectators, upon the strength of what they saw, to give up their firmest hopes and opinions, and follow him through a life of trial and danger; that many were so moved as to obey his call, at the expense both of every notion in which they had been brought up, and of their ease, safety, and reputation; and that by these beginnings a change was produced in the world the effects of which remain to this day; a case both in its circumstances and consequences, very unlike anything we find in Tacitus's relation.

123. II. The story taken from the memoirs of Cardinal de Retz, which is the second example alleged by Mr. Hume, is this: "In the church of Saragossa, in Spain, the canons showed me a man whose business it was to light the lamps; telling me that he had been several years at the gate with one leg only. I saw him with two."

It is stated by Mr. Hume, that the cardinal who relates this story did not believe it: and it nowhere appears that he either examined the limb or asked the patient, or, indeed, any one, a single question about the matter. An artificial leg, wrought with art, would be sufficient, in a place where no such contrivance had ever before been heard of, to give origin and currency to the report. The ecclesiastics of the place would, it is probable, favor the story, inasmuch as it advanced the honor of their image and church. And if they patronized it, no other person at Saragossa, in the middle of the last century, would care to dispute it. The story, likewise, coincided not less with the wishes and pre-conceptions of the people than with the interests of their ecclesiastical rulers; so that there was prejudice backed by authority, and both operating upon extreme ignorance, to account for the success of the imposture. If, as I have suggested, the contrivance of an artificial limb was then new, it would not occur to the cardinal

himself to suspect it; especially under the carelessness of mind with which he heard the tale, and the little inclination he felt to scrutinize or expose its fallacy.

124. III. The miracles related to have been wrought at the tomb of Abbé Paris, admit in general of this solution. The patients who frequented the tomb were so affected by their devotion, their expectation, the place, the solemnity, and, above all, by the sympathy of the surrounding multitude, that many of them were thrown into violent convulsions, which convulsions, in certain instances, produced a removal of disorders depending upon obstruction. We shall, at this day, have the less difficulty in admitting the above account, because it is the very same as has lately been experienced in the operations of animal magnetism; and the report of the French physicians upon that mysterious remedy is very applicable to the present consideration, namely, that the pretenders to the art, by working upon the imagination of their patients, were frequently able to produce convulsions; that convulsions so produced, are among the most powerful, but, at the same time, most uncertain and unmanageable applications to the human frame which can be employed.

Circumstances which indicate this explication in the case of the Parisian miracles, are the following:—

1. They were tentative. Out of many thousand sick, infirm, and diseased persons who resorted to the tomb, the professed history of the miracles contains only nine cures.

2. The convulsions at the tomb are admitted.

3. The diseases were, for the most part, of that sort which depends upon inaction and obstruction, as dropsies, palsies, and some tumors.

4. The cures were gradual; some patients attending many days, some several weeks, and some several months.

5. The cures were many of them incomplete.

6. Others were temporary.

So that all the wonder we are called upon to account for is, that out of an almost innumerable multitude

which resorted to the tomb for the cure of their complaints, and many of whom were agitated by strong convulsions, a very small proportion experienced a beneficial change in their constitution, especially in the action of the nerves and glands.

Some of the cases alleged do not require that we should have recourse to this solution. The first case in the catalogue is scarcely distinguishable from the progress of a natural recovery. It was that of a young man who labored under an inflammation of one eye, and had lost the sight of the other. The inflamed eye was relieved, but the blindness of the other remained. The inflammation had before been abated by medicine; and the young man, at the time of his attendance at the tomb, was using a lotion of laudanum. And, what is a still more material part of the case, the inflammation, after some interval, returned. Another case was that of a young man who had lost his sight by the puncture of an awl, and the discharge of the aqueous humor through the wound. The sight, which had been gradually returning, was much improved during his visit to the tomb, that is, probably, in the same degree in which its discharged humor was replaced by fresh secretions. And it is observable that these two are the only cases which, from their nature, should seem unlikely to be affected by convulsions.

In one material respect I allow that the Parisian miracles were different from those related by Tacitus, and from the Spanish miracle of the Cardinal de Retz. They had not, like them, all the power and all the prejudice of the country on their side to begin with. They were alleged by one party against another, by the Jansenists against the Jesuits. These were, of course, opposed and examined by their adversaries. The consequence of which examination was, that many falsehoods were detected, that with something really extraordinary much fraud appeared to be mixed. And if some of the cases upon which designed misrepresentation could not be charged, were not at the time satisfactorily accounted for, it was because the efficacy of strong

spasmodic affections was not then sufficiently known. Finally, the cause of Jansenism did not rise by the miracles, but sunk, although the miracles had the anterior persuasion of all the numerous adherents of that cause to set out with.

These, let us remember, are the strongest examples which the history of ages supplies. In none of them was the miracle unequivocal; by none of them were established prejudices and persuasions overthrown; of none of them did the credit make its way in opposition to authority and power; by none of them were many induced to commit themselves, and that in contradiction to prior opinions, to a life of mortification, danger, and sufferings; none were called upon to attest them at the expense of their fortunes and safety.

CHAPTER IV.

MAHOMETANISM.

Extracts from the Koran.

125. Chapter II. If ye be in doubt concerning that revelation which we have sent down unto our servant, produce (a) a chapter like unto it, and call upon your witnesses besides God, if ye say truth. . . . (b) We formerly delivered the book of the law unto Moses, and caused apostles to succeed him, and gave evident miracles to Jesus, the son of Mary, and strengthened him with the Holy Spirit. . . . (c) They to whom we have given the book of the Koran, and who read it with the true reading, they believe therein; and whoever believeth not therein, they shall perish. . . . Moreover, they who conceal any part of the scripture which God hath sent down into them, and sell it for a small price, they shall swallow unto their bellies nothing but fire; God shall not speak to them on the day of resurrection, neither shall he purify them, and they shall suffer a grievous punishment. . . . (d) Fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you; but transgress not by attacking them first, for God loveth not the transgressors. And kill them wherever ye find them, and turn them out of that whereof they have dispossessed you: for temptation to idolatry is more grievous than slaughter; yet fight not against them in the holy temple, until they attack you therein; but if they attack you, slay them there. This shall be the reward of infidels. But if they desist, God is gracious and merciful. Fight, therefore, against them, until there be no temptation to idolatry, and the religion be God's; but if they desist, then let there be no hostility, except against the ungodly. . . . War is

enjoined you against the infidels. . . . (e) Ye may divorce your wives twice, and then either retain them with humanity, or dismiss them with kindness. . . . But if the husband divorce her a third time, she shall not be lawful for him again until she marry another husband. . . . (f) If ye make your alms to appear, it is well; but if ye conceal them, and give them unto the poor, this will be better for you, and will atone for your sins: and God is well informed of that which ye do.

126. Chapter III. There is no God but God, the living, the self-subsisting: he hath sent down unto thee the book of the Koran with truth, confirming that which was revealed before it; for he had (a) formerly sent down the law, and the gospel a direction unto men; and he has also sent down the distinction between good and evil. . . . (b) Ye have already had a miracle shown you in two armies, which attacked each other; one army fought for God's true religion, but the other were infidels; they saw the faithful twice as many as themselves in their eyesight; for God strengthened with his help whom he pleaseth.¹ . . . (c) If ye be slain or die in defence of the religion of God; verily pardon from God, and mercy, is better than what they heap together of worldly riches. And if ye die or be slain, verily unto God shall ye be gathered.

¹ The sign or miracle here meant was the victory gained by Mahomet, in the second year of the Hegira, over the idolatrous Meccans, headed by Abu Sofîân, in the valley of Bedr, which is situate near the sea, between Mecca and Medina. Mahomet's forces consisted of no more than three hundred and nineteen men; but the enemy's army of near a thousand; notwithstanding which odds he put them to flight, having killed seventy of the principal Koreish, and taken as many prisoners, with the loss of only fourteen of his own men. This was the first victory obtained by the prophet, and though it may seem no very considerable action, yet it was of great advantage to him, and the foundation of all his future power and success. For which reason it is famous in the Arabian history, and more than once vaunted in the Koran as an effect of the divine assistance.

127. Chapter IV. If ye fear that ye shall not act with equity towards orphans of the female sex, (a) take in marriage of such other women as please you, two, or three, or four, and not more. But if ye fear that ye cannot act equitably towards so many, marry one only, (b) or the slaves which ye shall have acquired. . . . Ye are also forbidden to take to wife free women who are (c) married, except those women whom your right hands shall possess as slaves. . . . (d) If they turn back from the faith, take them, and kill them wherever ye find them. . . . (e) And for that they [the Jews] have not believed in Jesus, and have spoken against Mary a grievous calumny; and have said, Verily we have slain Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the apostle of God; yet they slew him not, neither crucified him, but he was represented by one in his likeness; and verily they who disagreed concerning him were in a doubt as to this matter, and had no sure knowledge thereof, but followed only an uncertain opinion. They did not really kill him; but God took him up unto himself. . . . (f) Believe therefore in God, and his apostles, and say not, There are three Gods; forbear this; it will be better for you. God is but one God. Far be it from him that he should have a son.

128. Chapter V. Our apostles formerly came unto them, with evident (a) miracles. . . . (b) We have also sent down unto thee the book of the Koran with truth, confirming that scripture which was revealed before it; and preserving the same safe from corruption. . . . (c) They are surely infidels, who say, Verily God is Christ the son of Mary. . . . They are certainly infidels, who say, God is the third of three, for there is no God, besides one God. . . . Christ the son of Mary is no more than an apostle. . . . (d) The duty of our apostle is to preach only.

129. Chapter VI. They have sworn by God, by the most solemn oath, that if a sign came unto them, they would certainly believe therein: Say, verily, signs are in the power of God alone.

130. Chapter VII. I will write down good unto those . . . who shall follow my illiterate prophet.

131. Chapter IX. Fight against those who believe not in God, . . . and profess not the true religion . . . until they pay tribute by right of subjection, and they be reduced low. . . . Verily God hath purchased of the true believers their souls, and their substance promising them the enjoyment of paradise on condition that they fight for the cause of God; whether they slay or be slain, (a) the promise for the same is assuredly due by the law, and the gospel, and the Koran.

132. Chapter X. This Koran could not have been composed by any except God; but it is a confirmation of that which was *revealed* before it, and an explanation of the scripture; there is no doubt thereof; *sent down* from the Lord of all creatures. Will they say, Mohammed hath forged it? Answer, Bring therefore a chapter like unto it; and call whom you may to your assistance, besides God, if ye speak truth.

133. Chapter XI. Will they say, he hath forged the Koran? Answer, Bring therefore ten chapters like unto it, forged by yourselves: and call on whomsoever ye may to assist you, except God, if ye speak truth. . . .

134. Chapter XII. [After narrating the history of Joseph with many variations from the Bible account—], This is a secret history which we reveal unto thee, O Mohammed, although thou wast not present with the brethren of Joseph, when they concerted their design, and contrived a plot against him.

135. Chapter XIII. The infidels say, Unless a sign be sent down unto him from his Lord, we will not believe. Thou art commissioned to be a preacher only, and not a worker of miracles. . . . The infidels say, Unless a sign be sent down unto him from his Lord, we will not believe. Answer, Verily God will lead into error whom he pleaseth, and will direct unto himself him who repenteth, and those who believe, and whose hearts rest securely in the meditation of God; shall not

men's hearts rest securely in the meditation of God? . . . Though a Koran were revealed by which mountains should be removed, or the earth cleaved in sunder, or the dead be caused to speak, it would be in vain. . . . Moreover, whether we cause thee to see any part of that punishment wherewith we have threatened them, or (a) whether we cause thee to die before it be inflicted on them, verily unto thee belongeth preaching only, and unto us inquisition.

136. Chapter XV. The Meccans say, O thou to whom the admonition hath been sent down, thou art certainly possessed with a devil; wouldst thou not have come unto us with an attendance of angels if thou hadst spoken truth? Answer, We send not down the angels unless on a just occasion; nor should they then be respited any longer. We have surely sent down the Koran; and we will certainly preserve the same from corruption. . . . If we should open a gate of heaven above them, and they should ascend thereto all the day long, they should rather say, Our eyes are only dazzled; or rather we are a people deluded by enchantments. . . . (a) But if they turn back, verily thy duty is public preaching only. . . . We also know that they say, Verily, a certain man teacheth him to compose the Koran. The tongue of the person unto whom they incline is a foreign tongue; but this, wherein the Koran is written, is the perspicuous Arabic tongue.

137. Chapter XVII. Praise be unto him who transported his servant by night from the sacred temple of Mecca to the farther temple of Jerusalem. [From whence he was carried through the seven heavens to the presence of God, and brought back again to Mecca the same night.¹] . . . (a) Nothing hindered us from

¹ It is a dispute among the Mahometan divines whether their prophet's night journey was really performed by him corporally, or whether it was only a dream or a vision. Some think the whole was no more than a vision; and allege an express tradition of Moâwiyah, one of Mahomet's successors, to that purpose. Others suppose he was carried bodily to Jerusalem, but no further; and that he ascended thence to heaven in spirit

sending thee with miracles, except that the former nations have charged them with imposture.

138. Chapter XIX. [After narrating the conception and birth of Jesus, with many and great variations from the New Testament account, the Koran puts words in the mouth of the new-born infant.] Whereupon the child said, Verily, I am the servant of God; he hath given me the book of the gospel, and hath appointed me a prophet. And he hath made me blessed wheresoever I shall be; and hath commanded me to observe prayer, and to give alms, so long as I shall live; and he hath made me dutiful towards my mother, and hath not made me proud or unhappy. And peace be on me the day whereon I was born, and the day whereon I shall die, and the day whereon I shall be raised to life. This was Jesus, the son of Mary; the Word of truth, concerning whom they doubt.

139. Chapter XXI. But they say the Koran is a confused heap of dreams; nay, he hath forged it; nay, he is a poet; let him come unto us therefore with some miracle, (a) in like manner as the former prophets were sent. None of the cities which we have destroyed believed the miracles which they saw performed before them; will they therefore believe if they see a miracle? (b) We have not granted unto any man before thee eternal permanency in this world; if thou die, therefore will they be immortal. (c) The Jews and Christians have made schisms in the affair of their religion among themselves.

140. Chapter XXVII. And Solomon was David's heir; and he said, O men, we have been taught the speech of birds, and have had all things bestowed on us; this is manifest excellence. And his armies were gathered together unto Solomon, consisting of genii and

only. But the received opinion is, that it was no vision, but that he was actually transported in the body to his journey's end; and if any impossibility be objected, they think it a sufficient answer to say, that it might easily be effected by an omnipotent agent.

men and birds, and they were led into distant lands, until they came unto the valley of ants. And an ant, seeing the hosts approaching, said, O ants, enter ye into your habitation, lest Solomon and his army tread you under foot, and perceive it not. . . . And he viewed the birds and said, What is the reason that I see not the lapwing? Is she absent? Verily I will chastise her with a severe chastisement, or I will put her to death, unless she bring me a just excuse. And she tarried not long before she presented herself unto Solomon, and said, I have viewed a country which thou hast not viewed; and I come unto thee from Saba, with a certain piece of news. I found a woman to reign over them, who is provided with everything requisite for a prince, and hath a magnificent throne. [Here follows the story of the queen of Sheba, with many variations.]

141. Chapter XXVIII. Yet when the truth is come unto them before us, they say, unless he receive the same (a) power to work miracles as Moses received, we will not believe. Have they not likewise rejected the revelation which was heretofore given unto Moses? . . . Verily, (b) he who hath given thee the Koran for a rule of faith and practice, will certainly bring thee back home unto Mecca.¹

142. Chapter XXIX. They say, unless a sign be sent down unto him from his Lord, we will not believe. Answer: Signs are in the power of God alone; and I am no more than a public preacher.

143. Chapter XXX. The Greeks have been overcome by the Persians in the nearest part of the land; but after their defeat, they shall overcome the others in their turn, within a few years. Unto God belongeth the disposal of this matter, both for what is past, and for what is to come: and on that day shall the believers

¹ This verse, some say, was revealed to Mahomet when he arrived at Johfa, in his flight from Mecca to Medina, to comfort him, and still his complaints. But the chapter in which it is recorded is expressly said at the beginning of it to have been revealed at Mecca.

rejoice in the success granted by God ; for he granteth success unto whom he pleaseth, and he is the mighty, the merciful.

144. Chapter XXXIII. The prophet is nigher unto the true believers than their own souls ; and his wives are their (a) mothers.¹ . . . O prophet, say unto thy wives, If ye seek this present life, and the pomp thereof, come, I will make a handsome provision for you, and I will dismiss (b) you with an honourable dismissal ; but if ye seek God and his apostle, and the life to come, verily God hath prepared for such of you as work righteousness a great reward. [This passage was revealed on Mahomet's wives asking for more sumptuous clothes, and an additional allowance for their expenses: and he had no sooner received it than he gave them their option either to continue with him, or to be divorced, beginning with Ayesha, who chose God and his apostle, and the rest followed her example ; upon which the prophet thanked them, and the following words were revealed ; viz. It shall not be lawful for thee to take other women to wife hereafter, nor to exchange any of thy wives for them, although their beauty please thee, except the slaves whom thy right hand shall possess. From hence some have concluded, that a wife who has her option given her, and chooses to stay with her husband, shall not be divorced ; though others are of a contrary opinion.] (c) O prophet, we have allowed thee thy wives unto whom thou hast given their dower, and also the slaves which thy right hand possesseth, of the booty which God hath granted thee ; and the daughters of thy uncles, and the daughters of thy aunts, both on thy father's side, and on thy mother's side, who have fled with thee from Mecca, and any other believing woman, if she give herself unto the prophet ; in case the prophet desireth to take her to wife. This is a peculiar privilege granted unto thee, above the rest of the true believers. . . . We know what we have or-

¹ Commentators are of opinion that the common people were here forbidden to marry any of the prophet's wives.

daind them concerning their wives, and the slaves which their right hands possess : lest it should be deemed a crime in thee to make use of the privilege granted thee ; for God is gracious and merciful. Thou mayest (d) postpone the turn of such of thy wives as thou shalt please, in being called to thy bed ; and thou mayest take unto thee her whom thou shalt please, and her whom thou shalt desire of those whom thou shalt have before rejected, and it shall be no crime in thee. (e) And when ye ask of the prophet's wives what ye may have occasion for, ask it of them from behind a curtain. This will be more pure for your hearts and their hearts. Neither is it fit for you to give any uneasiness to the apostle of God, or to marry his wives after him for ever : for this would be a grievous thing in the sight of God.

145. Chapter XXXVI. We have not taught Mohammed the art of poetry ; nor is it expedient for him to be a poet. This book is no other than an admonition from God, and a perspicuous Koran.

146. Chapter XXXVII. But as for the sincere servants of God, they shall have a certain provision in Paradise, namely, delicious fruits : and they shall be honoured ; they shall be placed in gardens of pleasure ; leaning on couches, opposite to one another ; a cup shall be carried round unto them, filled from a limpid fountain, for the delight of those who drink ; it shall not oppress the understanding, neither shall they be inebriated therewith. And near them shall lie the virgins of paradise, refraining their looks from beholding any besides their spouses, having large black eyes, and resembling the eggs of an ostrich covered with feathers from the dust. . . . (a) Our word hath formerly been given unto our servants, the apostles ; that they shall certainly be assisted against the infidels, and that our armies should surely be the conquerors. . . . Turn aside from them, therefore, for a season, and see ; hereafter shall they see thy success and their punishment.

147. Chapter XXXVIII. But any army of the confederates shall even here be put to flight.

148. Chapter XXXIX. Verily thou, O Mohammed, shalt die, and they also shall die, and ye shall debate the matter with one another before your Lord, at the day of resurrection.

149. Chapter XL. We heretofore gave unto Moses a direction; and we left as an inheritance unto the children of Israel, the book of the (a) law. . . . (b) They who charge with falsehood the book of the Koran, and the other scriptures, and revealed doctrines which we have sent our former apostles to preach, shall hereafter know their folly, when the collars shall be on their necks, and the chains by which they shall be dragged into hell; then shall they be burned in the fire. . . . (c) Whether we cause thee to see any part of the punishment with which we have threatened them, or whether we cause thee to die before thou see it; before us thou shalt be assembled at the last day.

150. Chapter XLII. They who have inherited the scriptures after them are certainly in a perplexing doubt concerning the same. Wherefore invite them to receive the sure faith and say, I believe in all the scriptures which God hath sent down; and I am commanded to establish justice among you.

151. Chapter XLIV. But the pious shall be lodged in a place of security, among gardens and fountains; they shall be clothed in fine silk, and in satin; and they shall sit facing one another. Thus shall it be: and we shall espouse them to fair damsels, having large black eyes. In that place shall they call for all kinds of fruits, in full security; they shall not taste death therein, after the first death; and God shall deliver from the pains of hell; through the gracious bounty of thy Lord. This will be great felicity.

152. Chapter XLVI. Say, I am not singular among the apostles; neither do I know what will be done with me or with you hereafter; I follow no other than what is revealed unto me; neither am I any more than a public warner.

153. Chapter XLVII. When ye encounter the unbelievers, (a) strike off their heads, until ye have made a great slaughter among them; and bind them in bonds; and either give them a free dismissal afterwards, or exact a ransom; until the war shall have laid down its arms. . . . (b) The description of Paradise, which is promised unto the pious: therein are rivers of incorruptible water; and rivers of milk, the taste whereof changeth not; and rivers of wine, pleasant unto those who drink; and rivers of clarified honey; and therein shall they have plenty of all kinds of fruits; and pardon from their Lord.

154. Chapter XLVIII. Verily, we have granted thee a manifest victory: (a) that God may forgive thee thy preceding and thy subsequent sin.¹ . . . God promised you (b) many spoils which ye should take; but he gave you these by way of earnest.

155. Chapter LIV. The hour of judgment approacheth; and the moon hath been split in sunder.²

156. Chapter LIX. The spoils of the inhabitants of the towns which God hath granted to his apostle are due unto God and to the apostle, and to him who is of kin to the apostle, and the orphans, and the poor, and the traveller; that they may not be for ever divided in a circle among such of you as are rich. What the apostle shall give you, that accept; and what he shall forbid you, that abstain from; and fear God; for God is severe in chastising.

¹ Some expound the words more particularly, and say the preceding or former fault was his lying with his handmaid Mary, contrary to his oath; and the latter his marrying of Zeinab, the wife of Zeid, his adopted son.

² The passage is expounded two different ways. Some imagine the words refer to a famous miracle supposed to have been performed by Mahomet; for it is said that on the infidels demanding a sign of him, the moon appeared cloven in two, one part vanishing, and the other remaining, and Ebn Masud affirmed that he saw Mount Hara interpose between the two sections. Others think the preter tense is here used in the prophetic style, for the future, and that the passage should be rendered, "the moon shall be split in sunder;" for this, they say, is to happen at the resurrection.

CHAPTER V.

MISCELLANEOUS EXTRACTS.

157. HEATHEN MORALITY.—*Gregory.*

NOR did the legislators inculcate erroneous notions with regard to the gods alone. Their laws, established for the express purpose of furthering the public virtue and happiness, had often a highly unfavorable effect upon both. I shall here only specify a few of those of Lycurgus, because the united voice of antiquity speaks of him as rather a god than a man; and Plutarch produces him as “an undeniable proof that a perfectly wise man is not a mere notion and chimera.” Plato, though a great admirer of Lycurgus, acknowledges, that his laws were rather fitted to make men valiant than just. . . . Many of his laws were contrary to humanity. . . . Lycurgus enacted that deformed infants should not be suffered to live, but be cast into a cavern to perish gradually! Healthy boys, on the contrary, were to be treated charitably, and trained up to *dexterous thieving*, being whipped unmercifully if they were taken in the fact, not for stealing, but for being such bunglers as to expose themselves to detection. I will only add farther, under this head, that the Spartans had common baths, in which both men and women were *compelled* to bathe together; and that it was ordered by Lycurgus that young maidens should appear naked in the public exercises, as well as the young men; and that they should dance naked with them at the solemn festivals and sacrifices. . . .

In regard to morals, they [the philosophers] were generally wrong in that part which relates to purity, and continence, and the government of the sensual pas-

sions. Many of them, as Socrates, Plato, Xenophon, Æschines, Cebes, &c., were chargeable with unnatural lusts and vices, which they reckoned among things of an indifferent nature. They generally allowed of fornication, as having nothing in it sinful or contrary to reason. Many of them pleaded for suicide as lawful and proper in some cases; and most of them thought lying lawful when it was profitable. . . .

Socrates was the first among the Greeks who made morals the proper and only subject of his philosophy, and brought it into common life. . . . [He] was, as Tertullian remarks, condemned at Athens, amongst other things, for sodomy and the corrupting of youth; and was addicted to incontinence and *fornication*.

. . . I have already adverted to the encouragement this philosopher [Plato] gave to the habit of lying. He farther prescribes a community of wives in his commonwealth, and lays down laws for the express purpose of destroying all parental and filial affection; he gives great liberties to incontinency, affirming "that all things respecting women, marriage, and the propagation of the species should be entirely common among friends;" allows, and in some cases prescribes, the exposing and destroying children, namely, the children of mothers older than forty-five, or of fathers older than fifty-five; allows of drunkenness at the feast of Bacchus, though not at other times; and prescribes the worship of the *stars*, which indeed are the divinities he principally recommends to the people. . . .

. . . Cicero often commends and justifies suicide; and warmly pleads for fornication, as having nothing blameable in it, and as a thing universally allowed and practised.

. . . Cato of Utica, who has been held up as "a perfect model of virtue," but who lent his wife to Hortensius, was an habitual drunkard, and taught and practised self-murder. . . . Seneca pleads for suicide, justifies Cato's drunkenness, asserts that no man in his reason fears the gods, and contemns future punishments as vain terrors invented by the poets.

158. MORALITY OF DEISTS.—*Fuller.*

Compare the conduct of the leading men among deists with that of the body of serious Christian divines. Amidst their declamations against priestly hypocrisy, are they honest men? Where is their ingenuousness in continually confounding Christianity and Popery? Have these workers of iniquity no knowledge? "No," say some, "they do not understand the difference between genuine and corrupted Christianity. They have never had opportunity of viewing the religion of Jesus in its native dress. It is popish superstition against which their efforts are directed. If they understood Christianity they would embrace it." Indeed! And was this the case with Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, Hume, or Gibbon? or is this the case with Paine? No; they have both seen and hated the light; nor will they come to it, lest their deeds should be made manifest.

It may be thought, however, that some excuse may be made for infidels residing in a popish country; and this I shall not dispute as it respects the ignorant populace, who may be carried away by their leaders; but, as it respects the leaders themselves, it is otherwise. The National Assembly of France, when they wished to counteract the priests, and to reject the adoption of the Roman Catholic faith as the established religion, could clearly distinguish between genuine and corrupted Christianity. Deists can distinguish between Christianity and its abuses, when an end is to be answered by it; and, when an end is to be answered by it, they can, with equal facility, confound them.

Herbert, Hobbes, Shaftesbury, Woolston, Tindal, Chubb, and Bolingbroke, are all guilty of the vile hypocrisy of professing to love and reverence Christianity, while they are employed in no other design than to destroy it. Such faithless professions, such gross violations of truth, in Christians, would have been proclaimed to the universe, by these very writers, as infamous desertions of principle and decency. Is it less infamous in themselves? All hypocrisy is detestable; but I know of none so detestable as that which is coolly writ-

ten, with full premeditation, by a man of talents, assuming the character of a moral and religious instructor. Truth is a virtue perfectly defined, mathematically clear, and completely understood by all men of common sense. There can be no haltings between uttering truth and falsehood; no doubt, no mistakes, as between piety and enthusiasm, frugality and parsimony, generosity and profusion. Transgression, therefore, is always a known, definite, deliberate villany. In the sudden moment of strong temptation, in the hour of unguarded attack, in the flutter and trepidation of unexpected alarm, the best man may, perhaps, be surprised into any sin; but he who can coolly, of steady design, and with no unusual impulse, utter falsehood and vend hypocrisy, is not far from finished depravity.

The morals of Rochester and Wharton need no comment. Woolston was a gross blasphemer; Blount solicited his sister-in-law to marry him, and being refused shot himself. Tindal was originally a Protestant, then turned Papist, then Protestant again, merely to suit the times; and was at the same time infamous for vice in general, and the total want of principle. He is said to have died with this prayer in his mouth: "If there be a God, I desire that he may have mercy on me." Hobbes wrote his *Leviathan* to serve the cause of Charles I., but finding him fail of success, he turned it to the defence of Cromwell, and made a merit of this fact to the usurper, as Hobbes himself unblushingly declared to Lord Clarendon. Morgan had no regard to truth, as is evident from his numerous falsifications of Scripture, as well as from the vile hypocrisy of professing himself a Christian in those very writings in which he labors to destroy Christianity. Voltaire, in a letter now remaining, requested his friend, D'Alembert, to tell for him a direct and palpable lie, by denying that he was the author of the *Philosophical Dictionary*. D'Alembert, in his answer, informed him that he had told the lie. Voltaire has, indeed, expressed his own moral character perfectly in the following words: "Monsieur Abbé, I must be read;

no matter whether I am believed or not." He also solemnly professes to believe the Catholic religion, although at the same time he doubted the existence of a God. Hume died as a fool dieth. The day before his death he spent in a pitiful and affected unconcern about this tremendous subject, playing at whist, reading Lucian's Dialogues, and making silly attempts at wit, concerning his interview with Charon, the heathen ferryman of Hades.

Collins, though he had no belief in Christianity, yet qualified himself for civil office by partaking of the Lord's supper. Shaftesbury did the same; and the same is done by hundreds of infidels to this day. Yet these are the men that are continually declaiming against the hypocrisy of priests! Godwin is not only a lewd character, by his own confession; but the unblushing advocate of lewdness. And as to Paine, he is well known to have been a profane swearer, and a drunkard. We have evidence upon oath, that "religion was his favorite topic when intoxicated;" and, from the scurrility of the performance, it is not improbable that he was frequently in this situation while writing his "Age of Reason."

I shall conclude this catalogue of worthies with a brief abstract of the "Confessions of J. J. Rousseau." After a good education in the Protestant religion, he was put apprentice. Finding his situation disagreeable to him, he felt a strong propensity to vice—inclining him to covet, dissemble, lie, and at length, to steal—a propensity of which he was never able afterwards to divest himself. "I have been a rogue," says he, "and am so still sometimes, for trifles which I had rather take than ask for."

He abjured the Protestant religion, and entered the hospital of the Catechumens at Turin, to be instructed in that of the Catholics; "For which in return," says he, "I was to receive subsistence. From this interested conversion," he adds, "nothing remained but the remembrance of my having been both a dupe and an apostate."

After this he resided with a Madame de Warrens, with whom he "lived in the greatest possible familiarity." This lady often suggested that there would be no justice in the Supreme Being, should he be strictly just to us: because, not having bestowed what was necessary to make us essentially good, it would be requiring more than he had given. She was, nevertheless, a very good Catholic, or pretended at least to be one, and certainly desired to be such. If there had been no Christian morality established, Rousseau supposes she would have lived as though regulated by its principles. All her morality, however, was subordinate to the principles of M. Tavel (who first seduced her from conjugal fidelity, by urging, in effect, that exposure was the only crime): or rather, she saw nothing in religion that contradicted them. Rousseau was far enough from being of this opinion: yet he confessed he dared not combat the arguments of the lady; nor is it supposable he could, as he appears to have been acting on the same principles at the time. "Finding in her," he adds, "all those ideas I had occasion for, to secure me from the fears of death and its future consequences, I drew confidence and security from this source."

The writings of Port Royal, and those of the Oratory, made him half a Jansenist; and, notwithstanding all his confidence, their harsh theory sometimes alarmed him. A dread of hell, which, till then, he had never much apprehended, by little and little disturbed his security, and, had not Madame de Warrens tranquilized his soul, would at length have been too much for him. His confessor, also a Jesuit, contributed all in his power to keep up his hopes.

After this he became familiar with another female, Theresa. He began by declaring to her that he would never either abandon or marry her. Finding her pregnant with her first child, and hearing it observed, in an eating-house, that he who had best filled the Foundling Hospital was always the most applauded, "I said to myself," he tells us, "since it is the custom of the country, they who live here may adopt it. I cheerfully

determined upon it without the least scruple: and the only one I had to overcome was that of Theresa; whom, with the greatest imaginable difficulty, I persuaded to comply." The year following a similar inconvenience was remedied by the same expedient: no more reflection on his part; nor approbation on that of the mother. She obeyed with trembling. "My fault," says he, "was great; but it was an error."

He resolved on settling at Geneva; and, on going thither, and being mortified at his exclusion from the rights of a citizen by the profession of a religion different from his forefathers, he determined openly to return to the latter. "I thought," says he, "the gospel being the same for every Christian, and the only difference in religious opinions the result of the explanations given by men to that which they did not understand, it was the exclusive right of the sovereign power in every country to fix the mode of worship, and these unintelligible opinions; and that, consequently, it was the duty of a citizen to admit the one, and conform to the other, in the manner prescribed by the law." Accordingly at Geneva he renounced popery.

After passing twenty years with Theresa, he made her his wife. He appears to have intrigued with a Madame de W——. Of his desires after that lady he says, "Guilty without remorse, I soon became so without measure."

Such, according to his own account, was the life of uprightness and honor which was to expiate for a theft which he had committed when a young man, and laid to a female servant, by which she lost her place and character. Such was Rousseau, the man whom the rulers of the French nation have delighted to honor; and who, for writing this account, had the vanity and presumption to expect the applause of his Creator. "Whenever the last trumpet shall sound," says he, "I will present myself before the Sovereign Judge, with this book in my hand, and loudly proclaim, Thus have I acted; these were my thoughts; such was I, Power eternal! Assemble round thy throne the innumerable

throng of my fellow-mortals. Let them listen to my confession; let them blush at my depravity; let them tremble at my sufferings; let each in his turn expose, with equal sincerity, the failings, the wanderings of his heart; and, if he dare, aver—I was better than that man.”

159. TRADITIONS OF THE DELUGE.—*Kitto*.

As Noah was the progenitor of all the nations of the earth, and as the ark was the second cradle of the human race, we might expect to find in all nations traditions and reports more or less distinct respecting him, the ark in which he was saved, and the deluge in general. Accordingly, no nation is known in which such traditions have not been found. They have been very industriously brought together by Banier, Bryant, Faber, and other mythologists. Our present concern is only with the ark. And as it appears that an ark, that is, a boat or chest, was carried about with great ceremony in most of the ancient mysteries, and occupied an eminent station in the holy places, it has with much reason been concluded that this was originally intended to represent the ark of Noah, which eventually came to be regarded with superstitious reverence. On this point the historical and mythological testimonies (as collected in the authors to whom we have referred) are very clear and conclusive. The tradition of a deluge, by which the race of man was swept from the face of the earth, has been traced among the Chaldeans, Egyptians, Phœnicians, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Romans, Goths, Druids, Chinese, Hindoos, Burmese, Mexicans, Peruvians, Brazilians, Nicaraguans, the inhabitants of Western Caledonia, and the islanders of the Pacific; and among most of them also the belief has prevailed that certain individuals were preserved in an ark, ship, boat, or raft, to replenish the desolated earth with inhabitants. Nor are these traditions uncorroborated by coins and monuments of stone. Of the latter there are the sculptures of Egypt and of India; and it is not unlikely that those of the monuments called Druidical, which bear

the name of kistvaens, and in which the stones are disposed in the form of a chest or house, were intended as memorials of the ark. * * * * We shall confine our medallie illustrations to the two famous medals of Apamea. There were six cities of this name, of which the most celebrated was that of Syria; next to it, in importance, was the one in Phrygia, called also Kibotos, which means an ark or hollow vessel. This latter city was built on the river Marsyas; and there seems to have been a notion that the ark rested on the adjoining hills of Celænæ; and the Sibylline oracles, wherever they were written, also include these hills under the name of Ararat, and mention the same tradition. The medals in question belong, the one to the elder Philip, and the other to Pertinax. In the former it is extremely interesting to observe that on the front of the ark is the name of Noah, in Greek characters. The designs on these medals correspond remarkably, although the legends somewhat vary. In both we perceive the ark floating on the water, containing the patriarch and his wife, the dove on wing, the olive branch, and the raven perched on the ark. These medals also represent Noah and his wife on terra firma, in the attitude of rendering thanks for their safety. The genuineness of these medals has been established beyond all question by the researches of Bryant and the critical inspection of Abbé Barthélemy.

160. BIBLE HISTORY CONFIRMED BY SCIENCE.—
Rawlinson.

There is what may be called the historico-scientific argument, derivable from the agreement of the sacred narrative with the conclusions reached by those sciences which have a partially historical character. Geology—whatever may be thought of its true bearing upon other points—at least witnesses to the recent creation of man, of whom there is no trace in any but the latest strata. Physiology decides in favor of the unity of the species, and the probable derivation of the whole human race from a single pair. Comparative philology, after divers

fluctuations, settles into the belief that languages will ultimately prove to have been all derived from a common basis. Ethnology pronounces that, independently of the scripture record, we should be led to fix on the plains of Shinar as a common centre, or focus, from which the various lines of migration and the several types of races originally radiated. Again, there is an argument, perhaps more convincing than any other, but of immense compass, deducible from the indirect and incidental points of agreement between the Mosaic records and the best profane authorities. The limits within which I am confined compel me to decline this portion of the inquiry. Otherwise it might be shown that the linguistic, geographic, and ethnologic notices contained in the books of Moses are of the most veracious character, stamping the whole narration with an unmistakable air of authenticity. And this, it may be remarked, is an argument to which modern research is perpetually adding fresh weight. For instance, if we look to the geography, we shall find that till within these few years, "Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar,"¹ —Calah and Resen, in the country peopled by Asshur,²—Ellasar and "Ur of the Chaldees,"³ were mere names; and beyond the mention of them in Genesis, scarcely a trace was discoverable of their existence. Recently, however, the mounds of Mesopotamia have been searched, and bricks and stones buried for near three thousand years have found a tongue, and tell us exactly where each of these cities stood, and sufficiently indicate their importance. Again, the power of Og, and his "three-score cities all fenced with high walls, gates, and bars, besides unwalled towns a great many,"⁴ in such a country as that to the east of the Sea of Galilee, whose old name of Trachonitis indicates its barrenness, seemed to many improbable,—but modern research has found in this very country a vast number of walled cities still standing, which show the habits of the ancient people, and prove that the population must at one time have

¹ Gen. x. 10.³ Gen. xi. 31.² Gen. x. 11, 12.⁴ Deut. iii. 5.

been considerable. So the careful examination that has been made of the valley of the Jordan, which has resulted in a proof that it is a unique phenomenon, utterly unlike anything elsewhere on the whole face of the earth, tends greatly to confirm the Mosaic account, that it became what it now is by a great convulsion; and by pious persons will, I think, be felt as confirming the miraculous character of that convulsion. Above all, perhaps, the absence of any counter-evidence—the fact that each accession to our knowledge of the ancient times, whether historic, or geographic, or ethnic, helps to remove difficulties, and to produce a perpetual supply of fresh illustrations of the Mosaic narrative; while fresh difficulties are not at the same time brought to light—is to be remarked, as to candid minds an argument for the historic truth of the narrative, the force of which can hardly be over-estimated. All tends to show that we possess in the Pentateuch, not only the most authentic account of ancient times that has come down to us, but a history absolutely and in every respect true. All tends to show us that in this marvellous volume we have no old wives' tales, no "cunningly devised fable;"¹ but "a treasure of wisdom and knowledge;"²—as important to the historical inquirer as to the theologian. There may be obscurities—there may be occasionally, in names and numbers, accidental corruptions of the text—there may be a few interpolations—glosses which have crept in from the margin; but upon the whole, it must be pronounced that we have in the Pentateuch a genuine and authentic work, and one which—even were it not inspired—would be, for the times and countries whereof it treats, the leading and paramount authority. It is (let us be assured) "Moses" who is still "read in the synagogues every Sabbath day;"³ and they who "resist" him, by impugning his veracity, like Jannes and Jambres of old, "resist the truth."⁴

¹ 2 Peter, i. 16.

³ Acts, xv. 21.

² Col. ii. 3.

⁴ 2 Tim. iii. 8.

CHAPTER VI.

161. HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS.

No formal reply to the several objections of infidels founded on the supposed inconsistencies between the narratives of the evangelists, was attempted in the former part of this work, because these objections do not touch the question concerning the divine origin of Christianity. But since much use is made of them to bring the scriptures into disrepute, it will be useful to show their utter futility; and for this purpose they are here subjected to a brief examination.

OBJECTION 1.—Matthew and Luke differ with respect to the Annunciation. Matthew says that it was made to Joseph;¹ Luke that it was made to Mary.²

The explanation is very easy. There were two annunciations, one made to the Virgin before the conception, the other to Joseph afterwards. Luke relates the former; Matthew the latter.

OBJECTION 2.—Matthew and Luke differ in their account of Christ's genealogy,³ and both genealogies cannot be true.

Since men have two parents and four grandparents, it is possible for the same individual to have had two, or even four genealogies, differing from each other, and yet all true. If both Matthew and Luke designed to give the genealogy of Joseph, it may be that one has given the line through his father, and the other the line through his mother. The omission of the mother's name is no insurmountable obstacle to the supposition. In Matthew's genealogy several names are omitted, as may be shown by comparing it with the Old Testament. The first verse of Matthew may be translated, "Birth Record of Jesus Christ, son of David, son of Abraham,"

¹ Matt. i. 20, 21.

² Luke, i. 26-37.

³ Matt. i. 1-16; Luke, iii. 23-38.

Conant's version. Matthew wrote specially for the Jews, and it suited his purpose to give a copy of the birth-record, such as Jewish families were accustomed to keep, better than to make a full and accurate one by inspiration.

But enemies of Christianity have furnished a clue to what is probably the true explanation. The Jews [see quotations in Gill's Commentary on the passage] speak of Mary as the daughter of Heli; and from this it appears that Luke's genealogy is that of Mary the mother of our Lord, and not that of Joseph his reputed father. Both evangelists agree perfectly in the important fact, that Joseph was not his real father, and if both have given the genealogy of Joseph, the true line of Christ's natural descent is now unknown, and it cannot be proved that he was of David's seed, according to the flesh. Matthew, who wrote for Jews, gave them the legal descent through Joseph; but Luke, who wrote for Gentiles, has given the natural descent through Mary. If we omit, in Luke's genealogy, the italic words which the translators have supplied, it will be seen that little more is left than a list of names. The genealogies were generally reckoned through the male ancestors, but in tracing the line of Christ's natural descent through his male ancestors there was a vacancy at the first step, because he had no father according to the flesh. This vacancy the evangelist has filled with the name of Joseph, but has been careful to inform us that this name occupies the place only by *supposition*.

In harmonizing apparently conflicting testimonies, a probable conjecture may suffice to show that they are not really contradictory. It is not necessary for our purpose to decide positively that the above explanation is the true one. Other modes of harmonizing have been proposed, which are less probable than the above, but are nevertheless sufficient to remove the objection.

OBJECTION 3.—According to one evangelist, John the Baptist denied that he was Elias,¹ but according to another Jesus affirmed that he was.²

¹ John. i. 21.
35 *

² Matt. xvii. 12, 13.

It cannot be pretended that the evangelists contradicted each other in this case: nor is there any real contradiction between John and Jesus. John denied that he was literally Elijah risen from the dead. Jesus affirmed that he was Elijah in the sense of Malachi's prophecy, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet."¹ The Baptist came "in the spirit and power of Elijah." Luke i. 17, and was therefore prophetically called by his name.

OBJECTION 4.—Matthew and John differ on the question whether Jesus was personally known to the Baptist previous to his coming to the Jordan for baptism.²

Before the commencement of the Baptist's ministry he lived in the desert country of Judea,³ and Jesus lived in Nazareth of Galilee. We have no evidence that they were personally acquainted with each other. As Jesus approached the Jordan to receive baptism, John, probably by a prophetic intimation just then given, discovered the superiority of his character. This intimation was afterwards confirmed by the descent of the Holy Spirit. John denies that his knowledge of Christ's character was the result of previous personal acquaintance. In stating the means by which he obtained this knowledge, he did not mention the secret intimation received before the baptism, but confined himself to the sign of the Spirit's descent, a proof better adapted to produce conviction on the minds of others. With these facts, all that is said by both evangelists perfectly harmonizes.

OBJECTION 5.—The evangelists do not agree in their account of the words pronounced from heaven after the baptism of Jesus. Matthew: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;"⁴ Mark: "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased;"⁵ Luke: "Thou art my beloved Son, in thee I am well pleased."⁶

The harmony in sense is perfect: and in a court of justice such slight disagreements in words could have no effect to invalidate the testimony of witnesses. It

¹ Malachi, iv. 5.

³ Luke, i. 80.

⁵ Mark, i. 11.

² Matt. iii. 14; John, i. 33.

⁴ Matt. iii. 17.

⁶ Luke, iii. 22.

is not probable that the utterance from heaven was in the Greek language; and since all the reports of it which we have received are in this language, we may infer that in the view of the evangelists and of God who inspired them to write, it was of no importance to represent the precise sounds which were uttered, if the sense which they conveyed was duly expressed. No one will deny that the sense is fully expressed by each of the evangelists, and divine inspiration has not aimed to bind down the minds and pens of the sacred writers to an unnatural and unprofitable uniformity of expression—unnatural, because different minds naturally fall into different modes of expressing the same ideas; and unprofitable, because the benefit conveyed proceeds from the sense, and not from the sound. If we have the sense duly expressed, we have all that can be useful to us; and if we choose to reject this because God does not choose to give us the sound as well as the sense, we must account to him for our ingratitude and unbelief.

The preceding remarks may be applied to all the cases in which the narratives of the evangelists, while agreeing in sense, differ in expression. Several examples might be cited; and among them the superscription placed by Pilate over the cross in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. The evangelists differ as to the words of this superscription, and it may be that the three forms used by Pilate were not exact translations of each other. Agreement is seen in all that Pilate or the evangelists thought necessary; and the variety in Pilate's forms may have given origin to the variety of expression used by the evangelists. To give the expression as well as the sense, would have required that the evangelists should notice any varieties in the three forms used by Pilate: and perhaps to copy all these forms in their respective languages. This particularity would have answered no valuable purpose. Neither the simple honesty of the evangelists, nor the inspiration by which they were guided, inclined them to this useless care about forms of expression, while intent on the accomplishment of far higher ends.

OBJECTION 6.—Matthew says that a centurion went

in person to Christ,¹ and Luke that he sent messengers to him.²

According to the usage of language, a man is said to do what he accomplishes by the agency of others. So Pilate is said³ to have scourged Jesus, but no one understands that he applied the lash with his own hands. So Zebedee's sons are said⁴ to have made a request which was presented by their mother.⁵

OBJECTION 7.—Matthew gives an account of two demoniacs healed by Christ,⁶ when Mark and Luke mention but one.⁷

Mark and Luke do not affirm that there was only one, and therefore do not contradict the other evangelist. It is probable that one of the demoniacs was much more prominent in the transaction than the other, who may have been a lad or servant. This will account for the mention of but one by Mark and Luke.

OBJECTION 8.—According to Matthew, Jesus foretold that he would be in the grave three days and three nights,⁸ but according to all the evangelists he was interred late in the evening of Friday, and rose very early on Sunday morning.

The time of the resurrection is variously expressed: "in three days;"⁹ "after three days;"¹⁰ "the third day."¹¹

According to our usage these different forms of expression do not signify the same thing; but according to Jewish usage in the time of Christ their meaning was identical. From 1 Sam. xxx. 12, 13, we know that the phrase "three days and three nights" signified the same as three days. Jesus used the modes of expression which were familiar to his hearers; and how they understood him on this point is clear from the fact that the Jews, though they remembered that he had

¹ Matt. viii. 5-13.

² Luke, vii. 1-10.

³ John, xix. 1.

⁴ Mark, x. 35.

⁵ Matt. xx. 20.

⁶ Matt. viii. 28-34.

⁷ Mark, v. 1-21; Luke, viii. 26-40.

⁸ Matt. xii. 40.

⁹ John, ii. 19.

¹⁰ Matt. xxvii. 63; Mark, viii. 31; John, ii. 19.

¹¹ Matt. xvi. 21; xx. 19; Mark, ix. 31; x. 34; Luke, ix. 22; xviii. 33.

said "after three days I will rise again," yet requested Pilate to secure the sepulchre "until the third day."¹

We are under no obligation to account for Jewish usage in the computation of time. It is probable that they understood by the phrase "three days and three nights" three successive periods of twenty-four hours, each commencing at sunset. The continuance of Jesus in the grave extended to three of such periods. In the first, which terminated at sunset on Friday, he was interred, in the second he rested in the grave undisturbed, and in the third, which commenced at sunset of Saturday, he rose.

OBJECTION 9.—Matthew relates that Jesus opened the eyes of two blind men at Jericho:² Mark and Luke mention but one.³ Matthew and Mark say that the miracle was wrought as Jesus was leaving the city: Luke that it occurred as he was approaching it.

As to the number concerned, the case is like that of the demoniacs in Objection 7. Mark and Luke do not affirm that there was but one, and therefore do not contradict Matthew. When one of a company speaks for all, it is the usage of language to say that they all speak. Matthew describes both of the blind men as speaking to Jesus, yet it is most probable that one of them was the chief, if not the only speaker, and this is the one whom Mark and Luke have particularly mentioned. We are informed that this man's name was Bartimeus, and we may infer from this mention of his name that he afterwards became well known among the disciples of Christ. The other man probably never obtained notoriety, and may have died soon after Matthew wrote his Gospel, or even before. There is no difficulty in conjecturing such circumstances as these which would naturally lead Mark and Luke to speak of Bartimeus only. But whether we state the true cause or not, it is certain that they do not contradict Matthew.

The difficulty as to the place of the miracle may be removed by rendering the words of Luke, "When he

¹ Matt. xxvii. 63, 64.

² Matt. xx. 29-34.

³ Mark, x. 46-52; Luke, xviii. 35-43.

was near Jericho." Examples in which the word has this sense are found in the New Testament and the Septuagint. It is manifest from the narratives of the evangelists, that Jesus did not grant the request of the blind men on their first outcry to him. If Luke's account be taken according to the common translation, it may date the transaction from the beginning of the outcry, which may have been as Jesus was entering the city, though the favor solicited was not granted until he was departing.

OBJECTION 10.—Mark and Luke say that Christ's public entrance into Jerusalem was on an ass's colt which had never been ridden before, and which had, in obedience to his command, been taken from the place where it was found tied.¹ Matthew says that not only the colt but its dam also was loosed and brought to Jesus, and that the people set him on both.²

The account given by Mark and Luke does not contradict that of Matthew, but is included in it. They notice the colt specially, because it was on it that Jesus rode, and there was probably special reference to it, both in the command of Jesus to bring the animals, and in the inquiry of the owner respecting the use to which they were to be put, the colt being little adapted to use. When both were brought to Jesus, the people laid garments on both, that he might ride on either. Perhaps they were placed on the dam first; but removed to the colt when Jesus signified his pleasure to ride on it. Why he selected the colt we are not informed; and whether any other use was made of the dam than to give him an opportunity to make a selection we know not. The words "set him thereon" signify that he was set on the clothes just mentioned, and not that he was set on both of the animals.

OBJECTION 11.—Mark says that the cock crew once before Peter had thrice denied Jesus.³ Matthew and Luke say that he did not crow till afterwards.⁴

In interpreting these accounts of the several evange-

¹ Mark, xi. 1-11; Luke, xix. 29, 44.

² Matt. xxi. 1-11.

³ Mark, xiv. 68.

⁴ Matt. xxvi. 74; Luke, xxii. 60.

lists, it would violate the usage of language to understand the phrase "the cock" to denote a particular individual. It must include all the species, at least to the extent of hearing distance from the place. Even in Mark's account there is no necessity for supposing that the cock which crew the second time was the same that crew the first time. The words of Matthew and Luke, "before the cock crow," refer to the general crowing, and not to that of one individual. Mark's account is more definite, and affirms that not even two individuals had crowed. Hence he agrees perfectly with the two evangelists, according to the true import of their language, that the three denials occurred before the general cock-crowing, and he affirms this truth more strongly than they, because with more particularity. This is a case of real harmony in sense under the appearance of contradiction; and is therefore a clear example of undesigned coincidence.

The circumstance ought not to be overlooked, that the most particular account is found in that Gospel which was written under the special supervision of Peter. The particulars of the sad event were more deeply impressed on his mind than on that of any other apostle; and it was hence natural for him to relate them with greater regard to minute circumstances. In such incidental accordances with nature, proofs may be discovered confirming the truth of the evangelic history.

OBJECTION 12.—Luke says that one of the two thieves that were crucified with Christ was a penitent:¹ Matthew and Mark say that both of them reviled him.²

The supposition that the penitent thief had at first united with his fellow-sufferer in reviling Christ, has in it no absurdity. He was the subject of an instantaneous and marvellous change, wrought by omnipotent grace, and displaying the power of Jesus to save at the moment of his deepest humiliation.

OBJECTION 13.—The evangelists do not agree with respect to the time at which the women came to the sepulchre on the morning of the resurrection. Matthew,

¹ Luke, xxiii. 39-43.

² Matt. xxvii. 44; Mark. xv. 32.

Luke, and John say that it was early in the morning, and John specifies that it was while it was yet dark; but Mark says that it was at the rising of the sun.¹

The women, who had engaged to assist each other in embalming the body of Jesus, came together from different parts of the city, and arrived in the garden at different times. They who came first stopped at some place in the garden, where there were probably prepared seats, and waited till the arrival of others, before they proceeded to the sepulchre with their spices. But Mary Magdalene, who was among these first comers, went alone to the sepulchre "while it was yet dark," and saw that the stone had been rolled away. The assembled company went to the sepulchre at sunrise. With these facts all the accounts harmonize.

OBJECTION 14.—The evangelists disagree with respect to the number of angels seen in the sepulchre. Luke says that there were two:² but Matthew and Mark mention only one.³ They disagree also with respect to the posture: Mark says that he was sitting; Luke that they were standing.

Luke says that the two angels spoke to the women; but the usage of language authorizes us to understand that one of the angels spoke for both. This speaker, it appears from Matthew, was the same angel that had been sitting on the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre. The silent and less prominent angel may have been seen by those women only who entered furthest into the sepulchre. Hence Matthew and Mark have said nothing of his appearance; but since they do not affirm that only one angel was seen, they do not contradict Luke.

The angels were sitting when first seen; but arose before they addressed the women. This explains the difference in the accounts of their posture.

¹ Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark, xvi. 1, 2; Luke, xxiv. 1; John, xx. 1.

² Luke, xxiv. 4-8.

³ Matt. xxviii. 5, 7; Mark, xvi. 5-7.



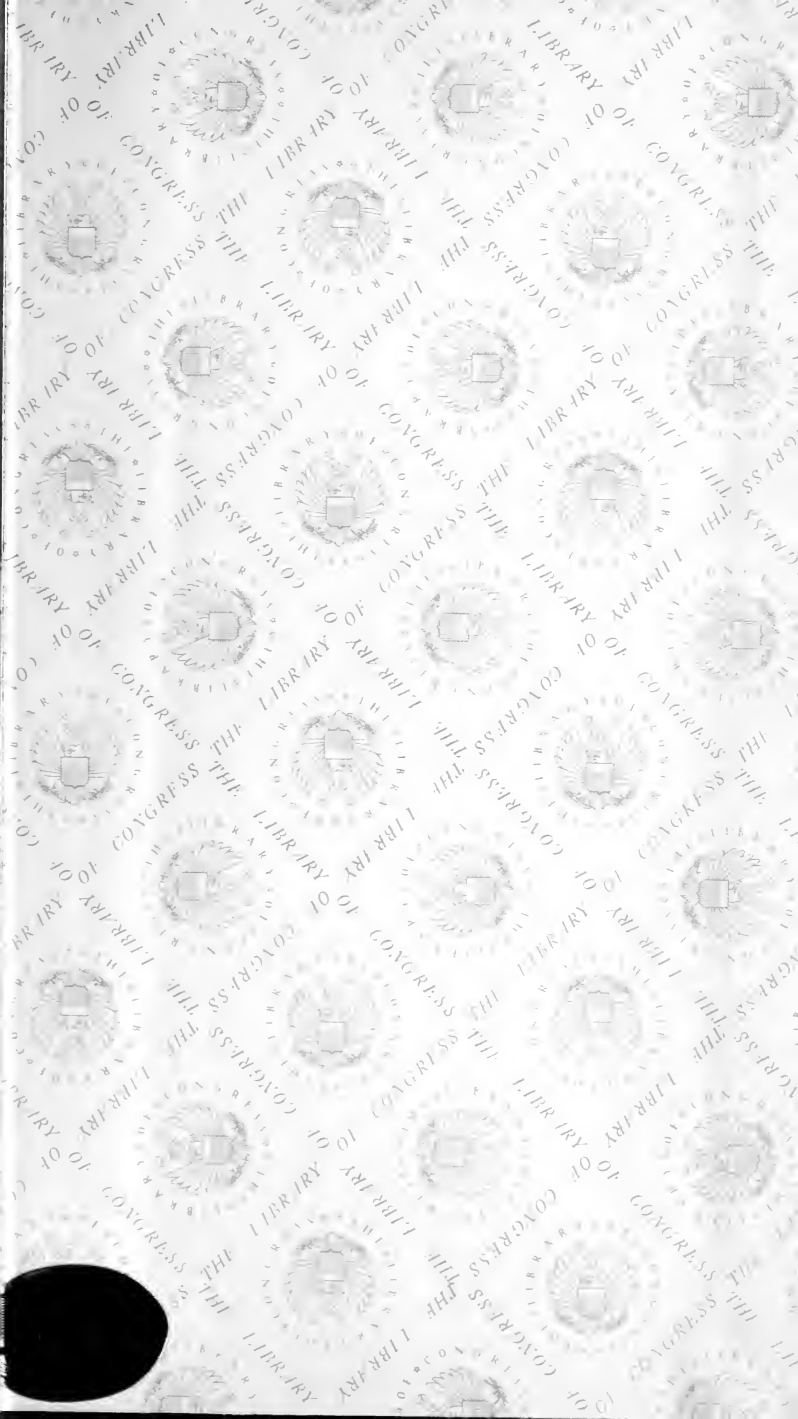




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