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Chas. J. C. C. C.





The
LIFE OF CHRIST,

by the late

REV. E. BLONFIELD.



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WITH A
HISTORY OF THE FIRST PROPAGATION
OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION,

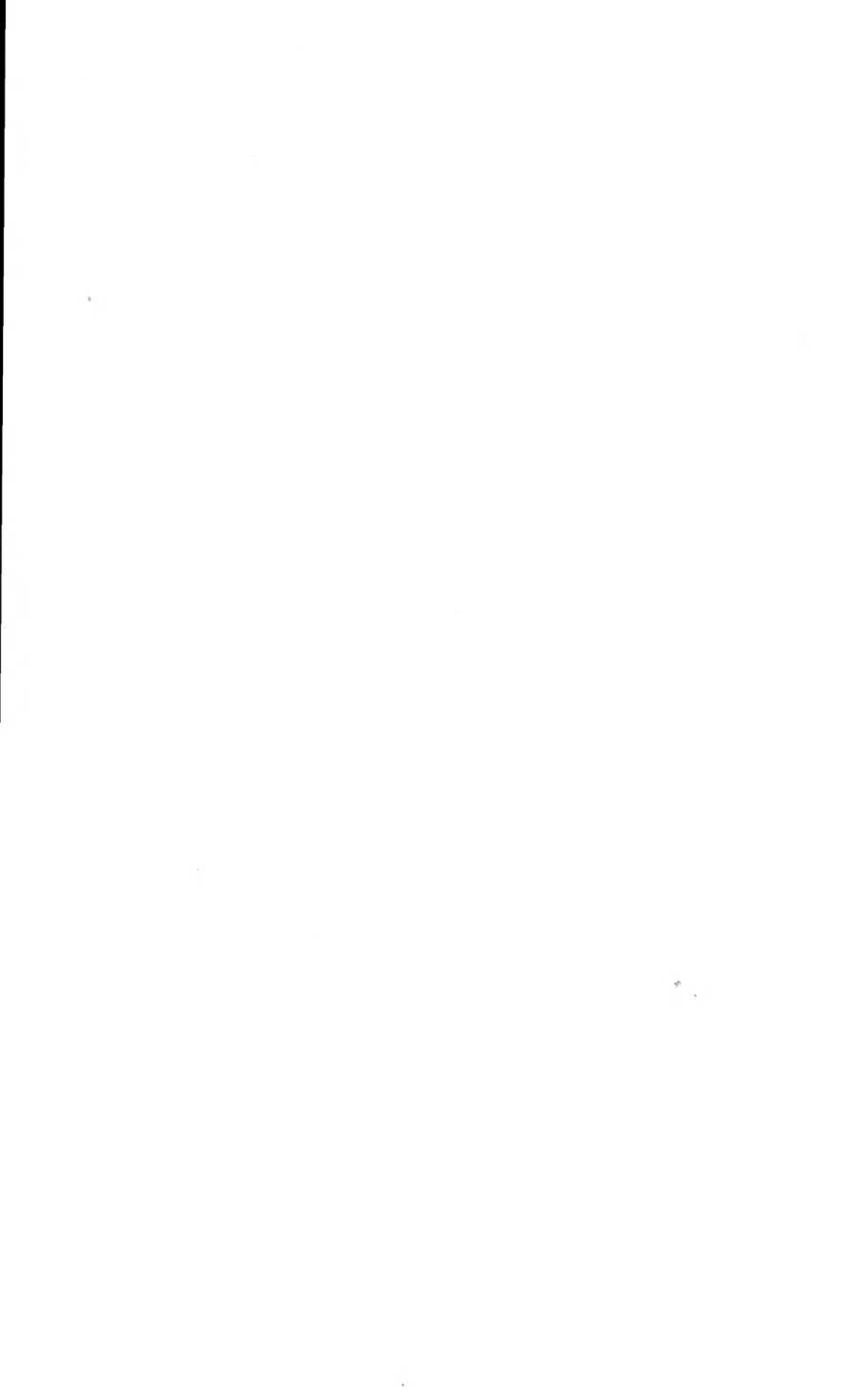
AND THE
LIVES OF THE MOST EMINENT PERSONS MENTIONED
IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

✓
BY THE REV. E. BLOMFIELD.



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LIFE OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

Retrospect of the Events which preceded the Incarnation of our Lord.

The wonderful union of divine and human nature in Jesus Christ—this doctrine stated by John, in the beginning of his gospel—the Logos, the word or wisdom of God—how understood by Jews and Heathens—was in the beginning—was God, yet distinct from the Father—the Creator of all things—dwelt in the person of Jesus Christ—the light of the world—if Christ be not properly God, the apostles have been the means, by their teaching, of leading mankind to the practice of idolatry—the doctrine credible, but to be discussed with modesty—the hypothesis of Milton, compared with the Mosaic account of the fall, and with different passages of scripture—consequences of the fall—are mitigated or removed by Jesus Christ—why the interval of four thousand years elapsed between the fall of the first Adam, and the incarnation of the second—the seed of the woman—the antediluvians were probably favoured with a traditional revelation, which prescribed rules of life, and indicated the coming of the Messiah—how Christ preached, in the days of Noah, to the spirits in prison—the Lord God of Shem—the causes, progress, and consequences of idolatry—the call of Abraham—Melchisedec—whether one of the three angels, that visited Abraham, was the Logos—Lot—the faith and covenant of Abraham—Isaac—Jacob—Shiloh—remarks on the character of Job, and on the book which bears his name—his faith in the Redeemer—the children of Israel go down into Egypt—wisdom and goodness displayed in this dispensation of divine providence—character of Moses, as a lawgiver, an historian, and a poet—his prediction concerning Christ—Balaam—the age of the Judges—the schools of the prophets—David—the Psalms—different states of the chosen people, from the times of Abraham to those of Solomon—the commerce and wealth of the Jews under Solomon—his temple—Proverbs—Ecclesiastes—the Song of Songs—the four prophetic periods—the prophets of the age of David—Nathan—Gad—Ahijah—Shemaiah—Iddo, &c.—the age of Jehoshaphat—Elijah—Elisha—Micaiah—Jonah—age of Isaiah—Isaiah—Hosea—Joel—Amos—Micah—Nahum, &c.—age of the captivity—Jeremiah—Lamentations—Obadiah—Habakkuk—Zephaniah—Ezekiel—Daniel—Haggai—Zechariah—and Malachi—nature and style of the prophetic writings—the reformation in the days of Ezra—Jeshua murdered in the temple—visit of Alexander to Jerusalem—Jerusalem taken by Ptolemy—persecution under Ptolemy Philopater—Antiochus the Great favours Jerusalem—quarrel between Onias and Simon the high-priest—usurpation of Jason, and general apostasy—Menelaus turns Pagan, plunders the temple, and murders Onias—Antiochus Epiphanes takes Jerusalem, and murders forty thousand of the inhabitants—Apollonius plunders Jerusalem, massacres many of the inhabitants, and carries an hundred thousand into captivity—the temple-service abandoned—the worship of Jupiter set up in Jerusalem—Mattathias has recourse to arms—is very successful—Judas Maccabeus restores the temple-worship—death

of Antiochus Epiphanes—Judas Maccabeus slain—Jonathan and Simon the brothers of Judas—Hyrcanus—Aristobulus—Alexander—Jannæus—civil war between Hyrcanus and Aristobulus—the two brothers apply to Pompey, who besieges and takes Jerusalem—Judæa divided into five districts—Herod the Great—his cruel tyranny—conclusion.

OF all the events of which man has received information, there is none more astonishing than the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The birth of the most celebrated poet, historian, legislator, or conqueror, is no otherwise interesting, than as beginning a life, which succeeding conduct rendered afterwards worthy of attention. But the nativity of the Lord Jesus Christ is remarkable in itself, as displaying such an union of divine and human nature, as never took place on any other occasion. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; the government is laid upon his shoulders," and he is fitly "called the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, (or Father of eternal life,) the Prince of Peace."

The beginning of the gospel according to John, when carefully read and examined, casts as much light upon this subject, as, perhaps, it is capable of receiving. John i. 1—18. "In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men, through him, might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light. That was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name. Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. John bare witness to him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake: He that cometh after me is preferred before me; for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

On this passage it may be proper to make a few remarks.

1. The name here translated the *word*, is, in the Greek original, *Logos*, and signifies, according to the Greek etymology,

both *discourse* and *reason*. Le Clerc, in his notes on this passage, takes it in the latter sense, when applied to the Son; because long before John wrote, the Platonists, and after them, several learned Jews, particularly Philo, had used it in that sense, to signify the Creator of the world. The Stoics, too, seem to have affixed a similar idea to the word *Logos*; when they affirmed, that all things were formed by reason or the divine wisdom, in opposition to the Epicurean system, which taught, that the world came into being by chance, or was made without reason. The Platonists and Philo, by the divine reason, understood, sometimes, the most perfect idea, conception, or model, which God had formed of every thing in his own mind, and of which he stamped the signature on his works. At other times, these writers speak of the Divine Reason or Logos as a distinct being, inferior or subordinate to the supreme God. Nevertheless, they have, more than once, spoken of him in terms not unlike to those used by the inspired writers. Thus Philo, in his book of agriculture, page 152, calls the Logos, God's first-born Son; an epithet, the same in signification with that which the apostle has given to our Lord, Col. i. 15. Likewise the same author, in his book concerning the formation of the world, affirms that Moses calls the Logos, the image of God, a term which he is very fond of himself. So the apostle, Col. i. 15, calls Christ, the image of the invisible God. Induced by such reasons as these, Le Clerc fancies, that as the name Logos was familiar to the philosophers and learned Jews, who had imbibed Plato's principles; such christians as admired the writings of Plato and his followers, must very early have adopted, not the name of Logos only, but all the phrases which the Platonists used, in speaking of the person to whom they gave that name, and consequently were in danger of corrupting christianity with the errors of Platonism. At the same time he imagines, that though the notions of these philosophers, concerning the Logos, were in general very confused, they had derived certain true ideas of him from tradition; and that the evangelist John, in speaking of the same person, made use of the term, to which they had been accustomed, to show in what sense, and how far it might be used with safety by Christians: but as it is uncertain whether the primitive christians studied the writings of Plato and Philo; it is not probable, that John would think it necessary, in composing his gospel, to adopt the terms and phrases of these philosophers. Accordingly, the generality of commentators have rejected Le Clerc's suppositions, believing that John borrowed the name, Logos, either from the Mosaic history of the creation, or from Psalm xxxiii. 6, where, in allusion to that history, it is said, "The heavens were created by the word of God;" or from the Jewish Targums, particularly the Chaldee paraphrases, in which "the Word of God" is often substituted for what in the text is *Jehovah*.

II. The Logos, whether translated *word* or *reason*, existed in the beginning at the time of the creation. Here is an apparent allusion to the first verse in Genesis, where it is said, that "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." The doctrine here advanced, is agreeable to what our Saviour is described as saying to John, in the first chapter of Revelation, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last."

III. The Logos is here expressly called God. This may be compared with Romans ix. 5; where speaking concerning the Israelites, "Whose are the fathers, and of whom concerning [according to] the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." Also to the same purpose, as the first of Hebrews, 8 and 9. "But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a sceptre of righteousness [equity] is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness [justice] and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

IV. Here appears to be a distinction marked out between the Logos and the eternal Father. He is said to be with God; which implies a being, in some respect distinct, with whom he exists. He is thus described in the 18th verse, as the "only-begotten Son, who was in the bosom of the Father."

V. The creation is here, in the most express terms, asserted to have been his work. "All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing [not one thing] made that was made." This expression seems to refer, not merely to the formation of this world, but also to the giving existence to angels, and every being, visible or invisible, which God has created. It is therefore a stronger expression than that which is made use of in verses 10, 11, and 12 of the first chapter of Hebrews. "And thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment. And as a vesture thou shalt fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

VI. From the whole of this passage it appears, that the divine Logos who was in the beginning, who was God, and yet, in some sense, distinct from the Father, who was the Creator of every dependent being; was made flesh and dwelt among men, residing in the body of Jesus, as in a tent or tabernacle; which is the express import of the verb, here translated, to dwell. The life which was in him was the light of men: his human life being employed in communicating religious knowledge, and given up to accomplish the salvation of sinners; and that eternal principle of life which he possessed, as God enlightening mankind; both as he is their maker, who has put into their minds the light of reason; and as he is the word of God, and author of revelation. This light has shined, in greater or less

degrees, from the time of our first parents to the present, in the midst of an ignorant and corrupt world; yet wicked men do not comprehend and receive it: they, however, who are obedient to his teaching, become the sons of God; and receive out of his fulness, grace for grace.

If it be said that Christ is God, not by nature, but by office; and that he ought not to be revered with the same adoration as is due to the eternal Father; it is difficult, as Dr. Macknight justly observes, to clear the evangelists and apostles from the imputation of having laid in men's ways a violent temptation to idolatry. For it is well known, that as in all ages men have been exceedingly prone to worship false gods; so it was the prevailing vice of the world, when the New Testament was written; that the grossest corruptions of the morals of mankind, have ever flowed from this poisonous spring; [Rom. i. 24;] and that to destroy idolatry and bring mankind to the worship of the true God, was the great end proposed by God, in all the revelations which he made of himself to men. This being the case, is it to be imagined, that either Christ himself, who brought the last and best revelation of the divine will; or his apostles, who delivered that revelation to writing; would, on any occasion, have used such expressions, as in their plain and obvious meaning could not fail to lead, at least, the bulk of mankind to think, that the names, perfections, and actions of the true God, were ascribed to a creature; and that the worship due to the true God, was due to him? [Heb. i. 6;] while in reality they meant no more, but that he was miraculously formed; was commissioned to deliver a new religion to the world; was endowed with the power of miracles; and, in consideration of his exemplary life, was raised from the grave, and his divine honours conferred upon him. Instead of reforming the world, this was to have laid in their way such a temptation to idolatry, as they could not well resist. Nor has the effect been any other than what was to be expected; for the generality of christians, moved by these expressions, have all along considered Christ as God, and honoured him accordingly.

If any one now object, that the representation of the incarnation of our Lord is beyond his comprehension, and therefore to him incredible; let him reflect seriously on the work of creation. God is a Spirit, and between his infinite perfections, power, wisdom, holiness, and truth; and the known properties of matter, hardness, extension, solidity, and figure; no resemblance can be traced: yet we believe, that he not only gave to matter its existence, but caused it to assume that immense variety of forms, which it exhibits in the mineral, vegetable, and animated world. Since all this has certainly taken place; why should it be thought a thing impossible for Almighty God so to unite himself to the man Christ Jesus; as that he, who every day displayed proofs of his humanity, should nevertheless be

entitled, not merely by office, but by virtue of this union, to the title of "Immanuel, God with us?" We should learn, however, from our incapacity to comprehend this wonderful event, to abstain, as much as possible, in discussing this subject, from the use of unscriptural expressions; and to hazard no assertions concerning it, which are unsupported by the easiest interpretation of the word of God.

The motives which influence a wise man, are always supposed to bear some just proportion to the magnitude of the work he undertakes: we must therefore conclude, that the manifestation of Deity in the flesh was the effect of causes that deserve to be investigated. As they do not, however, all of them, lay open to our view, the vast imagination of Milton has endeavoured to supply this deficiency; and has enabled him, with but a few scattered passages of scripture to guide him, to produce an epic poem, that has raised him, in the judgment of some critics, to a level with Virgil and Homer. A brief statement and examination of his hypothesis, will assist us in arranging our own ideas on the subject, and determining how far the generally received opinion is consistent with revelation.

Before this world was made, while chaos occupied the space which is now possessed by the heavens and earth, the Almighty Father was pleased to summon, round the place where his more immediate presence was displayed, the innumerable hosts of angels and archangels, and other exalted spirits who inhabited the regions of bliss. He then presented to them his only-begotten Son, clothed in unspeakable brightness, and announced him as the king whom they were all to honour and obey. With this command they all appeared well pleased, and expressed their satisfaction by songs.

With Satan, however, this satisfaction was only seeming: for having persuaded the third part of the angels to withdraw with him, far from the holy throne: he found means, by declaiming against the new decree, and insinuating that they were uncreated beings, and therefore served only from choice, to induce them to shake off their allegiance to the Father, and oppose, by force of arms, the dignity of the Son. A long battle was fought in heaven; in which, though the good angels on the whole prevailed, the issue continued dubious; till at length, the Son, for whom the Father had reserved the glory of that victory, came with irresistible power; and commanding his legions to stand still on either side, drove, with his chariot and thunder, into the midst of his enemies; and pursued them, unable to resist, to the furthest extremity of heaven. Incapable of remaining here, they fell into that dreadful abyss, which was prepared as their place of punishment. Here Satan and his angels lay for a considerable time, on the surface of a burning lake; overwhelmed with horror, confusion, and astonishment. At length their chief, recovering his spirits, addressed his companions, comfort-

ing them with the hope of yet regaining heaven ; telling them of a new world and new kind of creatures, which, according to a report current among the angels, were about that time to be created ; and exhorting them to find out the truth of this latter prediction, and how they might turn it the most to their advantage. After several projects had been discussed and abandoned by the infernal assembly ; it was at length resolved, that Satan should undertake the long and perilous voyage, which was necessary to accomplish the design that he himself had suggested. The flight of Satan was not unperceived by the eternal Father ; who declared to his Son, that though man was free to stand, Satan would be able to accomplish his fall ; yet not into utter ruin, as there was reserved for him a portion of mercy. The Son of God rendered praises to his heavenly Father, for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards the human race ; but was answered, that grace could not be extended to man, without the satisfaction of divine justice ; that man would offend the majesty of God, by aspiring to divinity ; and therefore, with all his progeny, must die, unless some one could be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offered himself a ransom for man ; the Father accepted him ; ordained his incarnation ; pronounced his exaltation above all names in heaven and on earth, and commanded all the angels to adore him. They obeyed ; and singing to their harps in full chorus, celebrated the praises of the Father and the Son. In the mean time, Satan, after having encountered various difficulties, found his way to the garden of Eden, and obtained a sight of Adam and Eve. He, at first, pitied their unsuspecting innocence ; then fell into many doubts in what way to proceed ; and endured much torment from the passions of fear, envy, and despair : but at length confirming himself in evil, resolved to take such measures as might accomplish their destruction. Overhearing their conversation, he learned that the continuance of their happiness depended on their abstaining from the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He therefore, in a dream, suggested such thoughts to Eve, as might prepare her to disobey the divine command. He was, however, for the present, disappointed ; and the angel Raphael descended from heaven, to acquaint our first parents with their danger. After some considerable delay, Satan entered the body of a serpent, in that disguise presented himself to Eve, and began with flattering her beauty. Pleased with the flattery, and astonished at the speech and sagacity of the serpent, she inquired by what means he acquired this superiority of reason and utterance over the other animals. He ascribed it to eating the forbidden fruit ; and conducting her to the fatal tree, persuaded her to try the experiment. She consented ; and having tasted, found herself exhilarated by a kind of intoxication ; and fancying that she was

now elevated to a divine dignity, sought out her husband, and persuaded him to follow her example, that he might enjoy her happiness. He saw her state to be utterly deplorable; but perceiving her lost, resolved, through excess of love, to perish with her, and partook also of the fruit. They, after experiencing a very transient pleasure, became sensible of their loss, sought to cover their nakedness, and then fell to variance and accusing one another. Satan, however, and his hateful companion, only found their misery increased by the success of their designs; but sin and death immediately took possession of this world, and various alterations were produced in the seasons and elements. After giving way, for some time, to discord and despair, the two great parents of mankind sought peace with God, by repentance and supplication. The Son presented their prayers to his Father, and interceded for their pardon; God accepted them, but declared they must no longer continue in Paradise; and sent Michael with a band of cherubim to dispossess them, but first to comfort them with the prospect of futurity. This errand Michael performed, showing to Adam, in vision, the history of mankind till the universal deluge; and then telling him of the most important events which should happen to the world till the call of Abraham, and to the chosen people of God till the incarnation of the Messiah. Having described the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Son of God, and communicated something of the same intelligence to Eve, in her sleep; he led them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the cherubim taking their station to guard the place. Our first parents submitted with humble resignation, having the wide world before them, and confiding in the merciful protection of providence.

The fall of our first parents, for which Milton thus ingeniously labours to account, is related by Moses with the utmost conciseness and simplicity. He tells us that God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. He was immediately placed, by his Creator, in a garden, which was planted in Eden, to dress and to keep it. As it was proper that his obedience should have some trial, and the circumstances in which he was placed were so widely different from those of succeeding generations, as to render impossible the exercise of the virtues, and the commission of those vices, which have since been deemed of the greatest importance; he received a single prohibition, every way suitable to the infancy of human nature. God commanded him, saying, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Eve was afterwards created, to be a companion to Adam: she shared

inferior animals ; and we naturally suppose, was instructed by her husband, concerning the tenure by which their happiness was held. After recording the creation of woman, Moses proceeds, in the following words, to give us the history of the fall. " Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made : and he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden ? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. But of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die ; for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat ; and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat."

Though the serpent only is here mentioned as the tempter ; yet, as the conduct attributed to him is very different from that which might be expected of a brute, it has been almost universally believed by christians, that he was only the involuntary instrument, employed by one of those angels who " did not keep their first estate, but are reserved in chains of darkness against the judgment-day." This opinion is confirmed by different passages of scripture. In the book of Revelation, the names of " old serpent, devil, and Satan," are used as synonymous ; and Jesus Christ, in his conversation with the Jews, as recorded in the eighth chapter of John, says, " Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do ; he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him ; when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own : for he is a liar, and the father of it." Thus far, therefore, the hypothesis of Milton appears to be well founded, but we dare not be equally answerable for the whole of his system. How moral evil first found residence in heaven, is an inquiry, which in this state of imperfection, we shall never be able to pursue as far as certainty ; and the battle of Michael and his companions with the apostate spirits, as described in the Apocalypse, is evidently a prophetic representation of some remarkable event, in which both the church and world were to be deeply interested.

The following are some of the consequences ascribed, in scripture, to the first act of disobedience. 1. The sentiment of shame, which is scarcely to be accounted for on any other principle. " And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked ; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons." 2. A disposition to cast the blame of our evil actions, as much as possible, on others. " And

the man said, The woman that thou gavest me, to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this thou hast done? and the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." 3. The distressing and dangerous circumstances attending the birth of infants. "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." 4. Perhaps the inequality of the sexes. "And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." 5. The increase of labour, necessary for the cultivation of the earth. "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake, in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life: Thorns, also, and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground." 6. Temporal death. "For dust thou art, and to dust shalt thou return." 7. Moral evil. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. For, until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law." Finally, as every act of transgression justly exposes us to the wrath of God; we may add the everlasting punishment of those, who have deviated from the divine law, in consequence of the evil example of our first parents, and the depraved nature which we have received from them.

To mitigate and ultimately to remove this long train of evils, the Son of God became incarnate. His teaching, his miracles, his example, the common and extraordinary sufferings of his life, his agonizing death, his resurrection, his ascension, and his exaltation to the right hand of his Father; here, all contributed to the fulfilment of these merciful designs. "He has brought life, and immortality to light;" and informed us, that though "we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God," we may obtain through him, not only pardon and peace, but an everlasting residence, in those delightful regions "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest." Our bodies, which are here the subjects of disease and death, shall, on a distant but certainly appointed day, "be raised in glory and power; this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality; so that death shall be swallowed up in victory." Nor ought we to repine at the various troubles we may here endure, since "all things shall work together for our good, for them that love God, and are called according to his purpose. These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

To any who may esteem it wonderful, that since the mani-

festation of our Lord in the flesh was thus intended as a remedy for the evil consequences of the fall, these two events should be separated by an interval of four thousand years : we reply, since Christ is denominated, in the book of Revelation, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world ; and he is expressly spoken of by Peter, “ as delivered up to crucifixion, by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God :” the same way of salvation, which has produced so many benefits to christians of succeeding ages, was open to the faithful who lived in the most early times. Neither did the long period, which has now been mentioned, pass away in vain ; since the light of divine revelation was gradually breaking in upon the world, and many important changes took place in the affairs of men ; which contributed to display, with greater lustre, the wisdom and mercy of God, in the gift of his Son. To prove the truth of this observation, by the consideration of facts, is the end to which the remainder of this chapter will be devoted.

The sentence pronounced upon the serpent, before the expulsion of our first parents from Eden, is very remarkable. “ And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field ; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed ; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” These words have been generally considered, as not merely predicting any alteration that was to be made in the food and locomotion of the serpent, and the enmity which has ever since subsisted between that race of animals and the human species ; but also to include some dark prophetic hint concerning Jesus Christ, who was to be born of a virgin, the persecution which he and his followers were to experience from wicked men, and the victory which he should obtain over the powers of darkness, at the very moment when they were “ bruising his heel,” by the bitter agonies he suffered on the cross.

Though the books ascribed to Adam, Seth, and Enoch, are undoubtedly apocryphal ; it is probable, that the antediluvians were favoured with, at least, a traditional revelation or species of instruction ; which, considering the long lives of the patriarchs, may be thought fully adequate to their wants. Cain is said, by our Saviour, to have slain his brother Abel ; because the works of Abel were righteous, and his own were wicked. “ And the Lord said unto Cain, Why art thou wroth ? and why is thy countenance fallen ? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted ? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door ;” and unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him. “ And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.” Concerning the depravity of the old world

it is said, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generations; and Noah walked with God. And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark, for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." All these passages seem clearly to indicate, that the antediluvians had further information concerning the distinction between good and evil, than was contained in the prohibition which was given to our first parents in Eden. They worshipped God, not only by "calling upon his name," but also by sacrifices. "And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof; and the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering. But unto Cain, and to his offering, he had not respect; and Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell." The shedding the blood of innocent animals, by way of satisfaction to God, would scarcely have been ever thought of by Abel, or been accepted by the Almighty; unless it had been performed in consequence of a divine appointment; and this appointment seems intended to impress mankind with this truth, that "without the shedding of blood there is no remission." The observation is confirmed by Hebrews xi. 4, 5, 6. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous; God testifying of his gifts, and by it, he being dead yet speaketh. By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and was not found because God had translated him; for before his translation, he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Add to all this, the observation of Noah's parents upon the observation of his birth; and it will appear, that they had some expectation of a deliverer from the curse. "And Lamech lived an hundred eighty and two years, and begat a son; And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." From what has been here adduced, we may safely conclude, not only that the antediluvians were favoured with a divine revelation, but that in this, the doctrine of a Messiah formed a prominent feature.

Two remarkable passages, in the first epistle of Peter, which have occasioned much controversy between the catholic and protestant churches, connect the history of Christ with that of the contemporaries of Noah. In the third chapter, verses 18, 19, and 20, it is said, "For Christ also hath once suffered for

sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit; By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved by water." To the same subject, probably, refers the sixth verse of the succeeding chapter, which we give with its connection. "Who shall give account to him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead. For, for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit. But the end of all things is at hand: be ye, therefore, sober, and watch unto prayer." With these we will compare the third verse of the sixth chapter of Genesis. "And the Lord said, my spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh, yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years." The spirit of God maintained the contest with the evil inclinations of men, by means of the preaching of Noah and other faithful men; and since the "word was with God and was God, and enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world;" we may consider this preaching also, as being the preaching of Christ by his holy influence. The ancient sinners who perished in the flood, were dead in the days of Peter, and their spirits were confined in that dismal prison, which is appointed for the wicked: but had they received the instruction with which they were favoured, they would have been able to give a good account at the day of resurrection; and during the long interval between death and judgment, their souls would have enjoyed complete felicity, in the presence of God.

In the prophetic description which Noah gave of the future condition of his posterity, he speaks thus concerning Shem. "And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant." Here is supposed to be a reference to the piety that should distinguish the Jewish nation, as well as to the Messiah, who should come of the family of Shem.

Scarcely had the earth resumed its wonted fertility, after having been delivered from the waters of the deluge; than mankind, beginning to multiply with great rapidity, thought of imitating the ill examples of the antediluvians, and indulging themselves in the perpetration of a variety of crimes. This depravation of manners was followed by the introduction of heathenish superstition. As this evil still continues to operate, and has been productive of innumerable fatal consequences, it may be useful to trace it from its sources, and briefly to describe the different stages of its progress. The principal sources were three: an excessive veneration for the works of

nature, a dark traditional history, and a fallacious mystical philosophy.

The most distinguished place, among natural objects, is unquestionably to be given to the sun; whether we contemplate the splendour of his appearance, or the benefits which are scattered round wherever his rays are directed. It was therefore easy for this illustrious orb, first, to be honoured as the symbol, afterwards, as the dwelling-place of the deity; and lastly, to receive adoration as a deity itself. The next step was to the worship of the moon, the planets, and the fixed stars: or, as they are denominated in scripture, the host of heaven. This kind of impiety, which has received the name of Sabæanism, was practised in the days of Job. "If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightness; And my heart hath been secretly enticed, or my mouth hath kissed my hand: This also were an iniquity, to be punished by the judge; for I should have denied the God that is above." To a similar cause may, probably, be ascribed, some of that idolatrous respect with which certain animals have been treated, though brute worship was chiefly derived from a mistaken philosophy.

Traditional history has formed a large proportion of the materials of pagan mythology. The fabulous descriptions of night and of chaos, and of the egg which contained heaven and earth; appear, when divested of poetical embellishment, to have been derived from accounts of the creation similar to that given by Moses. The fall of our first parents was commemorated by the worship of serpents. The deluge of Noah is the probable ground-work of the histories of Deucalion and Bæchus, with several others. The patriarch Ham was adored in Egypt, Greece, and Italy, by the name of Jupiter Hammon. We have not time to enumerate the many hunters, conquerors, legislators, leaders of colonies, founders of cities, and inventors of arts, who have, in this way, been preserved from total oblivion.

Among these systems of philosophy, which were serviceable to the cause of Polytheism; the Pythagorean, which has subsisted under various names in the ancient world, and is still prevalent in the south-east of Asia, occasioned brute animals to be considered as objects of religious veneration, by pointing them out as actuated by the souls of our ancestors. The doctrine of the two principles, opposite to each other, and nearly independent, filled the world with demons and genii, who were supposed to preside over the most important events of life; while astrologers, by consigning the world to the government of the celestial bodies, caused them to be considered as possessed of a variety of good and evil qualities, and to be propitiated by such sacrifices as were most suitable to their respective characters. The mystical language, in which the ancient philosophers delivered their instructions, though the

last mentioned, was not the least productive source of idolatrous worship; to which it contributed, by its comparative descriptions of the divine perfections, and by the personification of virtues and of vices, and of what were formerly styled, the elements of nature.

But in whatever ways the human mind has strayed to the practices of heathen impiety, the great primary cause was the love of sin, and the consequent dislike to retain God in the memory. To this purpose Paul speaks in the first chapter of the Romans, verses 18—25, and 28—32, “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness: Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful: but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became fools; And changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves. Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, Amen. And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient. Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity: whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents; Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.”

Instead of punishing the growing depravity of mankind by some second universal catastrophe, more dreadful than the preceding deluge, Providence was pleased to make choice of a particular family, among whom was to be preserved that spirit of piety, which was declining and dying in the rest of the world. Terah, the father of Abram, had resided in Ur of the Chaldees; but left that place with his family, and removed to Haran, the same city which was afterwards denominated Charræ; and under that name execrated by the Romans, on account of the destruction of the army of Crassus. After the

death of Terah, the Lord said to Abram, "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great, and thou shalt be a blessing. And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." The wandering life of the patriarchs had a tendency to preserve them from the infection of idolatry, to carry the light of religion into several countries, and to show to succeeding generations, an edifying example of the power of faith.

A very extraordinary personage next demands our attention, whom some commentators have supposed to be an angel, and others no less than our Saviour himself. As he has been the occasion of so much controversy, we shall first collect the several passages in which he is mentioned, and then subjoin a few plain observations. In Genesis xiv, after describing the defeat of Chedorlaomer, the great Persian conqueror, by the small force of Abram and his allies, he says, verses 18—20, "And Melchisedec, king of Salem, brought forth bread and wine; and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand, and he gave him tithes of all." The 110th Psalm is evidently descriptive of the kingdom and priesthood of the Messiah. It is here said in the 4th verse, "The Lord hath sworn and will not repent; Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. This is quoted in the fifth chapter of Hebrews, verses 6 and 10, which are unnecessary to be transcribed, as they do little more than repeat what before had been said by the Psalmist; but connecting the end of the sixth chapter of that epistle with the beginning of the seventh, we have the following comment. "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high-priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being, by interpretation, king of righteousness, and after that also, king of Salem, which is, king of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life: but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: But he, whose descent is

not counted from them, received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises." Further mention of Melchisedec is made in verses 10, 11, 15, and 21 of the same chapter, but they contain little additional information on the subject. Here we remark, first, that Melchisedec is said to be made like unto the Son of God, which proves, we conceive, that he could not be the Christ, as, in that case, he would be asserted to be made like unto himself. Second. If we believe Melchisedec to have been an angel, we must suppose that a celestial spirit became really incarnate, lived a considerable length of time on earth, governed a city, and exercised the office of priesthood; an opinion unsupported by any other part of scripture. Third. To affirm that he was Shem, or that he is mentioned under any other name, to give an account of his father or mother, or even from what stock he derived his origin, is only seeking to be wise beyond what is written. Fourth. The most probable conclusion, therefore, is, that he was a human prince, whether Canaanitish or not we cannot say, who reigned over a certain city denominated Salem, was distinguished for piety, and officiated, with great acceptance, as a priest of the most high God. When it is said that he was first king of righteousness and then king of peace; the inspired author of the epistle to the Hebrews appears only to trace, in the interpretation of Melchisedec's name and title, a typical representation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was without father, mother, or descent, without beginning of life or end of days, in this sense; that none of these particulars are recorded by Moses, and that he had no successor in his holy office.

As Abraham, previously to the destruction of Sodom, was visited by three angels; as Lot, on that occasion, received only two of these heavenly messengers; and as Abraham, after the departure of the angels, immediately entered into conversation with the Lord: it is believed, that the third angel was no less person than the Son of God. However, this we may safely conclude, that a mere angel was never called Jehovah, and revered as the judge of all the earth, who must do right.

Concerning that part of the life of Lot, which elapsed after the destruction of Sodom, we are possessed of but scanty memorials; yet we hope that he was recovered from his fall, though his descendants, the Moabites and Ammonites, were idolatrous nations, and enemies of the children of Israel.

The illustrious patriarch Abraham appears equally distinguished by his ready obedience to God on the most trying and distressing occasions, and by the comprehensive nature of that covenant, which the Lord did him the honour to make with him. When he had been prevented from offering up his only son Isaac, "The angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; That in blessing I will

bless thee, in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore ; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies : And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice. These promises were fulfilled by the amazing increase of the posterity of Abraham, whether derived from Ishmael, Keturah, Esau, or Jacob ; the establishment of the children of Israel in the land of Palestine ; and lastly, by the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ, who commanded his gospel to be preached to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. The rite of circumcision, which is characterized by Paul as the seal of the righteousness by faith, was intended to teach, that they, who professed to be heirs of the promises, should be careful to depart from all iniquity.

Isaac was a faithful follower of his father Abraham, but his faith was subjected to less severe trials. The sufferings of Jacob, on the contrary, were so many and great, that he told Pharaoh that the days of his life had been "few and evil." The prophecy which Jacob delivered, when he blessed his son Judah, was very remarkable. "Judah thou *art he* whom thy brethren shall praise ; thy hand *shall be* in the neck of thine enemies, thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp ; from the prey, my son, thou art gone up ; he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion who shall rouse him up ? The sceptre (the rod of the tribe) shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people be. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his asses' colt unto the choice vine ; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes. His eyes *shall be* red with wine, and his teeth white with milk." Here are, undoubtedly, references to different instances of the prosperity of the tribe of Judah ; to the fertility of the soil, which it should fall to their lot to cultivate ; to the dignity they should receive, by the advancement of David and his family to the throne ; to the victories of David ; and finally, to the loss of their independence, about the time of the coming of Jesus Christ, who is here denominated Shiloh. To the name Shiloh, many different etymologies have been assigned ; but it has been generally admitted by the Jewish, to have been the Messiah.

The last who might be denominated a patriarch was Job, concerning whom it is uncertain whether he was a descendant of Abraham ; but it is agreed, on all sides, that he was not a Jew. Like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he was sincerely devoted to the worship of the true God, and proved the purity of his religious principles by the benevolence and integrity of his conduct towards men. In him we discover all that is amiable in the character of the modern Arabians, unmixed with their implacable resentment and love of depredation. Hear the

earnest and uncontradicted appeal, which he makes to his friends, in the hour of his most bitter calamity. "If I did despise the cause of my man-servant, or of my maid-servant, when they contended with me; What then shall I do when God riseth up? and, when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the womb make him? and did not one fashion us in the womb? If I have withheld the poor from *their* desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; (For from my youth he was brought up with me, as *with* a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;) If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; If his loins have not blessed me, and *if* he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: *Then* let mine arm fall from my shoulder-blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone. For destruction *from* God *was* a terror to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure. If I rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me, or lifted up myself when evil found him; Neither have I suffered my mouth to sin, by wishing a curse to his soul. If the men of my tabernacle said not, Oh! that we had of his flesh! we cannot be satisfied. The stranger did not lodge in the street, but I opened my doors to the traveller. If I covered my transgressions as Adam, [or as a man,] by hiding mine iniquity in my bosom. Did I fear a great multitude, or did the contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, and went not out of the door? If my land cry against me, or that the furrows likewise thereof complain; If I have eaten the fruits thereof without money, or have caused the owners thereof to lose their life; Let thistles grow instead of wheat, and cockle instead of barley."

"The book of Job," says Dr. Blair, "is known to be extremely ancient; generally reputed the most ancient of all the poetical books; the author uncertain. It is remarkable, that this book has no connexion with the affairs or manners of the Jews or Hebrews. The scene is laid in the land of Uz, or Idumea, which is a part of Arabia; and the imagery employed, is generally of a different kind from what I before showed to be peculiar to the Hebrew poets. We meet with no allusions to the great events of Sacred History, to the religious rites of the Jews, to Lebanon, or to Carmel, or any of the peculiarities of the climate of Judea. We find few comparisons founded on rivers or torrents; these were not familiar objects in Arabia. But the longest comparison that occurs in the book, is, to an object frequent and well known in that region, a brook, that fails in the season of heat, and disappoints the expectation of the traveller."

The poetry, however, of the book of Job, is not only equal to

that of any other of the sacred writings, but is superior to them all, except those of Isaiah alone. As Isaiah is the most sublime, David the most pleasing and tender, so Job is the most descriptive of all the inspired poets. A peculiar glow of fancy and strength of description, characterize the author. No writer whatever abounds so much in metaphors. He may be said, not to describe, but to render visible whatever he treats of. A variety of instances might be given. Let us remark only those strong and lively colours, with which, in the following passages, taken from the 18th and 20th chapters of his book, he paints the condition of the wicked: observe how rapidly his figures rise before us, and what a deep impression, at the same time, they leave on the imagination. "Knowest thou not this of old, since man was placed upon the earth, that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite but for a moment? Though his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever. He shall fly away as a dream, and shall not be found; yea, he shall be chased away as the vision of the night. The eye, also, which saw him, shall see him no more; they which have seen him shall say, where is he? He shall suck the poison of asps; the viper's tongue shall slay him. In the fulness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits; every hand shall come upon him. He shall flee from the iron weapon, and the bow of steel shall strike him through. All darkness shall be hid in his secret places. A fire, not blown, shall consume him. The heaven shall reveal his iniquity, and the earth shall rise up against him. The increase of his house shall depart. His goods shall flow away in the day of wrath. The light of the wicked shall be put out; the light shall be dark in his tabernacle. The steps of strength shall be straitened, and his own counsel shall cast him down. For he is cast into a net by his own feet, he walketh upon a snare. Terror shall make him afraid on every side, and the robber shall prevail against him. Brimstone shall be scattered upon his habitation. His remembrance shall perish from the earth, and he shall have no name in the street. He shall be driven from light into darkness. They that come after him shall be astonished at his day. He shall drink of the wrath of the Almighty."

But there is one passage in Job, which, more than any other, demands our attention. Having, in the nineteenth chapter, bitterly lamented, that the reproaches of his friends were added to his other sufferings, he expresses, in the following terms, his expectation of deliverance at the general resurrection. "For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though, after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

About two hundred years after the call of Abraham, towards the end of the life of Jacob, his family, which had now increased to seventy persons, went down with him into Egypt, to avoid the calamitous effects of famine. They met with an hospitable reception from the king, who was induced to use them the more kindly, on account of the benefits he had derived from the premonitions of Joseph. They did not mingle with the other inhabitants of the land; but resided, as a distinct people, in the land of Goshen. Here they increased in numbers and in riches, but not in piety; for many of them became corrupted by the idolatry of their neighbours. But they soon reaped the fruit of their folly. A revolution having happened, which placed another race of princes, probably the shepherd kings, on the throne of Egypt; the Israelites began to excite suspicion in the breasts of their new masters, by their rapid increase; and it was first determined to break their spirits by slavery, and afterwards to destroy their new-born male infants. Under all this persecution they still continued to prosper, and were, at length, miraculously delivered from the house of bondage.

In reviewing this dispensation of divine providence, it is easy to discover in it the footsteps of wisdom and goodness. The posterity of Jacob had become so corrupt before the death of that venerable patriarch, as not merely to grieve his spirit, but to bring an evil reproach upon that holy religion, of which they were professors: it was therefore better, that they should become stationary in a particular province; than that they should remove from one country to another, as their ancestors had done, in proof of their professed obedience to God. Their increasing numbers did also render this mode of life much less convenient, than it had been to the smaller families of Abraham and Isaac. Their subsequent idolatry in the land of Egypt served to show, that their divine deliverance was the mere effect of mercy, and nothing which they could claim as the reward of their righteousness. Lastly, the long train of miraculous events, by which they were removed from Egypt, and, at length, put in possession of Canaan, displayed the power and providence of the Almighty in so eminent a manner, as not only to attract the present attention of the neighbouring nations, but to cause several relations of their history to be written by pagan historians, which, though dark and confused, still serve to confirm the authenticity of the Mosaic writings.

Moses, who was distinguished by his meekness, and sustained the honourable appellation of the man of God, was more eminent as a lawgiver, than as a prophet; and was raised up, rather to teach his countrymen how they should practise, than what they should believe. Making but little addition to that collection of important truths, which the Israelites had already received by tradition; he gave them the precepts, which were

necessary to form their character as a peculiar nation, subject to the immediate civil government of God.

He has obtained celebrity, not only as a legislator and as a performer of miracles, but also as an historian, a poet, and a prophet. As an historian, he is one of the most valuable, as he is the most ancient, whose writings are extant. Without attempting to unfold the secret springs of action, or giving us any copious account of the customs of those, whose actions he records; he tells their story with such lucid simplicity, that they appear to speak and act before us, and make us deeply interested in their successes and misfortunes. His language is the purest Hebrew, and is not excelled, nor even equalled, by David, Solomon, or Isaiah. His materials were probably derived, partly from traditional history, and partly from immediate inspiration.

The poetical parts of the writings of Moses are numerous, but generally short. Two of the most remarkable, are the triumphant song, which was sung by the Israelites after having passed through the Red Sea; and the prophetic ode, which he delivered a little before his death.

The principal prediction of Moses concerning the Messiah, is contained in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 15—19. “The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the Lord thy God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the Lord my God; neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the Lord said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.”

Balaam, the son of Beor, was a very singular character, whom it is difficult to class, either with the prophets of the true God, or the sooth-sayers, who were much encouraged among idolatrous nations. His predictions, which were delivered contrary to his wishes, under the influence of divine inspiration, are expressed in the most sublime and elegant language of poetry. The following are believed to refer to the kingdom of the Son of God; Numbers xxiv. 15—19, “And he took up his parable, and said, Balaam, the son of Beor, hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said; He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open: I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him,

but not nigh : there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy [or rule over] all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies ; and Israel shall do valiantly. Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion, and shall destroy him that remaineth of the city."

The age immediately succeeding that of Moses, affords us but little matter for observation ; as we discover very few indications of a religious or literary prosperity, and have only here and there a dark hint respecting the coming of Christ. Joshua has been supposed to have been a type of the Messiah ; and the similarity of the names, Joshua and Jesus, which is perfect in the Greek and Hebrew languages, is adduced to confirm this opinion. The angel which appeared to the mother of Samson, has been supposed to be the eternal word, from the circumstance of his declaring that his name was secret. Gibeon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, and Samuel, are mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews, as having performed wonders by the power of faith : but whether that faith did, in every one of these instances, mean the faith of God's elect, or only a confidence in his protecting care of the Jewish nation ; we shall not attempt precisely to determine. In the time of Samuel, we find the first mention of the schools of the prophets ; an institution, which we shall endeavour to describe in the words of Bishop Lowth, who is speaking concerning the nature of Hebrew prophecy.

The prophets were chosen by God himself, and were, certainly, excellently prepared for the execution of their office. They were, in general, taken from those who had been educated from childhood, in a course of discipline adapted to the ministerial function. It is evident from many parts of the Sacred History, that, even from the earliest times of the Hebrew republic, there existed certain colleges of prophets ; in which the candidates for the prophetic office, removed altogether from an intercourse with the world, devoted themselves entirely to the exercises and study of religion : over each of these, some prophet of superior authority, and more peculiarly under the divine influence, presided as the moderator and preceptor of the whole assembly. Though the Sacred History affords us but little information, and that in a cursory manner, concerning their institutes and discipline ; we, nevertheless, understand, that a principal part of their occupation consisted in celebrating the praises of Almighty God, in hymns and poetry, with choral chants, accompanied by stringed instruments and pipes.

David, the son of Jesse, was eminent in many different respects. Equally distinguished by his exemplary piety, and his exalted dignity ; he was, at the same time, a king, a poet, and a prophet ; an ancestor, and yet a type of the blessed Redeemer. His reign was one of the most prosperous eras in the Jewish

history, when the power of the Israelites extended over many of the surrounding nations. The excellences and defects of his character are easily to be perceived from the examination of his history; but that which more particularly merits the attention of christians, is that collection of Psalms, which bears his name; and which is composed of pieces, generally, either written by himself, or by some of those singers who were employed in the worship of the tabernacle.

Whatever traces of inimitable beauty we are enabled to discover in the Psalms; there is no reason to doubt, but much more could be discerned, if we were, in all cases, acquainted with the subject to which they refer, and the occasion on which they were composed. Much of the harmony, propriety, and elegance, of the sacred poetry, must pass unperceived by us, who can only form distant conjectures of the general design, but are totally ignorant of the particular applications.

David has predicted so much concerning evangelical times, that, in the opinion of some commentators, every Psalm has a reference to the Messiah.

If we trace the history of the chosen people, from the days of Abraham to those of Solomon, we shall find them assuming a considerable variety of forms. For the three first generations, they were only one pious family, with a venerable patriarch at its head; subject to none of the princes of the earth, and usurping no authority over its neighbours. Next, they became a distinct race of subjects to the Pharaohs; at first, treated with friendship, then with oppression, and, at last, with extreme cruelty. Then for forty years they subsisted without harvest or vintage; a military, wandering nation, supported by miracles. From their invasion of Palestine to the death of David, they were equally devoted to agriculture and to war; sometimes trampled on by their enemies, but ultimately victorious. During the reign of Solomon, they were a commercial, rich, luxurious people; enjoying the respect, rather than exciting the fear, of surrounding nations.

The Jewish kingdom, or rather empire, now extended from the banks of the Euphrates to the frontiers of Egypt; and numbered among its subjects, many kings of the remaining Canaanitish nations, many Syrian princes, and, probably, all the emirs of Arabia. The kings of Tyre and of Egypt, and the celebrated queen of Sheba, were included in the list of allies. From the cities of Elah and Ezion-Gaber, they navigated the whole of the Red Sea, and appear to have extended their commerce from Sofala to India; their caravans passed through Palmyra, to distant regions of the east; the spice trade of Arabia enriched them by its tributes, while they derived considerable emolument from their performing the office of carriers between the Egyptians and the Syrians.

The incredible abundance of wealth, which was derived from

all these sources, and from the plunder of those cities which had been taken by David, was employed by Solomon in erecting several public buildings, of which the most celebrated was the magnificent temple of Jerusalem. This wonderful pile of building consisted of the inner temple, or oracle, which was esteemed the most holy place; of the outer temple, or holy place, which was separated from the former by chain-work; and of the several courts, for the accommodation of different worshippers. The prayer which Solomon offered on the dedication of this holy edifice, would have given us a high idea of his piety and wisdom, though he had left us no other memorials: he is, however, the author of three books of scripture, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles.

The Proverbs of Solomon are a work consisting of two parts. The first, serving as a proem or exordium, includes the nine first chapters; and is varied, elegant, sublime, and truly poetical: the order of the subject is, in general, excellently preserved, and the parts are very aptly connected among themselves. It is embellished with many beautiful descriptions and personifications; the diction is polished, and abounds with all the ornaments of poetry; insomuch, that it scarcely yields in elegance and splendour to any of the sacred writings. The other part, which extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter to the end of the book, consists, almost entirely, of detached parables or maxims, which have but little in them of the sublime or poetical, except a certain energetic and concise turn of expression.

It is believed by many, that the wisdom of the book of Proverbs is no other than the eternal Logos, or Word of the evangelist John. This book is quoted in Hebrews, in the following words, "And ye have forgotten the exhortation, which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

There is another didactic work of Solomon, entitled, Kohelet, [Ecclesiastes,] or the Preacher; or rather, perhaps, Wisdom of the Preacher, the general tenor and style of which is very different from the book of Proverbs, though there are many detached sentiments and proverbs interspersed. For the whole work is uniform, and confined to one object, namely, the vanity of the world, exemplified by the experience of Solomon; who is introduced in the character of a person investigating a very difficult question, examining the arguments on either side, and, at length, disengaging himself from an anxious and doubtful disputation. It would be very difficult to distinguish the parts and arrangement of this production; the order of the subject, and connexion of the arguments, are involved in so much obscurity, that scarcely any two commentators have agreed con-

cerning the plan of the work, and the accurate division of it into parts or sections. The truth is, the laws of the methodical composition and arrangement were neither known by the Hebrews, nor regarded in their didactic writings. They uniformly retained the old sententious manner, nor did they submit to method, even where the occasion appeared to demand it. The style of this work is, however, singular; the language is generally low; it is frequently loose, unconnected, approaching to the incorrectness of conversation, and possesses very little of the poetical character, even in the composition and structure of the periods; which peculiarity may possibly be accounted for, from the nature of the subject. Contrary to the opinion of the Rabbies, Ecclesiastes has been classed among the poetical books; though, if their authority and opinions were of any weight or importance, they might, perhaps, on this occasion, deserve some attention.

There is scarcely any part of scripture, the interpretation of which has excited more dispute among christians, than Canticles, or the Song of Solomon. While some have considered this elegant poem, as affording an allegorical description of the intimate and endearing connection between our blessed Redeemer and his faithful people: others have assigned to it no higher character, than that of a mere nuptial song, celebrating the mutual affection of Solomon and his Egyptian bride.

In examining attentively the Old Testament history, we distinguish four periods, during which the prophetic spirit appears to have descended, with more abundant influence, on the minds of the faithful. For the ease of recollection, we may denominate the first of these, the age of David; the second, the age of Jehoshaphat; the third, that of Isaiah; and the fourth, that of the captivity.

The first of these prophetic periods, to which we have attached the name of David, commences with the life of Samuel, and terminates with the reign of Jeroboam. The most distinguished characters of this period, were Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, Nathan, Gad, Ahijah the Shilonite, Shemaiah, Iddo the Seer, the man of God who was slain by the lion, and the old prophet who deceived him: of the four first some notice has been already taken. Nathan was much respected by David, to whom he was the bearer of several divine messages, particularly that which forbade him to erect a temple, and that which reproved him for the murder of Uriah the Hittite. He is quoted as having written some historical account of the reigns of David and Solomon, which is either now lost, or preserved in the second book of Samuel, and first book of Kings. Gad, who was another of the historians of David, reproved that king, by the divine command, when he numbered the inhabitants of Judah and Israel. Ahijah the Shilonite was commissioned by the Almighty, to promise to Jeroboam the son of Nebat, the

sovereignty of the ten tribes, as a punishment for the idolatry which disgraced the latter days of Solomon. He was, afterwards, the faithful reprovcr of Jeroboam; and was consulted by his wife, in his old age, concerning the recovery of the young prince Abijah. He wrote the lives of Solomon and Rehoboam. The chief thing which distinguishes the life of Shemaiah, was his message to Rehoboam, forbidding him to make war on the revolted tribes. He is also mentioned as an historian of that prince. Iddo wrote two treatises; one concerning visions against Jeroboam, and the other respecting genealogies, which seems to have included the life and reign of Abijah. The account of the two prophets, with whose names we are not favoured, is contained in the thirteenth chapter of the first book of Kings. In addition to those books, which have been here enumerated as at present unknown, may be numbered another, which is entitled, the Acts of Solomon.

The age of Jehoshaphat was preceded by a great declension, both religious and political. Rehoboam, the immediate successor of Solomon, and Abijam his son, were both of them wicked princes, and countenanced idolatry. Asa, though the greater part of his reign was spent in the fear of God, did, himself, become persecuting and oppressive before he died. Jehoshaphat was, on the whole, a great, good, and successful prince; but he committed a capital error, in making affinity with Ahab, the most wicked of all the idolatrous princes, who governed the ten tribes of Israel. The division of the Israelites into two kingdoms, caused much of their strength to be wasted in civil contentions, and enabled the kings of Syria greatly to harass both the rival states.

The prophets of this period are Elijah the Tishbite, who was caught up alive into heaven, as a testimony to the divine approbation of his distinguished piety; Elisha, his faithful servant, and worthy successor; Michaiah, the son of Imlah, who predicted the death of Ahab; a great number of good men, who were murdered by Jezebel; and we add, with some diffidence, Jonah, the son of Amittai, who was sent to Nineveh. The whole of, what is called, the prophecy of Jonah, is the bare recital of a fact; and contains nothing of poetry, but the prayer of the prophet, which is an ode. Here are contained no predictions of the Messiah; but he is expressly mentioned, by Christ, as a type of the Son of Man. He appears, also, to have been the author of some other works.

The third period comprehends the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah; produced the celebrated prophets Isaiah, Hosea, Amos, Micah, and probably Joel and Nahum.

Isaiah, the first of the prophets, both in order and dignity, abounds in such transcendent excellences, that he may be properly said to afford the most perfect model of the prophetic

poetry. He is, at once, elegant and sublime, forcible and ornamented; he unites energy with copiousness, and dignity with variety. In his sentiments, there is uncommon elevation and majesty; in his imagery, the utmost propriety, elegance, dignity and diversity; in his language, uncommon beauty and energy; and, notwithstanding the obscurity of his subjects, a surprising degree of clearness and simplicity. To these, we may add, there is such sweetness in the poetical composition of his sentences, (whether it proceed from art or genius,) that if the Hebrew poetry, at present, is possessed of any remains of its native grace and harmony, we shall chiefly find them in the writings of Isaiah: so that the saying of Ezekiel may most justly be applied to this prophet:

“Thou art the confirmed exemplar of measures,
“Full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.”

Isaiah greatly excels, too, in all the graces of method, order, connexion, and arrangements; though, in asserting this, we must not forget the nature of the prophetic impulse, which bears away the mind with irresistible violence, and frequently in rapid transitions, from near to remote objects, from human to divine: we must also be careful in remarking the limits of particular predictions, since, as they are now extant, they are often improperly connected, without any marks of discrimination; which injudicious arrangement, on some occasions, creates almost insuperable difficulties. In the former part of his volume, many instances may be found, where the particular predictions are distinctly marked. The latter part, which Dr. Lowth supposes to commence at the fortieth chapter, is the most elegant specimen, remaining, of inspired composition; and yet, in this respect, is attended with considerable difficulty. It is, in fact, a body or collection of different prophecies, nearly allied to each other, as to the subject: which for that reason, having a sort of connexion, are not to be separated but with the utmost difficulty. The general subject is the restoration of the church. Its deliverance from captivity; the destruction of idolatry; the vindication of the divine power and truth; the consolation of the Israelites; the divine invitation, which is extended to them; their incredulity, impiety, and rejection; the calling in of the Gentiles; the restoration of the chosen people; and the glory and felicity of the church, in its perfect state; and the ultimate destruction of the wicked; are all set forth, with a sufficient respect to order and method. If we read these passages with attention, and duly regard the nature and genius of the mystical allegory, at the same time remembering, that all these points have been frequently touched upon, in other prophecies, promulgated at different times, we shall neither find any irregularity in the arrangement of the whole, or any want of order or con-

nexion, as to matter or sentiment, in the different parts. The whole book of Isaiah is esteemed to be poetical, a few passages excepted; which, if brought together, would not, at most, exceed the bulk of five or six chapters.

His predictions concerning the Messiah are so numerous, that they have obtained him the appellation of the evangelical prophet.

Hosea is the first in order of the minor prophets, and is, perhaps, Jonah excepted, the most ancient of them all. His style exhibits the appearance of very remote antiquity; it is pointed, energetic, and concise. It bears a distinguished mark of poetical composition, in that pristine brevity and condensation, which is observable in the sentences; and which later writers have, in some measure, neglected.

Many passages in Hosea undoubtedly refer to evangelical times, but none more clearly than the fifth verse of the third chapter. "Afterwards shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness, in the latter days."

The style of Joel is essentially different from that of Hosea; but the general character of his diction, though of a different kind, is not less poetical. He is elegant, perspicuous, copious, and fluent; he is also sublime, animated, and energetic. In the first and second chapters he displays the full force of the prophetic poetry, and shows how naturally it inclines to the use of metaphors, allegories, and comparisons. Nor is the connexion of the matter less clear and evident, than the complexion of the style; this is exemplified in the display of the impending evils, which gave rise to the prophecy; the exhortation to repentance; the promises of happiness, and success, both terrestrial and eternal, to those who become truly penitent; the restoration of the Israelites; and the vengeance to be taken of their adversaries.

The second chapter of this prophecy, 27—32 verses, are quoted by Peter, on the feast of Pentecost, as referring, clearly, to the present dispensation.

Jerome calls Amos "rude in speech, but not in knowledge," applying to him what St. Paul modestly professes of himself. Many have followed the authority of Jerome, in speaking of this prophet, as if he were, indeed, quite rude, ineloquent, and destitute of all the embellishments of composition. The matter is, however, far otherwise. Let any person, who has candour and perspicacity enough to judge, not from the man, but from his writings, open the volume of his predictions; and he will agree with Dr. Lowth, that our shepherd "is not a whit behind the very chief of the prophets." He will agree, that as in sublimity and magnificence he is almost equal to the greatest; so, in splendour of diction, and elegance of expression, he is scarcely inferior to any. The same celestial spirit, indeed,

actuated Isaiah and Daniel in the court, and Amos in the sheep-folds; constantly selecting such interpreters of the divine will, as were best adapted to the occasion; and, sometimes, "from the mouth of babes and sucklings, perfecting praise," occasionally employing the natural eloquence of some, and occasionally making others eloquent.

The style of Micah is, for the most part, close, forcible, pointed, and concise; sometimes approaching the obscurity of Hosea; in many parts, animated and sublime; and, in general, truly poetical.

Micah is remarkable for expressly naming the birth-place of our Saviour.

None of the minor prophets, however, seem to equal Nahum, in boldness, ardour, and sublimity. His prophecy, too, forms a regular, and perfect poem; the exordium is not merely magnificent, it is truly majestic; the preparation for the destruction of Nineveh, and the description of its downfall and desolation, are expressed in the most vivid colours, and are bold and luminous in the highest degree.

The fifteenth verse of the first chapter of Nahum, appears to allude to the publication of the gospel at Jerusalem, by the apostles.

We find, also, mention of two other prophets, who flourished in this period. Zachariah, who had understanding in the visions of the Lord; and Obed, by whose interference the Israelites of the ten tribes were prevailed on to dismiss their Jewish prisoners.

The fourth age is naturally divided into three parts; the beginning, which commenced with the reign of Josiah, and ended with the captivity of Jehoiakim; the middle, which lasted during the seventy years' captivity; and the last division, which continued from the decree of Cyrus, through all the struggles of the patriots, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel, for rebuilding the temple and city wall, and reforming the people; till the time of Malachi, who closed the Old-Testament canon. To the first part of this period belong Jeremiah, Obadiab, and, we believe, Habakkuk and Zephaniah.

Jeremiah, though deficient neither in elegance or sublimity, must give place, in both, to Isaiah. Jerome seems to object against him a sort of rusticity of language, no vestige of which Dr. Lowth has been able to discover. His sentiments, it is true, are not always neat and compact; but these are faults common to those writers, whose principal aim is to excite the gentler affections, and to call forth the tear of sympathy or sorrow. This observation is very strongly exemplified in the Lamentations, where these are the prevailing passions: it is, however, frequently instanced in the prophecies of this author, and, most of all, in the beginning of the book, which is chiefly poetical. The middle of it is almost entirely historical. The

latter part again, consisting of the six last chapters, is altogether poetical; it contains several different predictions, which are distinctly marked, and in these, the prophet approaches very near the sublimity of Isaiah. On the whole, however, Dr. Lowth believes not above half the book of Jeremiah to be poetical.

Chapter twenty-third, verses 3—6, contains a very evident reference to evangelical times.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah (for the title is properly and significantly plural) consist of a number of plaintive effusions, composed upon the plan of the funeral dirges; all upon the same subject, and uttered without connexion, as they rose in the mind, in a long course of separate stanzas. These have afterwards been put together, and formed into a collection or correspondent whole. If any reader, however, should expect to find in them an artificial or methodical arrangement of the general subject; a regular disposition of the parts; a perfect connexion, and orderly succession in the matter; and, with all this, an uninterrupted series of elegance and correctness; he will really expect what was foreign to the prophet's design. In the character of a mourner, he celebrates, in plaintive strains, the obsequies of his ruined country; whatever presented itself to his mind, in the midst of desolation and misery; whatever struck him as particularly wretched and calamitous; whatever the instant sentiment of sorrow dictated; he pours forth, in a kind of spontaneous effusion. He frequently pauses, and, as it were, ruminates upon the same object; frequently varies and illustrates the same thought with different imagery, and a different choice of language; so that the whole bears rather the appearance of an accumulation of correspondent sentiments, than an accurate and connected series of different ideas, arranged in the form of a regular treatise.

Of the style of Obadiah there is little to be said; the only specimen of his genius extant, being very short, and the greater part of it included in one of the prophecies of Jeremiah. The reader may compare, at leisure, Obadiah 1—9, with Jeremiah xlix. 14, 15, 16, 7, 9, 10.

The whole of Habakkuk is also poetical, and his prayer is a remarkable instance of that sublimity, peculiar to the ode; and which is often the result of a bold, but natural digression.

Zephaniah is also poetical, but affords matter for no particular remark. In the conclusion is a prophecy respecting the days of the Messiah.

During the captivity, the greater part of the predictions of Ezekiel and Daniel were delivered.

Ezekiel is much inferior to Jeremiah in elegance; in sublimity, he is not even excelled by Isaiah; but his sublimity is of a totally different kind. He is deep, vehement, tragical; the only sensation he affects to excite, is the terrible; his sentiments are elevated, fervid, full of fire, indignant; his imagery is

crowded, magnificent, terrific, sometimes almost to disgust; his language is pompous, solemn, austere, rough, and, at times, unpolished; he employs frequent repetitions, not for the sake of grace or elegance, but from the vehemence of passion and indignation. Whatever subject he treats of, that he sedulously pursues, from that he rarely departs, but cleaves, as it were, to it; whence the connexion is, in general, evident, and well preserved. In many respects, he is, perhaps, excelled by the other prophets; but in that species of composition, to which he seems, by nature, adapted, the forcible, the impetuous, the great and solemn, not one of the sacred writers is superior to him.

Ezekiel has several predictions concerning the Messiah; although, in this respect, he is excelled by Daniel, who has so clearly pointed out the train of events, which connect the reign of Nebuchadnezzar with the establishment of the Roman empire, and the birth of Christ; that Porphyry, that great enemy of the christian name, asserted them to have been written after they were partially fulfilled.

The book of Daniel is entirely prose.

Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, are the only remaining prophets. The first of these is altogether prosaic, as well as the greater part of the second: towards the conclusion of the prophecy, there are some poetical passages, and those highly ornamented; they are also perspicuous, considering that they are the production of the most obscure of all the prophetic writers. The last of the prophetic books, that of Malachi, is written in a kind of middle style, which seems to indicate, that the Hebrew poetry, from the time of the Babylonish captivity, was in a declining state; and being past its prime and vigour, was then fast verging towards the debility of age.

Each of these prophets has borne a valuable testimony to the coming of the Son of God.

We cannot better close this account of the prophets, than with the following observations of Lowth on the genius of the prophetic language.

The immediate design of all prophecy is, to inform or amend those generations that precede the events predicted; and it is usually calculated, either to excite their fears and apprehensions, or to afford them consolation. The means which it employs for the accomplishment of these effects, are a general amplification of the subject, whether it be of the menacing or consolatory kind, copious descriptions, diversified, pompous, and sublime; in this, also, it necessarily avoids too great a degree of exactness, and too formal a display of the minuter circumstances, rather employing a vague and general style of description, expressive only of the nature and magnitude of the subject; for prophecy, in its very nature, implies some degree of obscurity, and is always, as the apostle elegantly expresses it, "like a light glimmering in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-

star arise." But there is, also, a further use and intention of prophecy, which regards those who live after the prediction is accomplished, and that is, the demonstration and attestation which it affords of the divine veracity: this evidently appears to demand a different form of enunciation; for correct language, apt imagery, and an exact display of circumstances, are peculiarly adapted to this purpose. Since, however, a very plain description would totally withdraw the veil of obscurity, a more sparing use of this liberty of particularizing, is frequently adequate to that purpose; for the particular notification of one or two circumstances, united with a general propriety in the imagery, the proper adaption of which shall appear after the event, will afford an accumulation of evidence that cannot be withstood, as might be demonstrated in a number of instances. The prophetic style, therefore, is chiefly constructed on the former principle; that is, it commonly prefers a general mode of amplifying and elevating the subject, rarely and cautiously descending to a circumstantial detail.

There is, also, another particular which must not be omitted. Prophecy frequently takes in, at a single glance, a variety of events, distinct both in nature and time; and pursues the extreme and principal design, through all its different gradations. From this cause, also, it principally employs general ideas; and expresses them by imagery of established use and acceptance, for these are equally capable of comprehending the general scope of the divine counsels, and of accompanying the particular progressions of circumstances, situations, and events; they may be easily applied to the intermediate relations and ends, but must be more accurately weighed and proportioned, to equal the magnitude and importance of the ultimate design.

We have already briefly mentioned the important change in the Jewish affairs, which was introduced, by the decree of Cyrus, for the rebuilding of the temple; but it is necessary to observe it a little more particularly. They were now restored to the enjoyment of their public worship, as far as it respected the imperial sanction; but as it is out of the power of the strongest edicts, at once, to root out inveterate prejudices, the reformers of that age had to encounter with many formidable difficulties. Many of the people had suffered from poverty as well as from exile, and therefore were little able to make any considerable exertions in that cause, which they deemed the most important; while others, who had obtained riches in the land of their conquerors, were disinclined to forego their present comforts, for the sake of re-establishing the religion and customs of their fathers at Jerusalem. Many, also, who consented to return, had married heathenish women, whom they were unwilling to divorce; and had contracted habits of superstition, licentiousness, and oppression, which they were, with extreme reluctance, prevailed upon to abandon. Besides these internal troubles,

the Samaritans, irritated at being refused a share in the erection of the temple, exerted all their influence with the court of Persia, to procure the interference of authority for depressing and persecuting the Jews. Still, however, the good cause continued to prosper; Jerusalem, its temple and its wall, were rebuilt; many excellent institutions were set on foot for the instruction of the people; and religion again lifted up its head. It was not, indeed, long, before many abuses found an entrance; but the Jews, as a body, never afterwards practised idolatry.

But though the Jews were now restored to the free exercise of religion, they were neither a free nor a powerful people, as they had formerly been. They were few in number, and their country only a province of Syria, subject to the kings of Persia. The Syrian governors conferred the administration of affairs upon the high-priests, and their accepting this office, and thus deviating from the law of Moses, must be considered as one of the chief causes of the misfortunes, which immediately befel the people; because it made room for a set of men, who aspired at this high office merely through ambition or avarice, without either zeal for religion, or love for their country. It, besides, made the high-priesthood capable of being disposed of at the pleasure of the governors; whereas, the Mosaic institution had fixed it unalienably in the family of Aaron. Of the bad effects of this practice, a fatal instance happened in 373, B. C. Bagoses, governor of Syria, having contracted an intimate friendship with Jeshua, the brother of Johanan the high-priest, promised to raise him to the pontifical office, a few years after his brother had been invested with it. Jeshua came immediately to Jerusalem, and acquainted his brother with it. The interview happened in the inner court of the temple, and a scuffle ensued; Jeshua was killed by his brother, and the temple thus polluted in the most scandalous manner. The consequence, to the Jews, was, that a heavy fine was laid on the temple, which was not taken off till seven years after.

The first public calamity which befel the Jewish nation after their restoration from Babylon, happened in the year 351, B. C. for having, some how or other, disobliged Darius Ochus, king of Persia; he besieged and took Jericho, and carried off all the inhabitants captives. From this time they continued faithful to the Persians, insomuch, that they had almost drawn upon themselves the displeasure of Alexander the Great. That monarch, having resolved upon the siege of Tyre, and being informed that the city was wholly supplied with provisions from Judea, Samaria, and Galilee, sent to Jaddua, then high-priest, to demand of him that supply, which he had been accustomed to pay to the Persians. The Jewish pontiff excused himself, on account of his oath of fidelity to Darius, which so provoked Alexander, that he had no sooner completed the reduction of Tyre, than he marched against Jerusalem. The inhabitants then, being, with

good reason, thrown into the utmost consternation, had recourse to prayers; and Jaddua is said, by a divine revelation, to have been commanded to go and meet Alexander. He obeyed accordingly, and set out on his journey, dressed in his pontifical robes, at the head of all his priests in their proper habits, attended by the rest of the people dressed in white garments. Alexander is said to have been seized with such awful respect, on seeing this venerable procession, that he embraced the high-priest, and paid a kind of religious adoration to the name of God, engraven on the front of his mitre. His followers being surprised at this unexpected behaviour, the Macedonian monarch informed them, that he paid that respect, not to the priest, but to his God, as an acknowledgment for a vision which he had been favoured with at *Dia*, where he had been promised the conquest of Persia, and encouraged in his expedition, by a person of much the same aspect, and dressed in the same habit, as the pontiff before. He afterwards accompanied Jaddua into Jerusalem, where he offered sacrifices in the temple. The high-priest showed him, also, the prophecies of Daniel, wherein the destruction of the Persian empire, by himself, is plainly set forth; in consequence of which, the king went away highly satisfied; and, at his departure, asked the high-priest, if there was nothing in which he could gratify himself or his people. Jaddua then told him, that, according to the Mosaic law, they neither sowed nor ploughed on the seventh year; therefore would esteem it an high favour, if the king would be pleased to remit their tribute in that year. To this request the king readily yielded, and having confirmed them in the enjoyment of all their privileges, particularly that of living under their own laws, he departed.

Whether this story deserves credit or not, (for the whole transaction is not, without reason, called in question by some,) it is certain, that the Jews were much favoured by Alexander, but with him their good fortune seemed also to expire. The country of Judea, being situated between Syria and Egypt, became subject to all the revolutions and wars, which the ambitious successors of Alexander waged against each other. At first, it was given, together with Syria and Phœnicia, to Leomedon the Mitylenian, one of Alexander's generals; but he being, soon after, stripped of the other two by Ptolemy, Judea was next summoned to yield to the conqueror. The Jews scrupled to break their oath of fidelity to Leomedon, and were, of consequence, invaded by Ptolemy, at the head of a powerful army. The open country was easily reduced, but the city, being strongly fortified both by art and nature, threatened a strong resistance. A superstitious fear of breaking the sabbath, however, prevented the besieged from making any defence on that day; of which Ptolemy being informed, he caused an assault to be made on the sabbath, and easily carried the place.

At first he treated them with great severity, and carried 100,000 men of them into captivity; but reflecting, soon after, on their known fidelity to their conquerors, he restored them to all the privileges they had enjoyed under the Macedonians. Of the captives, he put some into garrisons, and others he settled in the countries of Libya and Cyrene. From those who settled in the latter of these countries, descended the Cyrenean Jews, mentioned by the writers of the New Testament.

Five years after Ptolemy had subdued Judea, he was forced to yield it to Antigonus, reserving to himself only the cities of Ace, Samaria, Joppa, and Gaza; and carrying off an immense booty, with a great number of captives, whom he settled at Alexandria, and endowed with considerable privileges and immunities. Antigonus behaved in such a tyrannical manner, that great numbers of his Jewish subjects fled into Egypt, and others put themselves under the protection of Seleucus, who also granted them considerable privileges. Hence this nation became gradually to be spread over Syria and Asia Minor, while Judea seemed to be in danger of being depopulated, till it was recovered by Ptolemy in 292. The affairs of the Jews then took a more prosperous turn, and continued in a thriving way till the reign of Ptolemy Philopater, when they were grievously oppressed by the incursions of the Samaritans, at the same time that Antiochus Theos, king of Syria, invaded Galilee. Ptolemy, however, marched against Antiochus, and defeated him; after which, having gone to Jerusalem to offer up sacrifices, he ventured to profane the temple itself, by going into it. He penetrated through the two outer courts; but as he was about to enter the sanctuary, he was struck with such dread and terror, that he fell down half dead. A dreadful persecution was then raised against the Jews, who had attempted to hinder him in his impious attempt; but this persecution was stopped by a still more extraordinary accident, and the Jews again received into favour.

About the year 204, B. C. the country of Judea was subdued by Antiochus the Great, and on this occasion, the loyalty of the Jews to the Egyptians failed them, the whole nation readily submitting to the king of Syria. This attachment so pleased the Syrian monarch, that he sent a letter to his general, wherein he acquainted him, that he designed to restore Jerusalem to its ancient splendour, and to recall all the Jews that had been driven out of it; that out of his singular respect to the temple of God, he granted them 20,000 pieces of silver, towards the charges of the victims, frankincense, wine, and oil; 1400 measures of fine wheat, and 375 measures of salt, towards their usual oblations; that the temple should be thoroughly repaired at his cost; that they should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, and restore the public service of the temple, and the priests, Levites, singers, &c. to the usual functions; that no

stranger or Jew that was unpurified, should enter further into the temple than was allowed by their law; and that no flesh of unclean beasts should be brought into Jerusalem, not even their skins; and all these, under the penalty of paying 3000 pieces of silver into the treasury of the temple. He further granted an exemption of taxes, for three years, to all the dispersed Jews, that should come, within a limited time, to settle in the metropolis; and that all who had been sold for slaves, within his dominions, should be set free.

This sudden prosperity proved of no long duration. About the year 176, a quarrel happened between Onias, at that time high-priest, and one Simon, governor of the temple, which was attended with the most fatal consequences. The causes of this quarrel are unknown. The event, however, was, that Simon, finding he could not get the better of Onias, informed Apollonius, governor of Cœlosyria and Palestine, that there was, at that time, in the temple, an immense treasure, which, at his pleasure, might be seized upon, for the use of the king of Syria. Of this the governor instantly sent intelligence to the king, who despatched one Heliodorus to take possession of the supposed treasure. This person, through a miraculous interposition, as the Jews pretend, failed in his attempt of entering the temple; upon which, Simon accused the high-priest to the people, as the person who had invited Heliodorus to Jerusalem. This produced a kind of civil war, in which many fell on both sides. At last, Onias having complained to the king, Simon was banished; but, soon after, Antiochus Epiphanes having ascended the throne of Syria, Jason, the high-priest's brother, taking advantage of the necessities of Antiochus, purchased from him the high-priesthood, at the price of 350 talents; and obtained an order, that his brother should be sent to Antioch, there to be confined for life.

Jason's next step was to purchase liberty, at the price of one hundred and fifty talents more; to build a gymnasium at Jerusalem, similar to those which were used in the Grecian cities; and to make as many Jews as he pleased free citizens of Antioch. By means of these powers, he became very soon able to form a strong party in Judea; for his countrymen were exceedingly fond of the Grecian customs, and the freedom of the city of Antioch was a very valuable privilege. From this time, therefore, a general apostasy took place, the service of the temple was neglected, and Jason abandoned himself, without remorse, to all the impieties and absurdities of paganism.

He did not, however, long enjoy his ill-acquired dignity. Having sent his brother Menelaus with the usual tribute to Antiochus, the former took the opportunity of supplanting Jason, in the same manner that he had supplanted Onias. Having offered for the high-priesthood three hundred talents more than his brother had given, he easily obtained it, and returned, with

his new commission, to Jerusalem. He soon got himself a strong party; but Jason, proving too powerful, forced Menelaus and his adherents to retire to Antioch. Here, the better to gain their point, they acquainted Antiochus, that they were determined to renounce their old religion, and wholly conform themselves to that of the Greeks, which so pleased the tyrant, that he immediately gave them a force sufficient to drive Jason out of Jerusalem, who thereupon took refuge among the Ammonites.

Menelaus, being thus freed from his rival, took care to fulfil his promise to the king, with regard to the apostasy, but forgot to pay the money he had promised. At last he was summoned to Antioch, and finding nothing but the payment of the promised sum would do, sent orders to his brother Lysimachus, to convey to him as many of the sacred utensils, belonging to the temple, as could be spared. As these were all of gold, the apostate soon raised a sufficient sum from them, not only to satisfy the king, but also to bribe the courtiers in his favour. But his brother Onias, who had been all this time confined at Antioch, getting intelligence of the sacrilege, made such bitter complaints, that an insurrection was ready to take place among the Jews at Antioch. Menelaus, in order to avoid the impending danger, bribed Andronicus, governor of the city, to murder Onias. This produced the most vehement complaints, as soon as Antiochus returned to the capital, (he having been absent for some time, in order to quell an insurrection in Cilicia,) which, at last, ended in the death of Andronicus, who was executed by the king's order. By dint of money, however, Menelaus still found means to keep up his credit, but was obliged to draw such vast sums from Jerusalem, that the inhabitants, at last, massacred his brother Lysimachus, whom he had left governor of the city in his absence. Antiochus soon after took a journey to Tyre, upon which the Jews sent deputies to him, both to justify the death of Lysimachus, and to accuse Menelaus of being the author of all the troubles which had happened. The apostate, however, was never at a loss while he could procure money. By means of this powerful argument, he pleaded his cause so effectually, that the deputies were not only cast, but put to death; and this unjust sentence gave the traitor a complete victory over all his enemies, that from thenceforth he commenced a downright tyrant. Jerusalem was destitute of protectors, and the sanhedrim, if there were any zealous men among them, were so much terrified, that they durst not oppose him, though they evidently saw that his design was finally to eradicate the religion and liberties of his country.

In the mean time Antiochus was taken up with the conquest of Egypt, and a report was, some how or other, spread, that he had been killed at the siege of Alexandria. At this news the Jews imprudently showed some signs of joy, and Jason, thinking this a proper opportunity to regain his lost dignity, appear-

ed before Jerusalem at the head of 1000 resolute men. The gates were quickly opened to him, by some of his friends in the city; upon which, Menelaus retired into the citadel, and Jason, minding nothing but his resentment, committed the most horrid butcheries. At last he was obliged to leave both the city and country, on the news, that Antiochus was coming with a powerful army against him; for that prince, highly provoked at this rebellion, and especially at the rejoicings the Jews had made on the report of his death, had actually resolved to punish the city in the severest manner. Accordingly, about 170, B. C. having made himself master of the city, he behaved with such cruelty, that within three days they reckoned no fewer than 40,000 killed, and as many sold for slaves. In the midst of this dreadful calamity, the apostate, Menelaus, found means, not only to preserve himself from the general slaughter, but even to regain the good graces of the king, who having, by his means, plundered the temple of every thing valuable, returned to Antioch in a kind of triumph. Before he departed, however, he put Judea under the government of one Philip, a barbarous Phrygian; Samaria, under that of Andronicus, a person of a similar disposition; and left Menelaus, the most hateful of all the three, in possession of the high-priesthood.

Though the Jews suffered exceedingly under these tyrannical governors, they were still reserved for greater calamities. About 168, B. C. Antiochus, having been most severely mortified by the Romans, took it into his head to wreak his vengeance on the unhappy Jews. For this purpose he despatched Apollonius, at the head of 22,000 men, with orders to plunder all the cities of Judea, to murder all the men, and sell the women and children for slaves. Apollonius, accordingly, came with his army, and, to outward appearance, with a peaceable intention; neither was he suspected by the Jews, as he was superintendant of the tribute in Palestine. He kept himself inactive till the next sabbath, when they were all in a profound quiet, and then, on a sudden, commanded his men to arms. Some of them he sent to the temple and synagogues, with orders to cut in pieces all whom they found there; whilst the rest, going through the streets of the city, massacred all that came in their way, the superstitious Jews not attempting to make the least resistance, for fear of breaking the sabbath. He next ordered the city to be plundered and set on fire, pulled down all their stately buildings, caused the walls to be demolished, and carried away captive about 100,000 of those who had escaped the slaughter. From that time, the service of the temple was totally abandoned, that place having been quite polluted, both with the blood of multitudes, who had been killed, and in various other ways. The Syrian troops built a large fortress on an eminence in the city of David, fortified it with a strong wall and stately towers, and put a garrison in it, to command the temple over against which

it was built : so that the soldiers could easily see, and sally out upon all those who attempted to come into the temple, so many of whom were continually plundered and murdered by them, that the rest, not daring to stay any longer in Jerusalem, fled for refuge to the neighbouring nations.

Antiochus, not yet satiated with the blood of the Jews, resolved either totally to abolish their religion, or destroy their whole race. He therefore issued out a decree, that all nations, within his dominions, should forsake their old religion and gods, and worship those of the king, under the most severe penalties. To make his orders more effectual, he sent overseers into every province, to see them strictly put in execution ; and as he knew the Jews were the only people who would disobey them, special directions were given, to have them treated with the utmost severity. Atheneas, an old and cruel minister, well versed in all the pagan rites, was sent into Judea. He began by dedicating the temple to Jupiter Olympius, and setting up his statue on the altar of burnt-offerings. Another lesser altar was raised before it, on which they offered sacrifices to that false deity. All who refused to come and worship this idol, were either massacred, or put to some cruel tortures, till they either complied or expired under the hands of the executioners. At the same time, altars, groves, and statues, were raised every where through the country, and the inhabitants compelled to worship them, under the same severe penalties ; while it was instant death to observe the sabbath, circumcision, or any other institution of Moses.

At last, when vast numbers had been put to cruel deaths, and many more had saved their lives by their apostasy, an eminent priest, named Mattathias, began to signalize himself by his bravery and zeal for religion. He had, for some time, been obliged to retire to Modin, his native place, in order to avoid the persecution which raged at Jerusalem. During his recess there, Apelles, one of the king's officers, came to oblige the inhabitants to comply with the above-mentioned orders. By him, Mattathias and his companions were addressed in the most earnest manner, and had the most ample promises made them of the king's favour and protection, if they would renounce their religion. But Mattathias answered, that though the whole Jewish nation, and the whole world, were to conform to the king's edict, yet both he and his sons would continue faithful to their God to the last minute of their lives. At the same time, seeing one of his countrymen just going to offer sacrifices to an idol, he fell upon him and instantly killed him, agreeable to the law of Moses, in such cases. Upon this, his sons, fired with the same zeal, killed the officer and his men, overthrew the altar and idol, and, running about the city, cried out, that those who were zealous for the law of God should follow them ; by which means, they quickly saw themselves at the head of a numerous troop, with whom they soon after withdrew into some of the deserts

of Judea. They were followed by many others, so that, in a short time, they found themselves in a condition to resist their enemies; and having considered the danger to which they were exposed, by their scrupulous observance of the sabbath, they resolved to defend themselves, in case of an attack upon that day, as well as upon any other.

In the year 167, B. C. Mattathias, finding that his followers daily increased in number, began to try his strength, by attacking the Syrians and apostate Jews. As many of these as he took he put to death, but forced a much greater number to fly for refuge into foreign countries; and having soon struck his enemies with terror, he marched from city to city, overturned the idolatrous altars, opened the Jewish synagogues, made a diligent search after all the sacred books, and caused fresh copies of them to be written; he also caused the reading of the scriptures to be resumed, and all the males, born since the persecution, to be circumcised. In all this he was attended with such success, that he had extended his reformation through a considerable part of Judea, within the space of one year; and would, probably, have completed it, had he not been prevented by death.

Mattathias was succeeded by his son Judas, surnamed Maccabeus, the greatest uninspired hero of whom the Jews can boast. His troops amounted to no more than six thousand men, yet, with these, he quickly made himself master of some of the strongest fortresses of Judea, and became terrible to the Syrians, Samaritans, and apostate Jews. In one year, he defeated the Syrians in five pitched battles, and drove them quite out of the country; after which, he purified the temple, and restored the true worship, which had been interrupted for three years and a half. Only one obstacle now remained, viz. the Syrian garrison above mentioned, which had been placed over against the temple, and which Judas could not, at present, reduce. In order to prevent them from interrupting the worship, however, he fortified the mountain, on which the temple stood, with an high wall and strong towers round about, leaving a garrison to defend it; making some additional fortifications, at the same time, to Bethzura, a fortress at about twenty miles distance.

In the mean time, Antiochus, being on his return from an unsuccessful expedition in Persia, received the disagreeable news, that the Jews had, all to a man, revolted, defeated his generals, driven their armies out of Judea, and restored their ancient worship. This threw him into such a fury, that he commanded his charioteer to drive with the utmost speed, threatening utterly to extirpate the Jewish race, without leaving a single person alive. These words were scarcely uttered, when he was seized with a violent pain in his bowels, which no remedy could cure or abate. But notwithstanding this violent shock,

suffering himself to be hurried away by the transports of his fury, he gave orders for proceeding with the same precipitation, in his journey. But while he was thus hastening forward, he fell from his chariot, and was bruised by the fall, that his attendants were forced to put him into a litter. Not being able to bear even the motion of the litter, he was forced to halt at a town called Tabæ, on the confines of Persia and Babylonia. Here he kept his bed, suffering inexpressible torments, occasioned chiefly by the vermin which bred in his body, and the stench, which made him insupportable, even to himself. But the torments of his mind, caused by his reflecting on the former actions of his life, surpassed, by many degrees, those of his body. Polybius, who, in his account of this prince's death, agrees with the Jewish historians, tells us, that the uneasiness of his mind grew, at last, to a constant delirium or state of madness, by reason of several spectres and apparitions of genii or spirits, which he imagined were continually reproaching him with many wicked actions, of which he had been guilty. At last, having languished for some time in this miserable condition, he expired, and by his death freed the Jews from the most inveterate enemy they had ever known.

Notwithstanding the death of Antiochus, however, the war was still carried on against the Jews; but through the valour and good conduct of Judas, the Syrians were constantly defeated; and in 163, B. C. a peace was concluded upon terms very advantageous to the Jewish nation. This tranquillity, however, was of no long continuance; the Syrian generals renewed their hostilities, and were attended with the same ill success as before. Judas defeated them in five engagements, but in the sixth, was abandoned by all his men, except eight hundred, who, together with their chief, were slain in the year 161, B. C.

The news of the death of Judas threw his countrymen into the utmost consternation, and seemed to give new life to all their enemies. He was succeeded, however, by his brother Jonathan, who conducted matters with no less prudence and success than Judas had done, till he was treacherously seized and put to death by Tryphon, a Syrian usurper, who shortly after murdered his own sovereign. The traitor immediately prepared to invade Judea, but found all his projects frustrated by Simon, Jonathan's brother. This pontiff repaired all the fortresses of Judea, and furnished them with fresh garrisons; took Joppa and Gaza; and drove out the Syrian garrison from the fortress of Jerusalem; but was at last treacherously murdered by a son-in-law, named Ptolemy, about 135, B. C.

Simon was succeeded by his son Hyrcan, who not only shook off the yoke of Syria, but conquered the Samaritans, demolished their capital city, and became master of all Palestine, to

which he added the provinces of Samaria and Galilee; all which he enjoyed till within a year of his death, without the least disturbance without, or internal discord. His reign was no less remarkable, on the account of his great wisdom and piety at home, than his conquests abroad. He was the first, since the captivity, who had assumed the royal title, and he raised the Jewish nation to a greater degree of splendour, than it had ever enjoyed since that time. The author of the fourth book of the Maccabees also informs us, that in him those dignities were centred, which never met in any other person, namely, the royal dignity, the high-priesthood, and the gift of prophecy: but the instances given of this last are very equivocal and suspicious. The last year of his reign, however, was imbittered by a quarrel with the Pharisees, and which proceeded such a length, as was thought to have shortened his days. Hyrcan had always been a great friend to that sect, and they had hitherto enjoyed the most honourable employments in the state; but, at length, one of them named Eleazar, took it into his head to question Hyrcan's legitimacy, alleging that his mother had formerly been a slave, and, consequently, that he was incapable of enjoying the high-priesthood. This report was credited, or pretended to be so, by the whole sect, which irritated the high-priest to such a degree, that he joined the Sadducees, and could never afterwards be reconciled to the Pharisees, who therefore raised all the troubles and seditions they could, during the short time he lived.

Hyrcan died in 107, B. C. and was succeeded by his eldest son Aristobulus, who conquered Iturea, but proved a most cruel and barbarous tyrant, polluting his hands with the blood, even of his mother, and one of his brothers, keeping the rest closely confined during his reign, which, however, was but short. He was succeeded, in 105, by Alexander Jannæus, the greatest conqueror, next to king David, that ever sat on the Jewish throne. He was hated, however, by the Pharisees, and once in danger of being killed in a tumult, excited by them; but having caused his guards to fall upon the mutinous mob, they killed six thousand of them, and dispersed the rest. After this, finding it impossible to remain in quiet in his own kingdom, he left Jerusalem, with a design to apply himself wholly to the extending of his conquests; but while he was busied in subduing his foreign enemies, the Pharisees raised a rebellion at home. This was quashed in the year 86, B. C. and the rebels were treated in the most inhuman manner. The faction, however, was, by this means, so thoroughly quelled, that they never dared to lift up their heads as long as he lived; and Alexander, having made several conquests in Syria, died about 79, B. C.

The king left two sons, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, but bequeathed the government to his wife Alexandra, as long as she

lived; but as he saw her greatly afraid, and not without reason, of the resentment of the Pharisees, he desired his queen, just before his death, to send to the principal leaders of that party, and pretend to be entirely devoted to them; in which case, he assured her, that they would support both her, and her sons after her, in the peaceable possession of the government. With this advice the queen complied, but found herself much embarrassed by the turbulent Pharisees, who, after several exorbitant demands, would, at last, be contented with nothing less, than the total extermination of their adversaries, the Sadducees. As the queen was unable to resist the strength of the pharisaic faction, a most cruel persecution immediately took place against the Sadducees, which continued for four years; until, at last, upon their earnest petition, they were dispersed among the several garrisons of the kingdom, in order to secure them from the violence of their enemies. A few years after this, being seized with a dangerous sickness, her youngest son Aristobulus collected a strong party, in order to secure the crown to himself; but the queen, being displeased with his conduct, appointed her other son Hyrcanus, whom she had before made high-priest, to succeed her also in the royal dignity. Soon after this she expired, and left her two sons competitors for the crown. The Pharisees raised an army against Aristobulus, which almost instantly deserted to him; so that Hyrcanus found himself obliged to accept of peace upon any terms, which, however, was not granted, till the latter had abandoned all title both to the royal and pontifical dignity, and contented himself with the enjoyment of his peculiar patrimony, as a private person.

But this deposition did not extinguish the party of Hyrcanus. A new cabal was raised by Antipater, an Idumean proselyte, and father of Herod the Great, who carried off Hyrcanus into Arabia, under pretence that his life was in danger if he remained in Judea. Here he applied to Aretas, king of that country, who undertook to restore the deposed monarch, and, for that purpose, invaded Judea, defeated Aristobulus, and kept him closely besieged in Jerusalem. The latter had recourse to the Romans, and having bribed Scaurus, one of their generals, he defeated Aretas, with the loss of seven thousand of his men, and drove him quite out of the country. The two brothers next sent presents to Pompey, at that time commander in chief of all the Roman forces in the east, and whom they made the arbitrator of their differences. But he, fearing that Aristobulus, against whom he intended to declare, might obstruct his intended expedition against the Nabathæans, dismissed them with a promise, that as he had subdued Aretas, he would come into Judea and decide their controversy.

This delay gave such offence to Aristobulus, that he suddenly departed from Judea, without even taking leave of the

Roman general, who, on his part, was no less offended at this want of respect. The consequence was, that Pompey entered Judea with those troops which he had designed to act against the Nabathæans, and summoned Aristobulus to appear before him. The Jewish prince would gladly have been excused, but was forced, by his own people, to comply with Pompey's summons, to avoid a war with that general. He came, accordingly, more than once or twice to him, and was dismissed with great promises, and marks of friendship. But, at last, Pompey insisted that he should deliver into his hands all the fortified places he possessed, which let Aristobulus plainly see, that he was in the interest of his brother; and, upon this, he fled to Jerusalem, with a design to oppose the Romans to the utmost of his power. He was quickly followed by Pompey, and, to prevent hostilities, was, at last, forced to go and throw himself at the feet of the haughty Roman, and to promise him a considerable sum of money, as the reward of his forbearance. This submission was accepted; but Gabinius, being sent with some troops to receive the stipulated sum, was repulsed by the garrison of Jerusalem, who shut the gates against him, and refused to fulfil the agreement. This disappointment so exasperated Pompey, that he immediately marched, with his whole army, against the city.

The Roman general first sent proposals of peace; but finding the Jews resolved to stand out to the last, he began the siege in form. As the place was strongly fortified, both by nature and art, he might have found it very difficult to have accomplished his design, had not the Jews been suddenly seized with a qualm of conscience of the sabbath-day. From the time of the Maccabees, they made no scruple of taking up arms against an offending enemy on the sabbath; but now they discovered, that though it was lawful, on that day, to stand in their defence, in case they were actually attacked; yet it was unlawful to do any thing towards the preventing of those preparatives, which the enemy made towards such future assaults. As, therefore, they never moved an hand, to hinder the erection of mounds and batteries, or the making of breaches in their walls, on the sabbath; the besiegers, at last, made such a considerable breach on that day, that the garrison could no longer resist them. The city was, therefore, taken, in the year 63, B. C. twelve thousand of the inhabitants were slaughtered, and many more died by their own hands; while the priests who were offering up their usual prayers and sacrifices in the temple, chose rather to be butchered along with their brethren, than suffer divine service to be one moment interrupted. At last, after the Romans had satiated their cruelty with the death of a vast number of the inhabitants, Hyrcanus was restored to the pontifical dignity, with the title of prince; but forbid to assume the title of king, to wear a diadem, or to extend his territories beyond the limits of Judea. To prevent future revolts, the walls were pulled

down, and Scaurus was left governor with a sufficient force. But before he departed, the Roman general gave the Jews a still greater offence, than almost any thing he had hitherto done, and that was, by entering into the most sacred recesses of the temple, where he took a view of the golden table, candlestick, censers, lamps, and all the other sacred vessels; but out of respect to the deity, forbore to touch any of them; and when he came out, commanded the priests to purify the temple according to custom.

Pompey having thus subdued the Jewish nation, set out for Rome, carrying along with him Aristobulus and his two sons, Alexander and Antigonus, as captives, to adorn his future triumph. Aristobulus himself, and his son Antigonus, were led in triumph; but Alexander found means to escape into Judea, where he raised an army of ten thousand foot and fifteen hundred horse, and began to fortify several strong holds, from whence he made incursions into the neighbouring country. As for Hyrcanus, he had no sooner found himself freed from his rival brother, than he relapsed into his former indolence, leaving the care of all his affairs to Antipater, who, like a true politician, failed not to turn the weakness of the prince to his own advantage, and the aggrandizing of his family. He foresaw, however, that he could not easily compass his ends, unless he ingratiated himself with the Romans, and therefore spared neither pains nor cost to gain their favour. Scaurus soon after received from him a supply of corn and other provisions, without which, his army, which he had led against the metropolis of Arabia, would have been in danger of perishing; and after this, he prevailed on the king to pay three hundred talents to the Romans, to prevent them from ravishing his country. Hyrcanus was now in no condition to face his enemy Alexander, and, therefore, had again recourse to the Romans, Antipater, at the same time, sending as many troops as he could spare to join them. Alexander ventured a battle, but was defeated with considerable loss, and besieged in a strong fortress, named Alexandrion. Here he would have been forced to surrender, but his mother, partly by her address, and partly by the services she found means to do to the Roman general, prevailed upon him to grant her son a pardon for what was past. The fortresses were then demolished, that they might not give occasion to fresh revolts; Hyrcanus was again restored to the pontifical dignity; and the province was divided into five several districts, in each of which a separate court of judicature was erected. The first of these was at Jerusalem, the second at Gadara, the third at Amath, the fourth at Jericho, and the fifth at Sephoris in Galilee. Thus was the government changed from a monarchy to an aristocracy, and the Jews now fell under a set of domineering lords.

Soon after this, Aristobulus found means to escape from his

confinement at Rome, and raised new troubles in Judea, but was again defeated and taken prisoner; his son also renewed his attempts, but was, in like manner, defeated with the loss of near ten thousand of his followers; after which, Gabinus, having settled the affairs of Judea to Antipater's mind, resigned the government of his province to Crassus. The only transaction during his government was his plundering the temple of all its money and sacred utensils, amounting, in the whole, to ten thousand attic talents, i. e. above two millions of our money. After this sacrilege Crassus set out on his expedition against Parthia, where he perished, and his death was, by the Jews, interpreted as a divine judgment for his impiety.

The war between Cæsar and Pompey afforded the Jews some respite, and, likewise, an opportunity of ingratiating themselves with the former, which the political Antipater readily embraced. His services were rewarded by the emperor. He confirmed Hyrcanus in his priesthood, added to it the principality of Judea, to be entailed on his posterity for ever, and restored the Jewish nation to their ancient rights and privileges; ordering, at the same time, a pillar to be erected, whereon all these grants, and his own decree, should be engraved, which was accordingly done; and soon after, when Cæsar himself came into Judea, he granted liberty, also, to fortify the city, and rebuild the wall which had been demolished by Pompey.

During the life-time of Cæsar, the Jews were so highly favoured, that they could be said scarcely to feel the Roman yoke. After his death, however, the nation fell into great disorders, which were not finally quelled till Herod was created king of Judea, by Marc Antony, in 40, B. C.; was fully established on the throne, by the taking of Jerusalem, by his allies, the Romans, in 37, B. C. The immediate consequence of this, was another cruel pillage and massacre; then followed the death of Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus, who had, for three years, maintained his ground against Herod, put to death his brother Phasaël, and cut off Hyrcanus's ears, in order, the more effectually, to incapacitate him for the high-priesthood.

The Jews gained but little by this change of masters. The king proved one of the greatest tyrants mentioned in history. He began his reign with a cruel persecution of those who had sided with his rival Antigonus, great numbers of whom he put to death, seizing and confiscating their effects to his own use. Nay, such was his jealousy in this last respect, that he caused guards to be placed at the city gates, in order to watch the bodies of those of the Antigonian faction, who were carried out to be buried, lest some of their riches should be carried along with them. His jealousy next tempted him to decoy Hyrcanus, the banished pontiff, from Parthia, where he had taken refuge, that he might put him to death, though contrary to his solemn promises. His cruelty then fell upon his own family. He had

married Mariamne, the daughter of Hyrcanus, whose brother Aristobulus, a young prince of great hopes, was made high-priest, at the intercession of his mother Alexandra. But the tyrant, conscious that Aristobulus had a better right to the kingdom than himself, caused him, soon after, to be drowned in a bath. The next victim was his beloved queen Mariamne herself. Herod had been summoned to appear, first, before Marc Antony, and then before Augustus, in order to clear himself from some crimes laid to his charge. As he was, however, doubtful of the event, he left orders, that in case he was condemned, Mariamne should be put to death. This, together with the death of her father and brother, gave her such an aversion for him, that she showed it on all occasions. By this conduct the tyrant's resentment was, at last, so much inflamed, that, having got her falsely accused of infidelity, she was condemned to die, and executed accordingly. She suffered with great resolution, but with her ended all the happiness of her husband. His love for Mariamne increased so much after her death, that, for some time, he appeared like one quite distracted. His remorse did not get the better of his cruelty. The death of Mariamne was soon followed by that of her mother Alexandra, and this, by the execution of several other persons, who had joined, with her, in an attempt to secure the kingdom to the sons of the deceased queen.

Herod, having now freed himself from the greatest part of his supposed enemies, began to show a greater contempt for the Jewish ceremonies than formerly, and introduced a number of heathenish games, which made him odious to his subjects. Ten bold fellows, at last, took it into their heads to enter the theatre, where the tyrant was celebrating some games, with daggers concealed under their clothes, in order to stab him or some of his retinue. In case they should miscarry, they had the desperate satisfaction to think, that if they perished, the tyrant would be rendered still more odious by the punishment inflicted on them. They were not mistaken; for Herod being informed of the design by one of his spies, and causing the assassins to be put to a most excruciating death, the people were so exasperated against the informer, that they cut and tore him to pieces, and threw his flesh to the dogs. Herod tried, in vain, to discover the authors of this affront; but, at last, having caused some women to be put to the rack, he extorted from them the names of the principal persons concerned, whom he immediately caused to be put to death, with their families. This produced such disturbances, that, apprehending nothing less than a general revolt, he set about fortifying Jerusalem with several additional works, rebuilding Samaria, and putting garrisons into several fortresses in Judea. Notwithstanding this, however, Herod had, shortly after, an opportunity of regaining the affections of his subjects, in some measure,

by his generosity to them during a famine; but as he soon relapsed into his former cruelty, their love was again turned into hatred, which continued till his death.

Having thus brought down the Jewish affairs till the time of our Saviour, we shall proceed, in the next chapter, to record the circumstances of his nativity.

CHAPTER II.

The Nativity and Childhood of Christ.

Table of our Lord's genealogy—critical and explanatory remarks upon it—Zechariah and Elizabeth—the vision of the angel in the temple—the conception of Christ—visit of Mary to Elizabeth—birth of John—prophetic song of Zacharias—private life of John—the taxing, when, and how it took place—correspondent accounts from Josephus—the birth of Christ announced to the shepherds—the presentation—Simeon and Anna—visit of the wise men from the east—who they were—the nature of the star—flight into Egypt—Herod's cruelty and death—return of Christ to Nazareth—fulfilment of prophecies—Christ's conversation with the Rabbies—his private life.

AS John, in the beginning of his gospel, has amply attested the divine origin of our Saviour, so each of the other three evangelists asserts his descent from David, and consequently from Abraham. Matthew and Luke have each of them given detailed accounts of his genealogy; but these are attended with several difficulties, whether considered in themselves or in relation to one another. That this subject may be the better understood, we have constructed the following table. It extends *across* from page to page, is divided into six columns, the first of which enumerates our Lord's ancestors, as recited by Luke; the second exhibits a correspondent genealogy from the Old Testament; the third gives the passages from which the second column is taken; the fourth recites the genealogy according to Matthew, which the fifth compares with the Old Testament, and the sixth establishes by proofs.

LUKE.	OLD TEST.	TEXTS.
God	God	Gen. i. 1.
Adam	Adam	Gen. i. 27. 1 Chron. i. 1.
Seth	Seth	Gen. iv. 25. 1 Chron. i. 1.
Enos	Enos	Gen. v. 6. 1 Chron. i. 1.
Cainan	Cainan	Gen. v. 9. 1 Chron. i. 2.
Maleleel	Mahalaleel	Gen. v. 12. 1 Chron. i. 2.
Jared	Jared	Gen. v. 15. 1 Chron. i. 2.
Enoch	Enoch	Gen. v. 18. 1 Chron. i. 3.
Mathusala	Methuselah	Gen. v. 21. 1 Chron. i. 3.
Lamech	Lamech	Gen. v. 25. 1 Chron. i. 3.
Noe	Noah	Gen. v. 29. 1 Chron. i. 4.
Sem	Shem	Gen. v. 32. 1 Chron. i. 4.
Arphaxad	Arphaxad	Gen. x. 22. 1 Chron. i. 17.
Cainan		
Sala	Salah	Gen. x. 24. 1 Chron. i. 18.
Heber	Eber	Gen. x. 24. 1 Chron. i. 18.
Phalec	Peleg	Gen. x. 25. 1 Chron. i. 19.
Ragau	Reu	Gen. xi. 18. 1 Chron. i. 25.
Saruch	Serug	Gen. xi. 20. 1 Chron. i. 26.
Nachor	Nahor	Gen. xi. 22. 1 Chron. i. 26.
Thara	Terah	Gen. xi. 24. 1 Chron. i. 26.
Abraham	Abram	Gen. xi. 26. 1 Chron. i. 27.
Isaac	Isaac	Gen. xxi. 3. 1 Chron. i. 28.
Jacob	Jacob	Gen. xxv. 26. 1 Chron. i. 34.
Juda	Judah	Gen. xxix. 35. 1 Chron. ii. 1.
Pharez	Pharez	Gen. xxxviii. 29. 1 Chron. ii. 4.
Esrom	Hezron	Gen. xlv. 13. 1 Chron. ii. 5.
Aram	Ram	Ruth iv. 19. 1 Chron. ii. 9.
Aminadab	Amminadab	Ruth iv. 19. 1 Chron. ii. 10.
Naasson	Nahshon	Ruth iv. 20. 1 Chron. ii. 10.
Salmon	Salmon	Ruth iv. 20. 1 Chron. ii. 11.
Booz	Boaz	Ruth iv. 21. 1 Chron. ii. 11.
Obed	Obed	Ruth iv. 21. 1 Chron. ii. 12.
Jesse	Jesse	Ruth iv. 22. 1 Chron. ii. 12.
David	David	Ruth iv. 22. 1 Chron. ii. 15.
Nathan	Nathan	2 Sam. v. 14. 1 Chron. iii. 5.
Mattatha		
Menan		
Melea		
Eliakim		
Jonan		
Joseph		
Juda		
Simco		
Levi		
Matthat		
Jorim		

MATTHEW.

OLD TEST.

TEXTS.

Abraham	Abram	Gen. xi. 26.	1 Chron. i. 27.
Isaac	Isaac	Gen. xxi. 3.	1 Chron. i. 28.
Jacob	Jacob	Gen. xxv. 26.	1 Chron. i. 34.
Judas	Judah	Gen. xxix. 35.	1 Chron. ii. 1.
Phares	Pharez	Gen. xxxviii. 29.	1 Chron. ii. 4.
Ezrom	Hezron	Gen. xlvi. 13.	1 Chron. ii. 5.
Aram	Ram	Ruth iv. 19.	1 Chron. ii. 9.
Aminadab	Amminadab	Ruth iv. 19.	1 Chron. ii. 10.
Naasson	Nalishon	Ruth iv. 20.	1 Chron. ii. 10.
Salmon	Salmon	Ruth iv. 20.	1 Chron. ii. 11.
Booz	Boaz	Ruth iv. 21.	1 Chron. ii. 11.
Obed	Obed	Ruth iv. 21.	1 Chron. ii. 12.
Jesse	Jesse	Ruth iv. 22.	1 Chron. ii. 12.
David	David	Ruth iv. 22.	1 Chron. ii. 15.
Solomon	Solomon	2 Sam. xii. 24.	1 Chron. iii. 5.
Roboam	Rehoboam	1 Kings xi. 43.	1 Chron. iii. 10.
Abia	Abijam	1 Kings xiv. 31.	1 Chron. iii. 10.
Asa	Asa	1 Kings xv. 8.	1 Chron. iii. 10.
Josaphat	Jehoshaphat	1 Kings xv. 24.	1 Chron. iii. 10.
Joram	Jehoram	1 Kings xxii. 50.	1 Chron. iii. 11.
	Ahaziah	2 Kings viii. 24.	1 Chron. iii. 11.
	Jehoash	2 Kings xi. 21.	1 Chron. iii. 11.
	Amaziah	2 Kings xii. 21.	1 Chron. iii. 12.
Ozias	Azariah	2 Kings xiv. 21.	1 Chron. iii. 12.

LUKE.	OLD TEST.	TEXTS.
Eliezer		
Jose		
Er		
Elmodam		
Cosam		
Addi		
Melchi		
Neri		
Salathiel	Salathiel	1 Chron. iii. 17.
Zorobabel	Zerubbabel	Ezra iii. 2.
Rhesa		
Joanna		
Judah		
Joseph		
Semei		
Mattathias		
Maath		
Nagge		
Eslì		
Naum		
Amos		
Mattathias		
Joseph		
Janna		
Melchi		
Levi		
Matthat		
Heli		
Joseph		
Jesus		Luke ii. 7

The difficulty which strikes us in the examination of Luke's genealogy is the introduction of Cainan between Arphaxad and Salah, in which instance he is supposed to have followed the Septuagint, which was the version most commonly received by the Jews. This will appear the more probable, if we admit that he only transcribed such a genealogy of Christ, as he found already drawn up and acknowledged among his relations. Concerning Matthew we remark,

1. The genealogy as given by Matthew commences with the following words, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." The word book here may be very well rendered a table of genealogy. He proposes to prove that Jesus Christ was the son of David and of Abraham, and he therefore enumerates so many of his ancestors as may be necessary to ascertain that point.

2. The brethren of Judas are mentioned in this genealogy,

MATTHEW.	OLD TEST.	TEXTS.
Joatham	Jotham	2 Kings xv. 7. 1 Chron. iii. 12.
Achaz	Ahaz	2 Kings xv. 38. 1 Chron. iii. 13.
Ezekias	Hezekiah	2 Kings xvi. 20. 1 Chron. iii. 13.
Manasses	Manasseh	2 Kings xx. 21. 1 Chron. iii. 13.
Amon	Amon	2 Kings xxi. 18. 1 Chron. iii. 14.
Josias	Josiah	2 Kings xxi. 26. 1 Chron. iii. 14.
	Jehoiakim	2 Kings xxiii. 34. 1 Chron. iii. 15.
Jechonias	Jehoiachin	2 Kings xxiv. 6. 1 Chron. iii. 16.
Salathiel	Salathiel	1 Chron. iii. 17.
Zorobabel	Zerubbabel	Ezra iii. 2.
Abihud		
Eliakim		
Azor		
Sadoc		
Achim		
Eliud		
Eleazar		
Matthan		
Jacob		
Joseph		
Jesus		Matt. i. 25.

because, though they were not Messiah's progenitors, they were on an equal footing with Judas, in respect of religious privileges. To them belonged the promises, and their posterity had the law given to them. It was otherwise with Ishmael and Esau, though the one was the son of Abraham, and the other of Isaac. They and their posterity were expressly excluded from the privileges of the covenant, for which reason they are not mentioned in Messiah's genealogy.

3. Zarah is mentioned, not because he was the twin-brother of Pharez, our Lord's progenitor; for if that had been a reason for assigning him this honour, Esau, the twin-brother of Jacob, ought to have obtained it likewise; but he is mentioned to prevent any mistake. For unless Zarah had been spoken of, considering the infamy of Pharez's birth, we might have been apt to imagine, that not the Pharez whom Judas begat in incest, but another son of Judas, called Pharez, was our Lord's

progenitor, it being no uncommon thing among the Jews to have several children of the same name. Wherefore, to put the matter beyond doubt, Thamar, as well as Zarab, is mentioned in the genealogy. It is, perhaps, for a like reason, that in this genealogy, when Solomon is spoken of, his mother Bathsheba is mentioned, not by her own name, but by her relation to her former husband, verse 6, "David, the king, begat Solomon, of her that was the wife of Uriah."

4. Theophylact was of opinion, that Rahab mentioned in this genealogy, was not the harlot of Jericho; and his opinion has been embraced by several modern commentators, for the following reasons. First, Because her name is written differently by the LXX, and by the apostles, viz. Raab, not Rachab, as in Matthew. Second, In every passage where Rahab of Jericho is mentioned, she is distinguished by the epithet of the harlot; whereas the woman mentioned in the genealogy has no such name given her. Third, Because the Israelites were expressly discharged from entering into affinity with any of the nations who inhabited Canaan. [Deut. vii. 1.] Fourth, On supposition that Rahab of Jericho was the mother of Booz, and wife of Salmon, she must have born Booz when she was eighty years old, a thing not very probable in that age of the world, when the period of human life was so much shortened. But to the first and second arguments it is replied, that nothing can be concluded with certainty from the orthography of the name, or from the epithet of harlot, such differences occurring often in histories both sacred and profane. To the third the answer is, that Rahab, though originally a heathen, may have been a proselyte, as Ruth the Moabitess, whom Booz married, and Maacah the daughter of the king of Geshur, whom David married, are supposed to have been. To the fourth argument it is replied, that Booz may have been not Salmon's immediate son by Rahab, but his grandson, or great-grandson; which consideration derives some strength from other omissions observed in the same genealogy.

5. David has the title of king given him because he was the first king of his family, and because he had the kingdom entailed upon his children; in which respect he had greatly the advantage of Saul, from whose family the kingdom was taken away almost as soon as it was conferred.

6. The Jechonias who is mentioned in the eleventh verse, is understood to be Jehoiakim the immediate son of Josias, called Jechonias, not by Matthew only, but by the author also of the third of Esdras, first chapter and thirty-fourth verse. Josiah is said to have begotten Jechoniah and his brethren about the time of the captivity, although it was more than forty years before it, as is plain from Jehoiakim's age. He was thirty-six years old when he died, [2 Kings xxiii. 36.] eight years before the captivity, for so long his son Jehoiakim reigned after

his death. [2 Kings xxiv. 12.] It is plain, therefore, that the preposition *ἐπι* does not signify here precisely at that time; but, as usual, it comprehends a period of some considerable length. The brethren of Jechonias or Jehoiakin are mentioned in the genealogy, because all of them, except Shallum, filled the throne, though Jechonias alone had the right, being the elder brother.

7. It is observable that Matthew omits three of the kings of Judah—Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah. This might be done either for the sake of making the numbers more easily to be remembered, as such omissions are common in Jewish genealogies, or, as has been insinuated, because these three princes had a defective title to the crown.

On comparing the two genealogies with one another, we perceive two difficulties of a similar kind. The first ascribes two different descents to Salathiel, the father of Zorobabel; Matthew making him the son of Jechonias, and Luke the son of Neri. This may be obviated by considering the Salathiels as two different persons; one of whom having heard of the fame of that Zorobabel, the son of Salathiel, who was a great instrument of providence in restoring the Jews, might confer a similar name upon his son, in hopes that he might copy from the example of such an illustrious name-sake. The second difficulty concerns the father of Joseph, who is called Jacob by Matthew, and Heli by Luke. The most received opinion is, that Jacob was the father of Joseph, and Heli his father-in-law, by his marriage with Mary the daughter of Heli, and mother of our Lord.

Nearly related to Mary, though of the family of Aaron, were two personages illustrious for their piety; a priest named Zacharias, and his wife, whose name was Elizabeth. Though they had long walked in a very strict conformity with the institutions of Moses, they remained destitute of one of those blessings, which that dispensation promised to the obedient; for they had no offspring, nor the least expectations of any, being both very old.

“And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest’s office, in the order of his course; According to the custom of the priest’s office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.” Because some parts of the sacred service were more honourable than others, both the priests and Levites divided the whole among them by lot. The Jews tell us, that there were three priests employed about the service of the incense; one, who carried away the ashes left on the altar at the preceding sacrifice; another, who brought a pan of burning coals from the altar of sacrifice, and having placed it in the golden altar, departed; a third, who went in with the incense, sprinkled it on the burning coals, and while the smoke ascended, made intercession for the people. This was the part that fell to Zacharias, and the most honourable in the whole service. From the whole

multitude of the people being mentioned as praying without at this time, it is concluded, that it was at some great festival, a circumstance which duly attended to strengthen the credibility of the facts reported by the evangelist. Zacharias' tarrying in the temple beyond the usual time, must thus have been taken notice of by many, verse 21. There were likewise many, who, upon his coming out dumb, conjectured that he had seen a vision, verse 22. Matters of so public a nature, and the truth or falsehood of which so many must have known, would never have been thus openly appealed to by Luke if they had been really false.

When the angel appeared to Zacharias, it was in such a form, as evidently proved him to be a being of a superior nature, and therefore filled the mind of Zacharias with that awful sensation, which the greatest and best of mankind have often experienced on similar occasions. To relieve him from this apprehension, "the angel said, Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son." We cannot imagine that this holy man, at so advanced an age, and on such an occasion, would pray for the pregnancy of his wife, who was likewise very old. The priests, in this office, considered themselves as the mouth of the people, and made the welfare of the nation the subject of their prayers. Wherefore, since it is reasonable to suppose that Zacharias now interceded for the coming of the Messiah, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed, we may consider the angel's word as having a reference to such a prayer, thus: "The Messiah, for whose coming thou prayest, is about to be born, for thy wife shall bring forth his forerunner." Some, indeed, are of opinion, that the prayers which Zacharias may have put up for offspring when he and his wife were young, were meant. Yet the time and place of the vision gives reason to believe, that the object of it was a matter of more general concern:—"and thou shalt call his name John. And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias." The son of Zacharias had the spirit of Elias, equaling, if not exceeding him, in zeal for God, in severity of manners, in courage, and in sustaining persecutions. For he was clad in a garment of camel's hair, fed on locusts and wild honey, rebuked sinners of the highest distinction with great boldness, and was put to death on that account. He had the power also of Elias; for though he did no miracle, he was honoured with the like success in restoring the lost spirit of true religion among his countrymen. Nay, he even excelled Elias in that which is properly the power of a prophet, and to which all his other gifts

are subservient ; the power of converting men being in this more successful without miracles, than Elijah had been with them. By his preaching he made such a general change upon the manners of the nation, that he turned the hearts of the fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to their children the Jews, from whom they had been alienated on account of their wickedness ; and the hearts of the children to their fathers, by begetting in them a love of religion, and religious characters, and by so doing prepared a people for the coming of the Lord.

Thus God, by a supernatural interposition, testified his approbation of the piety of this religious pair. But Zacharias, looking on the pregnancy of his wife as a thing incredible, because she was greatly advanced in years, did not believe the news thereof, though brought him by an angel, and rashly demanded a sign in confirmation of it ; which want of faith was the more culpable, as he was well acquainted with the instances of Sarah, who brought forth Isaac in an extreme old age ; and of the wives of Manoah and Eleana, who, after long barrenness, conceived by the promise of angels. The angel, in reply, informed him that he was Gabriel, who stood in the presence of God, referring, as some suppose, to his station among the heavenly hosts ; or, as others think, to the place he then occupied in the temple. To confirm his faith, he gave him a sign, which was also a chastisement of his offence. Because he had sinned with his lips, the angel struck him dumb, declaring that he should continue so till the message, whose truth he had doubted of, was verified by the accomplishment. Accordingly, when Zacharias came out to the people, who had been praying in the court of the temple while the incense was burning, he could not speak to them ; but he made such signs as let them know he had seen a vision, which was the cause of his dumbness.

“ And it came to pass that as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed unto his own house.” This is generally supposed to have been in Hebron, a city of the priests, about twenty miles from Jerusalem. “ And after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.” The meaning is, either, that she saw no company, judging it proper to spend much of her time in the duties of devotion, and meditating silently on the wonderful goodness of God ; or, that she concealed her pregnancy for a while, lest she should expose herself to ridicule, by speaking of it before she knew certainly that it was a real conception.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy the angel Gabriel was sent to a city of Galilee, that he might there communicate the most important tidings to a young virgin, who, though a descendant of David, lived in circumstances of humble poverty, and was distinguished by nothing but her exemplary piety.

She was contracted to a man of the same tribe, and similar character, whose name was Joseph. It was usual among the Jews for women to be for some time thus contracted, before that they were taken home to reside with their husbands; they were considered as under all the obligations of wedlock, and every deviation from the rules of chastity was, in them, punishable as adultery.

When the angel entered the apartment where Mary resided, he addressed her with, "Hail! thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women," i. e. according to the Hebrew idiom, thou art the happiest of all the women that ever lived. A salutation so unusual from a being of a superior order, (for such his form, which was more than human, bespoke him to be,) put Mary into a great perturbation of spirit. Wherefore, to remove her fears, the angel, speaking with a soothing accent, bid her take courage; and explained what he had said, by telling her that she was the happiest woman upon earth, in having found such favour with God, as to be chosen to the highest honour that a mortal could enjoy. She was to conceive and bring forth the great person, who, on earth, was to be called Jesus, because he would be the restorer of human nature, and Saviour of the world; but in heaven was known by the name of the Son of God most high. Moreover, being the long-expected Messiah, the Lord God would give him the throne typified by that of David his earthly father; for he was to rule over the house of Jacob, the spiritual Israel, even all who imitated the faith and obedience of that good patriarch, and of this his kingdom there was to be no end. When Mary heard Gabriel say that she was to conceive Messiah, being conscious of her virginity, she found the matter above her comprehension, and therefore desired him to explain it. Being young and unexperienced, it was not to be expected that she could have a comprehension of mind and strength of faith, equal to that which the old priest Zacharias ought to have possessed. Besides, this was a thing supernatural, and altogether without example; for though it is not distinctly mentioned by the evangelist, it is plain, from Mary's answer, that the angel had let her know she was to conceive forthwith, and without the concurrence of a man. These seem to have been the reasons why Gabriel, who had struck Zacharias dumb for presuming to ask a sign in proof of his wife's future pregnancy, bore with the virgin, when she desired to know how hers could be brought about. In the mean time, it should be observed, that Mary did not, like Zacharias, insinuate, that she would not believe till a miracle was wrought to convince her; but only that she did not understand how her pregnancy could be effected in her virgin state, and desired him to explain it to her, not doubting but it was possible. Wherefore, the weakness of her apprehension being consistent with faith, and her request being conceived

with modesty and humility, the angel told her, that the wonderful event should be accomplished by the interposition of the Holy Spirit, and special energy of the power of God, who would preserve her reputation entire, at least in the opinion of impartial judges, and protect her from any injury which this mystery might expose her to. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee. Therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." He shall be called God's son, because thou shalt conceive him by the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost, causing him to exist in thy womb. Moreover, to confirm her faith, he acquainted her with the pregnancy of her cousin Elizabeth, who was then past the age of child-bearing, that being a thing similar, though inferior, to her own pregnancy, which he had been predicting. "And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her." In this answer Mary expressed both great faith and great resignation. She believed what the angel had told her concerning her conception, and wished for it, not regarding the inconveniences she might be exposed to thereby, well knowing that the power of God could easily protect her.

Mary now went to the city where Zacharias and Elizabeth resided. On her arrival she saluted her cousin. But she no sooner spake, than the child in the womb of Elizabeth leaped, as transported with joy. Moreover, the holy woman herself, inspired at the approach of the Messiah, saluted the virgin by the grand title of "The mother of my Lord." Being also in a divine and prophetic ecstasy, she uttered things which had an evident relation to the particulars of Mary's interview with the angel, things, therefore, which Elizabeth could know only by revelation; so that she astonished Mary exceedingly, and exalted her faith beyond every doubt. "And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed, for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord." In these last words she evidently commends the humble faith with which Mary had received the revelation which was made her by the angel. The virgin, having heard Elizabeth thus speak, was likewise filled with the Holy Ghost; so that, being inspired, she expressed the deepest sense of her own unworthiness, and of the infinite goodness of God in choosing her to the high

honour of being Messiah's mother. This she did in a hymn, which, though uttered extempore, is remarkable for the beauty of its style, the sublimity of its sentiments, and the spirit of piety which runs through the whole. "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." When a person, speaking of himself, mentions his soul or spirit doing a thing, it is the strongest expression in human language, and intimates his doing the thing mentioned with the utmost energy of all his faculties. Mary, therefore, by saying that "her soul magnified the Lord, and that her spirit rejoiced in God," meant to tell that she exerted the utmost vigour of all her faculties, in declaring the perfections of God, which constitute his greatness; and that the considerations of his goodness towards her filled her with joy, to the utmost extent of her capacity. "For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden." Though I am a person in the lowest station, and had not the least reason to expect that any thing extraordinary should arise from me; yet God hath put such honour on my condition, as to make me the instrument of bringing into the world Messiah, the desire of all nations, for which reason all generations shall esteem me peculiarly happy; "for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty," Almighty God, "hath done to me great things." Perhaps Mary had now in her eye her miraculous conception of Messiah. "And Holy is his name." She made this remark to signify her humble faith in God's wisdom and goodness. She was astonished that God should have chosen her, a person of the meanest condition, to be mother of Messiah. Yet, from her belief of the divine perfections, she was convinced that all was done in wisdom and truth. "And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation." So great is the goodness of God, that he rewards the piety of his servants upon their posterity, to the thousandth generation. [Exod. xx. 6.] By making this observation the virgin modestly insinuated, that she imputed the great honour that was done her, not to any merit of her own, but to the piety of her ancestors, Abraham and David, which God thus rewarded upon their latest posterity. "He hath shewed strength with his arm." It is an observation of Grotius, that God's great power is represented by his finger, his greater by his hand, and his greatest by his arm. The production of lice was the finger of God, [Exod. vii. 18.] and the other miracles in Egypt were done by his hand, [Exod. iii. 20.] but the destruction of Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, was brought to pass by his arm. [Exod. xv. 16.] Wherefore the virgin's meaning is, that in this dispensation of his providence God mightily manifested his sovereign power. "He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts." The proud, great women, who indulged many fond imaginations concerning the honour that should

accrue to them from giving birth to Messiah, he hath scattered ; he hath filled them with shame to such a degree, that they have scattered and hid themselves, in allusion to an army of cowards, who, breaking their ranks, run off in despair. "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree." The kings who sprang from David had, no doubt, one after another, expected to be the parents of Messiah ; and when the kingdom was taken from them, such of the royal progeny as were in the highest station, would reckon this their certain and highest privilege. But now their hope was wholly overthrown. They were brought down, by God, from that height of dignity to which, in their own imagination, they had exalted themselves ; and a person in the meanest condition of all the royal seed, was raised to it.

"He hath filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away." Both the poor and the rich are here represented as waiting at God's gate, in the condition of beggars ; the rich, in expectation of receiving the honour of giving birth to Messiah ; the poor, in expectation, not of that blessing, but hoping for such small favours as suited their condition. While they wait in this state, God, by an exercise of his sovereignty, bestows the favour so much courted by the rich on a poor family, to its unspeakable satisfaction, and sends the rich away disappointed and discontented. "He hath holpen his servant Israel." The word here translated *to help*, signifies properly to support a thing that is falling, by taking hold of it on the falling side. Mary's meaning, therefore, was, that God had now remarkably supported the Jewish nation, and hindered it from falling, by raising up Messiah among them, the matchless renown of whose undertaking would reflect infinite honour on the nation which gave him birth. Perhaps, also, by his servant Israel, she meant all those who are spiritually so called, "In remembrance of his mercy." When men remember things which they ought to perform, they commonly perform them, especially if no obstacle lies in their way. For some such reason as this the scriptures say, God remembers his attributes, when he exerts them in a signal manner, and his promises, when he fulfils them in spite of all opposition. So he is said to forget a thing when he acts outwardly, as men do when they have forgotten it. Yet, properly speaking, remembering and forgetting are both of them absolutely inconsistent with the perfections of God, in whose mind things past, present, and to come, are ever present. "As he spake to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his seed for ever," i. e. to all his seed, Gentiles as well as Jews. For though the virgin might not have a distinct conception of what she uttered, understood in this extensive view ; yet as she spoke by inspiration, there is nothing to hinder us from affixing such a meaning to her words, especially as the construction of the sentence would scarce admit of any other. It might, there-

fore, be better translated thus : “ In remembrance of his mercy to Abraham, and to his seed for ever, as he spake to our fathers.” And so, Mary having, to her unspeakable satisfaction, found all things as the angel had told her, she returned home at the end of three months, when the period of Elizabeth’s pregnancy was completed. “ And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house in Nazareth.”

“ Now Elizabeth’s full time came that she should be delivered, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord shewed great mercy upon her,” by giving her a son after so long a course of barrenness ; “ and they rejoiced with her. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they called him Zacharias after the name of his father.” The law did not enjoin that the child should have his name given him at circumcision ; but it was customary to do it then, because, at the institution of the rite, God changed the names of Abraham and Sarah, Gen. xvii. 15. “ And his mother answered and said, Not so, but he shall be called John.” She might, in this, act by revelation, or Zacharias may have explained the whole affair to her in writing. “ And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name. And they made signs to his father how he would have him called. And he asked,” namely, by signs, being dumb, “ for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, his name is John.” Zacharias had no sooner done writing, than he recovered his speech, the angel’s prediction being then fully accomplished. Accordingly, with an audible, articulate voice, he praised God in holy raptures, to the astonishment of all present, acknowledging the justice of the punishment that had been inflicted upon him, and the greatness of the sin which had procured it. By this open, affectionate confession, he impressed all his neighbours and acquaintance with a reverence for God, and a fear of offending him. Immediately after this he broke out in the following divine ode, “ Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he hath visited and redeemed his people.” For God to visit his people is a metaphorical expression, signifying to show them great favour. It is taken from the custom of princes, who commonly visit the provinces of their kingdom, in order to redress grievances and to confer benefits. The great benefit accruing to the people of God from the visitation which this holy man speaks of here, is their redemption or deliverance from all their spiritual enemies, by the coming of Messiah. “ And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David.” In the prophetic language a horn signifies power, dignity, and dominion, because the strength and beauty of several animals lie in their horns. A horn of salvation, therefore, is a power which works or brings salvation. Here it signifies Messiah, who was soon to appear to save his people, the knowledge of which grand event had been

communicated to Zacharias by the angel, who foretold the birth of his son, verse 17. "As he spake [promised] by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began. That we should be delivered from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us." The promise which was made ever since the world began, refers, no doubt, to the seed of the woman, who was to bruise the serpent's head. "To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; The oath which he sware to our father Abraham, That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life." God hath raised up a mighty deliverer in the house of David, to perform the great spiritual mercy which he promised to our fathers, and to fulfil that most gracious covenant, which he was pleased to confirm by oath to our father Abraham, Gen. xxii. 16. The tenor of which covenant was, that Abraham's spiritual seed, being delivered from their enemies by Messiah, should, under his government, worship God cheerfully, without slavish fear, and serve him by purity of heart and integrity of life throughout all generations. Having thus described the great blessing which Messiah, whose coming he had so near a prospect of, was about to confer upon men, Zachariah proceeded to speak concerning his own son, who, as the angel had told him, was to be Messiah's forerunner. "And thou, child, (pointing towards John, or, perhaps, taking him in his arms,) shalt be called the prophet of the Highest," thou shalt be the messenger of God most high; "for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his way; thou shalt go before the Lord Messiah, to dispose mankind to reverence him, and to receive his doctrine; and this thou shalt do, by preaching to his people the glad tidings, that there is salvation to be obtained, even by repentance, God having determined to pardon the sins of the penitent. "To give the knowledge of salvation unto his people, by the remission of their sins. Through the tender mercy of our God," though thou shalt give men the glad tidings of the pardon of their sins upon their repentance, thou shalt teach them that their pardon is the pure effect of the most tender mercy of God. Of which mercy this indeed is the highest expression, that he is about to make Messiah the sun of righteousness, foretold by the prophets to arise upon the world, "whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us. To give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death; to guide our feet into the way of peace." At his coming, Messiah shall enlighten, with the knowledge of salvation, the Gentile nations, who had long lived in ignorance and wickedness, which are the cause of death. Nay, he shall guide the feet even of us Jews into the way of happiness, by showing us more perfectly the will of God, and the method of salvation. In these elevated strains

did this pious man describe the great blessings which mankind were to enjoy by the coming of the seed promised to Adam, to Abraham, and to David.

We are informed that John grew and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel; referring, perhaps, to his early seeking retirement, as well as to his residing with his parents in the hill, or desert country of Judea.

As it was the fourth month of Mary's pregnancy when she returned from visiting Elizabeth, the signs of it began to appear. Her husband observed them, was incensed, and meditated the dissolution of the marriage. But before he came to a determination, it is natural to think he would converse with her upon the subject; and that she, in her own vindication, might relate to him the vision of the angel, the message he had brought her, and what happened to Zacharias and Elizabeth: perhaps, also, she might produce letters from Zacharias, foreseeing what was to happen. But Joseph, apprehensive that the whole might be a stratagem of Mary and her relations to save her reputation, thought himself obliged to divorce her, although he was not fully certain of her unchastity; for he was a religious observer of the law. Nevertheless, he resolved to do it privately, by putting the bill into her bosom before two witnesses only, and without mentioning in the bill the reason of the divorce, which might have exposed her to the punishment of death, Deut. xxii. 20, 21. Besides, he did not choose to make a public example of her, as there was a possibility that what she alleged might be true, in which case he believed her innocence would, some how or other, be made to appear. He, therefore, thought he was bound in justice to preserve her character as entire as possible, the circumstances alleged entitling her to this lenity, although they were not such as, in his opinion, could justify him if he should retain her. While he was revolving these things in his own mind he fell asleep, and, by an internal light, saw an angel, who explained to him the nature of Mary's pregnancy, banished his fears, and commanded him to take her home. The angel addressed Joseph as the son of David, that, putting him in mind of whom he was descended, he might the more easily be convinced of the truth of what he was about to tell him concerning his wife's pregnancy. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife." Do not scruple to take thy wife home; in doing so thou wilt neither commit sin thyself, nor cloak it in her. "For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost." She is innocent: her pregnancy is not the effect of any criminal correspondence, it is miraculous, being produced by the operation of the Holy Ghost. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." By the direction which I now give thee thou shalt call the son which thy wife hath miraculously conceived, and will

bring forth in due time, Jesus, or Saviour, to intimate that he is the seed promised to Abraham and to David; who, by publishing the new dispensation, and by giving himself a ransom for the sins of many, shall deliver his people, both from the dominion and punishment of sin, and bring them to everlasting life. This remarkable interposition of providence is an illustrious proof of the care which God takes of good men, both in affording them direction, and in keeping them from sin. "Now all this was done." The clause, all this, comprehends not only what is mentioned in the preceding verses, but the whole particulars of this transaction; and, among the rest, the circumstance taken notice of in the last verse of the chapter; viz. that Joseph did not know Mary till she was delivered, because that circumstance, as well as her miraculous conception, was necessary to the accomplishment of the prophecy now cited by the evangelist, that a virgin was to bring forth a son in her virgin state;—"that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, [Isa. vii. 14.] saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." Mary's miraculous conception of Jesus, in her virgin state, was an evident accomplishment of the same prophecy, which likewise foretold that the virgin's son should be called Emanuel. This application merits the reader's attention, being a clear proof that the writers of the New Testament, in citing and applying the passages of the Old, considered the sense of those passages rather than the words. Otherwise, how could Matthew have said, that Joseph's naming Mary's son Jesus, was an accomplishment of Isaiah's prophecy, which foretold that the son of the virgin, mentioned by him, should be called Emanuel? Indeed, if the sense of the prophecy is attended to, the application will appear abundantly proper; for the name Jesus, is, upon the whole, of the same import with Emanuel, because none but the Son of God, who is God, could be Jesus, or the Saviour of mankind. And, therefore, the Saviour, appearing on earth in the human nature, is really "God with us." That this is the true design of the application is evident from the evangelist himself; for he has interpreted both the name Jesus, as well as Emanuel, to show that the prophecy was fulfilled, not in the names, but in the signification of them.

Joseph, when he awoke, must have been sensible that what had happened to him was in a dream; yet he was at no loss to believe the reality of the vision. The strength of the impression, with other proofs usually given in such cases, left him no room to doubt that the vision was from God; and, therefore, he no sooner awoke, than he felt his mind perfectly at ease, upon which he obeyed the heavenly message with joy. He took his wife home, after giving her an account of the revelation that had been made to him of her innocence, assuring her that he was

now fully persuaded of it, and of all the extraordinary things she had related. At the same time, in his conversation with her, he observed such chastity as was suitable to so high a mystery. "And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son, and he called his name Jesus." This circumstance the evangelist takes particular notice of, lest any reader should have suspected that there was not an exact accomplishment here of the prophecy, which foretold, not only that a virgin should conceive, but that a virgin should bring forth a son.

In those days there went out a decree from Augustus Cæsar, that the whole land of Palestine should be taxed, or enrolled. This was the enrolment of the census, first practised by Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, who ordained that the Roman people, at certain seasons, should, upon oath, give an account of their names, qualities, employments, wives, children, servants, estates, and places of abode. By this institution, Servius designed to put those who had the administration of public affairs in a condition to understand the strength of every particular part of the community, that is, what men and money might be raised from it; and according to those assessments, or estimates, men and money were levied afterwards, as occasion required.

Some are of opinion, this enrolment, at the birth of Christ, was only of men's names, not the enrolment of the census, in order to a taxation; because, Herod being then alive, Judea was not become a Roman province. And it must be acknowledged, that the word here translated taxed, is used indifferently, to signify any enrolment whatever. Yet it seems to mean the enrolment of the census in Luke, because, though Judea was not reduced into the form of a province, Herod was really a tributary prince, having been established in his kingdom by the Roman arms. Besides, his subjection very remarkably appeared about this time, in the differences which happened between him and Obodas, prince of Arabia, about a sum of money that Herod had lent to him. For the matter in dispute between the princes was decided by Saturninus and Voluminius, the emperor's officers in Syria: and after Obodas, or his successor Syllacus, had broken the stipulations fixed upon, Herod did not dare to move his forces into Arabia, without the consent of the above-mentioned officers. Augustus, indeed, imagining that he had done so, was highly incensed; for Syllacus, who was then at Rome, and had received an account of Herod's inroad, misrepresented the matter to Augustus. The latter, therefore, wrote to Herod, acquainting him, that, whereas he had hitherto treated him as a friend, he should, for the future, treat him as a subject. But if Herod, while a friend of Augustus, was then under command, what could treatment as a subject mean, but his obliging him to submit to the census, according to which, taxes were from that time forth to be levied in his dominions? We have an instance of this among the Cilicians, in the six-

teenth book of Tacitus's Annals. Besides, Augustus's displeasure with Herod did not soon end, for he refused to see the ambassadors whom Herod sent to make his peace. Nay, he rejected the presents offered him by a second embassy; and though a reconciliation was at length effected, by the address of Nicholas of Damascus, whom Herod sent to Rome on purpose, it was far from being perfect; for Antipater, Herod's son, was obliged to defend him, with the emperor, against Syllacus, the year before Herod died, and to support his defence, by distributing large sums of money among the courtiers.

It is probable, therefore, that a census was made in Judea by order of Augustus, during his displeasure with Herod, whose advanced age and infirmities, together with the ambitious views and divisions which reigned in his family, determined Augustus to reduce this country into the form of a province. But Herod, regaining the emperor's favour, prevailed with him to let things go on in their old channel. It is reasonable to suppose it was at this enrolment that the oath was imposed, which, Josephus tells us, the whole Jewish nation, excepting six thousand Pharisees, took to be faithful to Cæsar, and to the interests of the king. *Antiq.* xvii. 3. That this oath was imposed at the enrolment is thought probable, because it was the custom of the Romans to require the valuation of every man's substance, to be delivered in upon oath. And as this oath, at the enrolment of the Jews, was taken before commissioners, on the part of Herod and Augustus, it was, probably, represented as an oath of subjection to both kings. Perhaps an article of allegiance was added to the oath of the enrolment; for unless it was on such an occasion, it will be hard to understand how Herod came to require an oath of allegiance from the Jews at the close of his reign; far less, how such an oath could be required from them to Augustus, who had not made Judea a province. Add to this, that the events which followed the oath, of which Josephus speaks, are very like the things which happened after the enrolment.

The Pharisees who refused to swear, as imagining the law forbade them, [*Deut.* xvii. 15.] were fined: but the wife of Pheroras, Herod's brother, paid the fine for them, and they, in requital of her kindness, foretold that God, having decreed to put an end to the government of Herod and his race, the kingdom should be transferred to her, and to Pheroras, and to their children. Salome, the king's sister, informing him of these things, it is said, that he put the most guilty of the Pharisees to death, and Bagoas the eunuch, and every one in his own family who adhered to the things which were spoken by the Pharisees. The words of Josephus are, "But Bagoas had been elevated by them, in that he should be called father and benefactor; the king, who was to be appointed according to their prediction, (for all things would be in his power.) being

to give him a capacity of marriage, and of having children of his own." *Antiq.* xvii. 3, translated by Dr. Lardner, *Cred.* vol. ii. p. 630. Here we have a king described, in whose power all things would be, which is evidently Messiah's character. The disturbances which happened in Jerusalem after this, and the slaughter made in Herod's family and court, were all on account of the birth of this new king. It is thought that this is the perplexity of Herod and Jerusalem described by Matthew. And as for the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem, though Josephus has passed it over in silence, Herod's other cruelties, related by that historian, render it abundantly probable. The persons who predicted the birth of the king were the Pharisees, according to Josephus. In the gospel they are called the chief priests and scribes, who, from the ancient prophecies, told Herod that this rival king was to be born in Bethlehem, and so are said, by Josephus, to have predicted his birth. Indeed the whole of the affair is very slightly handled: but it must be remembered, that Josephus, being a Jew, would consult the reputation of his country, and conceal the taxing, or, at least, give it a favourable turn. Being also an enemy to christianity, he would not willingly relate many particulars which had a strong tendency to support it. It is on all hands agreed, that our translation of Luke ii. 2. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) is not to be admitted. But if it be rendered, this is the first enrolment of Cyrenius, governor of Syria, or that this enrolment was first carried into effect by Cyrenius, governor of Syria, the difficulty will be removed, as Cyrenius did not tax the country in his own name, till after that Archelaus had been deposed from the government.

When the census was made in any country, the inhabitants were obliged to attend in the cities to which they belonged. The reason was, without a precaution of this kind, the census would have been excessively tedious, and people who were abroad might have been omitted or set down among the inhabitants of other cities, where they would not have been found afterwards; or they might have been enrolled twice, which would have bred confusion in the registers. Herod, who, it is probable, executed the census in his own dominions, by appointment of Augustus, seems to have made a small alteration in the method of it. For instead of ordering the people to appear, as usual, in the cities where they resided, or to whose jurisdictions the place of their abode belonged, he ordered them to appear according to their families; perhaps, because it was the ordinary way of classing the Jewish people, or because he desired to know the number and strength of the dependents of the great families in his dominions. In obedience to Herod's order, Joseph and Mary repaired to Bethlehem, the city of their family, where, some have supposed, they might have a

small estate. Bethlehem was a town of great antiquity, for we read of it in Jacob's days when it was called Ephrath. Gen. xxxv. 19: in later times it was called Bethlehem Judah, to distinguish it from another Bethlehem which was in Galilee, and belonged to the tribe of Zabulon, Josh. xix. 15. Anciently Bethlehem of Judah was but a village, though afterwards it obtained the title of a city, being enlarged and fortified by Rehoboam. [2 Chron. xi. 6.] Yet it continued to be a small place even after that reparation, as may be gathered from Micah's prophecy, quoted Matt. ii. 6, which is the reason that it is called a village, John vii. 42. Eusebius, in his book of Hebrew places, tells us, that it stood six miles to the south of Jerusalem, on the road to Hebron, and, upon his authority, it is so placed in all the maps. Here they found every place so crowded, that they were obliged to take up their lodging in a stable, where Mary was delivered of the holy child, and laid him in a recess in the wall, which our translation calls a manger, though mangers are not used in the east.

Through the whole course of his life, Jesus despised the things most esteemed by men; for though he was the Son of God, when he became man, he chose to be born of parents in the meanest condition of life. Though he was heir of all things, he chose to be born in an inn, nay, in the stable of an inn, where, instead of a cradle, he was laid in a manger. The angels reported the good news of his birth, not to the Rabbies and great men, but to shepherds, who, being plain, honest people, were, unquestionably, good witnesses of what they heard and saw. When he grew up he wrought with his father as a carpenter; and afterwards, while he executed the duties of his ministry, he was so poor that he had not a place where to lay his head, but lived on the bounty of his friends. Thus, by going before men in the thorny path of poverty and affliction, he has taught them to be contented with their lot in life, however humble it may be.

On the night in which the Son of God was born, a multitude of angels, despatched from the seats of the blessed, found the shepherds, who were honoured with the news of his nativity, watching their flocks by turns in the fields near Bethlehem. An inexpressible splendour surrounding these heavenly beings, terrified the shepherds exceedingly, at the same time that it gave them notice of their arrival. Therefore, to calm their fears, one of the angels bade them take courage, because he was come on a friendly errand, namely, to inform them that the Messiah, who should bless all nations, was born in Bethlehem. Moreover, he mentioned the particular place where they should find him, and gave them marks to distinguish him by. "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." Glory to God in the highest

heavens, or among the highest orders of beings. Let the praises of God (so the word glory signifies, Psalm 1. 23, "whoso offereth praise glorifieth me,") be eternally celebrated by the highest orders of beings, notwithstanding they are not the immediate objects of this instance of his infinite goodness,—“and on earth peace among men.” On earth let all manner of happiness (so peace signifies in the Hebrew language) from henceforth prevail among men for ever, because the designs of the devil against them are utterly overthrown. And as they departed they shouted in the sweetest, most sonorous, and most seraphic strains, BENEVOLENCE; expressing the highest admiration of the goodness of God, which now began to shine with brighter lustre than ever, on the arrival of his Son to save the world. As soon as the celestial choir had ended their hymn, the shepherds went in quest of the Saviour of mankind. Though it is not mentioned, it looks as if the angel had described to them the particular inn in Bethlehem where Messiah was born: and found the child lying where the angel had said, they were, by that sign, fully confirmed in their belief, and with boldness declared both the vision which they had seen, and the things which they had heard pronounced by the angel and the heavenly host with him. And when they had seen the child, they made known abroad, they declared, without reserve, to all present, and to all their acquaintance afterward, the saying which was told them concerning this child, namely, that he was Christ the Lord, and the Saviour of the Jews; that a vision of angels had given this information; and that they had heard the heavenly host praising God on account of his birth. “And all they that heard it, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.” Joseph and Mary, with the people of the inn who attended them, and such of their relations as were come up to Bethlehem to be taxed, and happened to be with them on this occasion, were exceedingly astonished at the things which the shepherds openly declared; and the rather, because they could not understand how one born of such mean parents could be Messiah. In the mean time, Mary was greatly affected with, and thought upon, the shepherds’ words, the sense of which she was enabled to fathom, by what had been revealed to herself. She said nothing, however, being more disposed to think than to speak, which was an excellent instance of modesty and humility in so great a conjecture.

The shepherds now returned home, and, by the way, praised God, expressing their gratitude for him, for having condescended, by a particular revelation, to inform them of so great an event as the birth of Messiah, and because they had seen the signs by which the angel in the vision pointed him out to them.

As it became our Lord to fulfil all righteousness, so he was circumcised on the eighth day, and received the name of Jesus

by divine appointment. "And when the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord, (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called Holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons." This was the offering appointed for the poorer sort. It is evident, therefore, that although Joseph and Mary were both of the seed-royal, they were in very mean circumstances. The evangelist mentions the presentation of the child to the Lord, before the offering of the sacrifice for the mother's purification; but, in fact, this preceded the presentation, because, till it was performed, the mother could not enter the temple; accordingly Luke himself introduces both the parents presenting Jesus, v. 27.

The service of Mary's purification, therefore, being ended, she went, with her son in her arms, into the temple, and assisted her husband in presenting him to the Lord. On this occasion two extraordinary incidents happened, which not a little confirmed their faith, and raised their hopes concerning the future greatness of their son. There was now, it seems, in Jerusalem, one Simeon, venerable on account of his age, his prophetic spirit, his virtue, and his consummate piety. This good man had lived long in expectation of seeing Messiah; for God had favoured him so highly, as to assure him, by a particular revelation, that he should not die till he had seen the Lord's Christ. "And he came by the spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law; then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:" let me depart out of the world, filled with the satisfaction of having seen the Messiah, according to the gracious promise thou wast pleased to make me. This good man, having obtained the utmost pitch of felicity in the gratification of that which had always been his highest wish, and having no farther use for life, desired immediate death: yet he could not depart of himself, knowing that no man can lawfully desert his station, till God, who placed him therein, calls him off. "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Simeon being well acquainted with the prophetic writings, knew, from them, that Messiah was to be the author of a great salvation, which, because it was planned by God, this pious man very properly refers to God;—"thy salvation." He knew, likewise, that this salvation was not designed for the Jews only, but for all mankind; therefore he says, it was prepared by God, "before the face of all people." Withal, because, in the prophecies, Messiah is introduced teaching and ruling the Gentiles, he calls

him after Isaiah, "a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of Israel," whom he greatly honoured, by condescending to arise among them.

Simeon's words surprised both Joseph and Mary, not because they imported things greater than could be applied to their son, they knew him to be the Messiah, and so must have been sensible that they were what properly belonged to him, but they marvelled how Simeon, a stranger, came to the knowledge of the child. "And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also;) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." Thus Simeon informed them of the different effects which Christ's preaching should produce, and the severe persecutions he, and his friends upon his account, shall be called to endure.

"And there was one Anna a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser, she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about four-score and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." The meaning is, not that Anna abode continually in the temple, for none lived there, save the priests and Levites; but she attended constantly at the morning and evening sacrifices, and was often in the exercise of private prayer and fasting, spending the greatest part of her time in the temple, as we find the apostles doing, Acts ii. 46. This good woman having the Messiah discovered to her, either by what Simeon had said, or by a particular revelation of the Spirit, the favour which God now conferred on her, in allowing her to behold his Christ, filled her with an ecstasy of joy. She, therefore, praised the Lord aloud, with great fervency, and spake afterwards of the child under the character of Messiah, to all her acquaintance in Jerusalem, that had any sense of religion, or faith in its promises. "And she, coming in at that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." This is the reading of most of the Greek copies, and of the Syriac version; but an old copy, mentioned by Mill, has, "to all who looked for the redemption of Israel."

It is generally supposed, that immediately after these events, Christ's parents removed to Nazareth, and returned not again to Bethlehem, though Luke's words do not necessarily imply this, but only that Nazareth was the place of Christ's education.

Matt. ii. 1, 2. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." Alberti and others think, the philoso-

phers who now visited our Lord were learned Jews, called, by their own nation, scribes, many of which order lived in Persia, Babylonia, Arabia, Syria, and other eastern countries, being the posterity of the captives who did not return home, when permitted by the decree of Cyrus. It is supposed, that they came as ambassadors, in the name of the whole body, to do homage to the Messiah, and to congratulate their brethren on his birth. But the circumstances of the history are inconsistent with this hypothesis. For had the magi been Jewish scribes, they must have known all the prophecies relating to Messiah, and, therefore, could not have any need to inquire, either of their brethren scribes, or of Herod, concerning the place of his nativity. Besides, we are not under the smallest necessity of making such a supposition, as there is nothing incredible in the fact, that heathen philosophers came into Judea at this juncture, and inquired concerning the birth of the Messiah; for, from authors of unquestionable credit, we know an opinion had long prevailed over all the east, that in Judea one was to be born about this time, who should become universal monarch of the world. Thus Suetonius in *Vespas. c. 4*, “An old and firm opinion had prevailed over all the east, that it was written in the books of the Fates, that one, coming out of Judea at that time, should obtain the empire of the world. This, which as the event afterwards showed, was foretold of a Roman emperor, the Jews, applying it to themselves, rebelled.” In like manner Tacit. *Hist. b. v. c. 13*. “Many were persuaded, that it was written in the ancient books of the priests, that, at that very time, the east should recover strength, and that certain, coming out of Judea, should obtain the empire of the world; which mysterious prediction foretold Vespasian and Titus. But the common people (he is speaking of the Jews) according to the usual bias of human passions, interpreting this mighty fortune as designed for themselves, could not be brought to understand the truth by their calamities.” Josephus, also, has these remarkable words: “But that which chiefly pushed them on to the war, was an ambiguous oracle found in their sacred books, that, at that time, one from their own country should rule the world.”

What the original was of this uncommon expectation, which now prevailed among such different and widely distant nations, is not difficult to ascertain. Among the Jews, it took its rise from the prophecies of the Messiah, contained in their sacred books, as Josephus and Tacitus insinuate. Among the Arabians, it was derived from the promise made to Abraham, whose descendants they were by Ishmael. Of this promise they preserved a traditional knowledge, as is evident from the words of the Arabian prophet Balaam, *Numb. xxiv. 17*, “There shall come a star out of Jacob,” &c. which the LXX. interpret thus; “A man shall come forth of his [Jacob’s] seed,

and shall rule many nations, and his kingdom shall be exalted above Gog, [the name of the kings of the Scythick nations,] and it shall be increased." And even in later times, the words of this prophecy, by most interpreters, are applied to the Messiah. Among the other eastern nations, the expectation above mentioned owed its original to their commerce with the Jews and Arabians, but especially with the Jews; who, in their several captivities, being dispersed through the east, spread the knowledge of their prophecies, together with their religion, wherever they came, and begat that expectation which was so universal, that it merited to be taken notice of even by Roman historians. To conclude: we are told that Zoroastres, or Zordusht, the celebrated reformer of the magian discipline and worship in Persia, was servant to the prophet Daniel, who had particular revelations made to him concerning the coming of the Messiah: if so, it will not seem at all improbable, that the expectation of his arising in Judea should have remained so strongly imprinted in the belief of the disciples of Zoroastres, that, on the appearing of a new star, three of them should have been moved to undertake this journey, in order to be witnesses of the truth of its accomplishment.

It was the opinion of some of the ancients, that the star which the magi saw in their own country was the Holy Spirit; others supposed it was an angel; others, a new star in the firmament; others, a comet; others, some luminous appearance in the air. Lightfoot thinks it was the glory that shone round the angels who appeared to the Bethlehem shepherds on the night of the nativity. Probably, it was a bright meteor, which, at its first appearance, was high in the air, afterwards it descended so low, as to conduct the magi to Bethlehem. But whatever this star was, both the thing signified by it, and the course which the philosophers were to pursue, seem to have been explained to them by revelation.

The arrival of the wise men, and their errand, being quickly noised abroad, soon reached Herod's ears; or these strangers may have got themselves introduced at court immediately upon their coming. Whatever way it happened, the news which they brought, and the inquiry which they made, gave great uneasiness to Herod, and to the whole of the people in Jerusalem. "When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." In the midst of this general consternation, the tyrant, who was more deeply concerned than them all, concealing his uneasiness, seemed to hear the magi with pleasure, and showed them abundance of respect; for, that he might return a proper answer to their question, he assembled the supreme council of the nation, and inquired of them where the Messiah should be born. "And when he had gathered the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born." The chief

priests were, either those who had enjoyed the dignity of the high-priesthood, which was now become elective and temporary, or the chiefs of the sacerdotal classes, the heads of the courses of priests appointed by David. The scribes were the interpreters of the law, and the public teachers of the nation. All these being illustrious for their learning and station, were consulted upon this important question. They replied, that the ancient prophecies had assigned the honour of Messiah's nativity to Bethlehem of Judea; and by their answer they have showed what the general opinion of the nation, at this time, was, concerning the place of Messiah's nativity. "And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet: And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel."

If this quotation be compared with Micah v. 2, there will be perceived a variation of expression, but a coincidence of meaning. They may, either of them, be paraphrased thus: Though the quality of thy inhabitants is such, that thou canst not be reckoned as one of the principal thousands of Judah, thou art by no means among the least of these thousands. On the contrary, thou art, in point of dignity, one of the greatest cities, for thou shalt give birth to the governor of my people, whose going forth hath been of old; thou shalt give birth to Messiah. This answer of the Jewish senate was acquiesced in by Herod as indubitable; for he immediately sent the magi to Bethlehem. "Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared first;" for by that circumstance he could form a probable conjecture, how long it was since the child, concerning whom they inquired after, was born. He naturally judged, that Messiah's parents would conceal him; for which reason, he formed a project of killing all the children of Bethlehem of such an age, that there might be no possibility of his escaping. In the mean time, to hide his bloody purpose from the wise men, he desired them, as soon as they found the child, to let him know, that he also might have an opportunity of worshipping him, professing great respect for this infant king.

The magi having received these instructions, departed by themselves under the guidance of the star which had led them all the way from their own country, but had stood still, or disappeared, on their arrival in Judea. The disappearing of the star, or even its standing still, laid the strangers under a necessity of going to the capital for farther information, which the wisdom of God thus brought about, in order that their errand might be the better published. Accordingly, when that end was obtained, and they were departing from Jerusalem, the star appeared again, or began to move, going before them till it came to Bethlehem, where, to their exceeding joy, it stood over

the house in which the new-born King was lodged. They straightway entered, and falling down before him with the most profound reverence, offered him gifts of considerable value, probably, after having explained the occasion of their coming, as they had done before in Jerusalem: and, at night, being warned by God in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned into their own country by another way.

This visit which the magi, under the divine direction, made to the Son of God, at his entrance into the world, answered several valuable purposes. 1. The principal thing was, to show succeeding generations what expectations of him were entertained, at this very time, among the gentiles; and thereby to confirm, in latest ages, the existence of those prophecies, which had raised such a general hope in the breasts of mankind. 2. It is far from being absurd to suppose, that these philosophers, by the tidings which they carried home concerning the king of the Jews, might prepare their countrymen for becoming his subjects in due time: for if their report was remembered by the succeeding generation, it must have contributed, not a little, to their cheerful reception of the gospel, when it was preached to them. 3. The coming of the magi occasioned the answer of the sanhedrim, wherein it was declared to be the unanimous opinion of the most learned Jewish doctors then living, that by the designation of heaven, Bethlehem was to be the place of their Messiah's nativity. 4. The seasonable beneficence of those learned strangers, put Joseph in a condition to subsist his family in Egypt, whither he was soon to be sent from the wrath of the king.

But to return: though Herod's real designs, with respect to the king of the Jews, were hid from men, they did not elude the knowledge of God, who, foreseeing what the tyrant's cruelty would lead him to do, warned Joseph, by an angel, to flee with his family into Egypt. "And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph, in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt. And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, out of Egypt have I called my son."

This prophecy, as it stands, Hosea xi. 1. seems to have been spoken originally of the Israelites. Nevertheless, the application which the evangelist has made of it to Christ is just, as will appear from what follows. The bringing of people into Egypt was a proverb for laying them under great hardships, and took its rise from the afflictions which the Israelites sustained in that country. The threatening [Deut. xxviii. 68.] that the Israelites should be sent back again into Egypt,

affords a proof of this proverbial use of the expression; for we do not find the Israelites carried back into Egypt, as the punishment of the first instances of their rebellion, but into Assyria and Babylon, captivities which have ever been looked upon as the execution of that threatening. But if the carrying of people into Egypt was a proverbial expression for laying them under great hardships, by parity of reason, any singular interposition of providence, in behalf whether of a person or nation, might be termed a calling them out of Egypt, the Israelites having been delivered from the Egyptian bondage by visible and most astonishing exertions of the divine power. Agreeably to this remark, we find the return of the Jews from Assyria and Babylon, represented by the prophet Zechariah, x. 10, 11, under the figure of bringing them again out of Egypt. But that no reader might mistake his meaning, he adds, I will gather them out of Assyria. At the same time, he adumbrates the interpositions of divine providence, for accomplishing their deliverance from Assyria, by the miracles that were formerly wrought, to bring about the ancient deliverance from Egypt. And he shall pass through the sea with affliction, and shall smite the waves of the sea, and all the depths of the river shall dry up. And the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away. See Psalm lxxviii. 22. It is replied, indeed, that in later times, the Jews were carried captives into Egypt by the Ptolemies, and that this is a prediction of their deliverance from thence. But the answer is, that if the one part of the prophecy is to be understood literally, the other must be so likewise. Nevertheless, we do not find the Jews of later times brought out of Egypt by any singular interposition of providence at all, as was the case when they were made to return from the eastern captivities; much less were they brought out by God's smiting the waves of the sea, and drying up the deeps of the river, and making the sceptre of Egypt to depart away. It is much more proper, therefore, to interpret this prophecy of the deliverance from Babylonish captivity, effected by the divine destruction of the Babylonish empire, to accomplish which, Cyrus was raised up. If so, the prophecy, in this sense, affords us a proverbial use of God's bringing, or calling, his people out of Egypt, applicable to the present case: for as Christ's flying into Egypt, from the wrath of Herod, happened in consequence of a message from heaven, and was the means of saving his life; it might fitly have the prophetic and proverbial expression, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son," applied to it. And what confirms this remark is, that we find the prophecy, or proverb, rather applied, not to Christ's coming out of Egypt, but his going thither.

"Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the

children that were in Bethlehem, and all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." This prophecy, and its application, differ in two particulars. 1. The persons spoken of in the prophecy, were not put to death in the history; for [Jer. xxxi. 16, 17.] we find them coming again from the land of the enemy, to their own border: Thus saith the Lord, refrain thy voice from weeping, &c. 2. The lamentation described by the prophet was in Ramah, whereas, that mentioned by the evangelist was in Bethlehem. Now we learn from Judges xix. 2, 10, 13, that Ramah was at a considerable distance from Bethlehem, Jerusalem lying between them. Wherefore, the application of the prophecy to the slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem is made, rather by way of accommodation than completion; that is to say, it is an application of the expressions and figures of the prophecy, rather than of the prophecy itself. From Jer. xl. 1, it appears, that when Nebuzaradan was going to carry the Jews away to Babylon, he gathered them together in the plains of Ramah. But as the Babylonish captivity was the most terrible disaster that ever befell the Israelites, Jeremiah, predicting it, beautifully introduces Rachel their mother crying bitterly in Ramah, when she saw her children driven out of their country, slaves to heathens. It was not, however, his intention to affirm, that this circumstance would actually happen, for Rachel did not rise from the dead to bewail the Babylonish captivity; but he meant it as a poetical figure, to show the greatness of the desolation that was then to be made. It is plain, therefore, that Matthew uses the prophet's words in their genuine meaning, when he applies them to the slaughter of the infants, though that event was not predicted by Jeremiah. For as in the prophecy, so in the history, the mother of the Israelites is figuratively introduced weeping at the calamity of her children, a liberty taken by all animated writers, when they have a mind to heighten their descriptions. In the mean time, the figure, as it is made use of by the evangelist, has a peculiar beauty, which is wanting in the prophet. Rachel being buried in the fields of Bethlehem, [Gen. xlviii. 7.] where the infants were slain, she is awakened by their cries, rises out of her grave, and bitterly bewails her little ones, who lie slaughtered in heaps around her.

"But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the child's life." This last expression is supposed to include Antipater, one of the worst

of the sons of Herod. "And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene. This prediction that Christ should be a Nazarene, has been, by some, referred to the passages where he is called the branch, in Hebrew *natzi*; and by others, to those passages where his humiliation is predicted, Nazarene being a proverbial term of reproach.

"Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover. And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast. And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem, and Joseph and his mother knew not of it." Wherefore, not doubting that he had set out with some of his relations or acquaintance, they went a day's journey, in expectation of overtaking him on the road, or at the village where they were to lodge. Accordingly, when they came thither, they sought him, but to no purpose. Greatly afflicted, therefore, with their disappointment, they returned next day to Jerusalem, in the utmost anxiety, to try if they could learn what was become of him. Here, on the morrow after their arrival, which was the third day from their leaving the city, they found him, to their great joy, in one of the chambers of the temple, sitting among the doctors, who, at certain seasons, and particularly in time of the great festivals, taught there publicly; a custom hinted at, Jer. xxvi. 5, 6, 7, 10. See also John xviii. 20. It seems, the child Jesus had presented himself to the doctors, in order to be catechised; for we are told, that in the answers which he returned to their questions, and the objections which he made to their doctrine, he discovered a wisdom and penetration, which raised the admiration of all present, even to astonishment. And as it is himself who has told us, that, on this occasion, he was employed in his Father's business, it is probable, that in these his answers and objections, he modestly insinuated corrections of the errors wherewith the Jewish teachers had now greatly disfigured religion. His parents finding him here engaged in such an employment, were surprised beyond measure; and his mother, in particular, not able to repress the emotion she was in, chid him with a tender vehemence, for leaving them without their knowledge, and putting them to so much pain. He replied, that they had no reason to be angry with him for leaving them without their knowledge, nor even to be grieved on that account, since they might have understood, by his miraculous conception, and the revelations which accompanied it, that he was not to continue always with them, but was to em-

ploy himself in his business who was really his Father. His parents, however, did not understand him; perhaps, because they now doubted his being the Messiah, as he had not disappeared according to the notion of the scribes, or, rather, because they had few just conceptions of the end for which the Messiah was sent into the world. Nevertheless, that he might not seem to encourage disobedience in children, by withdrawing himself, at that weak age, from under the government of his parents, it is particularly taken notice of by the evangelist, that "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them; but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart:" though she did not understand them fully, she was deeply impressed with them, and thought much upon them. "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." Though his divine nature was capable of no improvement, his human received distinct and gradual illuminations as he advanced in years. For as our Lord condescended to be like his brethren in body, so it was not below him to resemble them in the other, and no less essential part of their nature, their soul. Accordingly, it is observed, that he industriously declined showing himself in public, till ripeness of years and judgment brought him to the perfections of a man.

Such as may wish to know further particulars of our Lord's childhood and private life, may, perhaps, be gratified by the following remarks of Dr. Macknight. "What early proofs he gave of his having the divine nature united to the human; what proficiency he made in knowledge, and the methods by which he advanced therein; what way he employed himself when he arrived at man's estate; what notions his acquaintance formed of him; the manner of his conversing with them; and other things of a like nature, the Holy Spirit has not thought fit to explain. The following particulars only are left upon record.—That he had not the advantage of a liberal education, [John vii. 15.] received no instructions, probably, but what his parents gave him according to the law; [Deut. iv. 9, 10. vi. 7.] yet at the age of twelve years, when carried up to Jerusalem, he distinguished himself, among the doctors, by such a degree of wisdom and penetration, as far exceeded his years. That he very early understood the design on which he was come into the world;—"Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" That as he grew in years, he became remarkable for his wisdom and stature, advancing gradually in the former as well as in the latter; and that by the comeliness of his person, the sweetness of his disposition, and the uncommon vigour of his faculties, he engaged the affections of all who had the happiness of knowing him. Luke ii. 52, "And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man." That as his mind was filled with wisdom, and always serene, being perfectly free from those turbulent passions which distract other

men, his countenance, no doubt, must have been composed and agreeable, such as did betoken the strength of his understanding, and the goodness of his heart. The expression, "the grace of God was upon him," found, Luke ii. 40, may imply this, unless it be thought an explication of the precedent clause, "He waxed strong in spirit, and was filled with wisdom," see Raph. not. Polyb. p. 186, who makes it probable, that the grace of God, in the passage under consideration, is the Hebrew highest superlative, being an expression of the same form with the mountains of God, i. e. exceeding high mountains, and so is equivalent to the description which Stephen gave of Moses's beauty, Acts vii. 20, "He was exceeding fair." Besides, we find the word *grace* in a similar sense by Luke, iv. 22, "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;" the harmony and beauty of his diction, as well as the importance of his subject. I confess, this observation concerning our Lord's form may appear somewhat singular, yet a nearer view of it will conciliate our approbation; for if his stature was so remarkable in his youth, that it deserved to be taken notice of twice by the evangelist Luke, ii. 40, 52, his comeliness might be so likewise. Nor is any thing which the prophets have said of him, for instance, Isaiah lii. 14, inconsistent with this conjecture; for the meanness of the Messiah's condition, and the disposition of the Jews towards him, are described in that prophecy, rather than the form of his person; just as Psal. xlv. 3, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most Mighty, with thy glory, and thy majesty," describes the triumphs of his religion, rather than the majesty and the glory of his outward form. The evangelist tells us farther, that Jesus was possessed of an uncommon and prevailing eloquence, inso-much, that his hearers were often amazed at the beauty of his discourses, [Luke iv. 22,] and some of them made to cry out, "Never man spake like this man," John vii. 46. That he remained subject to his parents, and lived with them in humble obscurity till he entered on his public ministry, which commenced about the thirtieth year of his age; the excellences of his divine nature having been, for the most part, veiled, during the whole course of his private life. And that, as soon as his strength permitted, he wrought with his father, at his occupation of a carpenter, Mark vi. 3, leaving us an admirable example, both of filial duty and prudent industry."

"These are all the particulars which the Holy Spirit has thought fit to communicate to us concerning our Lord's private life; if our curiosity would go further, it must be restrained, the means of gratifying it being denied us."

CHAPTER III.

The state of the Jews at the commencement of our Lord's ministry.

Palestine—its different names—its former fertility—its present desolate state—its divisions—mountains, Lebanon, Hermon, Tabor, &c.—plains—deserts—forests—seas—the Dead sea—sea of Tiberias—rivers—Jordan—the land of the Moabites—of Midian—the tribe of Reuben—the country of the Ammonites—Galilee—Gad—half tribe of Manassch—lower Galilee, tribes of Asher, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Issachar—half tribe of Manassch—Ephraim—Samaria—Judea, tribe of Benjamin—Jerusalem—tribes of Judah, Dan, and Simeon—the Philistines—Edom—description of the eastern buildings from Dr. Shaw—tents—their furniture—dress of the inhabitants—their diet—Herod's death—reign of Archelaus—government of Pilate—degenerate state of the Jews.

FROM the time of our Lord's conversation with the Jewish teachers to the commencement of the ministry of John the Baptist, not a single fact is related by the evangelists; here, therefore, we have a convenient opportunity to exhibit such a view of the state of Palestine, natural, political, and religious, as may enable the reader to understand more clearly the history of those important transactions, which, in the succeeding chapters, it is intended to relate.

The country which was the scene of our Lord's ministry was first called the land of Canaan, from Noah's grandson, by whom it was peopled; but it has since been more distinguished by other names, such as the Land of Promise, the Land of God, the Land of Israel, the Holy Land, and sometimes, by way of pre-eminence, the Land. It has, again, been called Palestine, from the Philistines, who possessed great part of it; and Juda, or Judæa Palæstina, from Judah, whose tribe was the most considerable of the twelve, and possessed the most fertile portion of the land. It was inclosed on the west by the Mediterranean; and on the east by the lake Asphaltites, the Jordan, the sea of Tiberias, or of Galilee, and the Samachonite lake; to the north it had the mountains of Libanus, or rather of Antilibanus, or the province of Phenicia; and to the south that of Edom, or Idumæa, from which it was likewise parted by another ridge of high mountains. It must be here observed, that we have confined ourselves to that part which is properly called the Land of Promise; as for the other part, viz. that which belonged to two tribes and an half on the other side Jordan, and which was called Peræa, and the land or kingdoms of Og, Sihon, &c. their boundaries are more difficult to be determined. It is about two hundred miles in length, and eighty in breadth, and extends from 31° 30' to 33° 20' of north latitude, and from 34°

50'' to 37° 15'' of east longitude from Greenwich. It is therefore placed under the fourth and fifth climates, so that its longest day is about fourteen hours fifteen minutes.

The climate of this country, Palestine, is certainly very happy, its situation being neither too far south, nor too far north. But the limits of this country appear so small, considering that it is likewise intersected, by high ridges or mountains, woods, deserts, &c. that many learned men have been induced to question what we read of its fertility and populousness in former times. It must be owned, indeed, that when we compare its ancient and flourishing state, when it was cultivated with the utmost diligence, by persons well skilled in every branch of agriculture, with what it has been since the total extirpation of the Jews out of it, and more especially since it fell into the hands of the Turks, the contrast is amazingly great: but when we consider the many evident causes which have contributed to effect this change, and its fruitfulness, in some instances, at the present day, we find not the least reason to doubt the truth of what the sacred historians have related. Moses describes it, before it was possessed by the Israelites, as a land flowing with milk and honey. It even exceeded Egypt, so much celebrated by the ancients, in the vast numbers of cattle which it produced, and in the quantity and excellence of its wine, oil, and fruits.

But its fertility has been called in question, and Voltaire, and other infidel writers, have raised difficulties and objections against the authority of scripture, from the pretended sterility of the land of Judea. In answer to which the abbè Guence, about 1780, communicated to the academy of inscriptions, and belles lettres, at Paris, Two memoirs concerning the fertility of Palestine, in order to show that such objections had no solid foundation.

In the first of them the author proves, that from the captivity of Babylon to the war of Adrian, Judea was always considered as a rich and fertile country. The positive and multiplied authorities of the writers of that period, Jews, Greeks, and Romans, not only attest, in general, the fertility of that country, but many of these writers, entering into a particular detail of these circumstances, prove it from the nature of the climate, the qualities of the soil, and the excellence and variety of its productions. These are confirmed by proofs of another kind, but which are of a very convincing nature, even those resulting from a great number of medals, struck under the reigns of Syria and Judea, and under the Romans, both by Jews and Pagans, and which all bear the symbols of a rich fertility. To these proofs are added a multitude of facts, recorded in the history of the Jews during this period; the efforts of the neighbouring kings to conquer their country; the long and bloody wars that the Jews carried on with vigour, and sometimes with success, against powerful princes and nations; the tribute and taxes

they paid to the kings of Egypt and Syria, to the Romans, and to their own princes; the magnificence of their sovereigns, and particularly of Herod; the troops he raised and kept on foot; the temples, fortresses, palaces, and cities, which he erected and embellished, not only in his own country, but in Syria, Asia Minor, and even in Greece; the immense sums he lavished among the Romans; the donations he made among his own people; and the vast treasures which he left behind him: all these circumstances concur in proving the fertility and richness of Palestine, during that period.

In the second memoir the abbé Guence considers the state of Palestine, as it was from the time of the emperor Adrian to the caliphate of Omar, which comprehends a period of four centuries. From sundry facts he shows, that it could not then have been the barren country which it has been represented by some sceptical writers. He particularly mentions the project formed by Adrian of rebuilding and embellishing Jerusalem, or reforming it into a Roman colony, of giving it its own name, a project of which he could never have entertained a thought, if Judea, which he had seen and examined with his own eyes, had appeared to him such a barren and wretched country, as it is said to have been by some, who neither have seen that country, nor examined the matter with care and attention. Our author also produces a variety of other facts to show, that Judea, after all that it had suffered from the desolation of war, both in ancient and later times, still remained, at the period in question, fertile, rich, and populous. This is the idea which the writers of the time, Pagan and Christian, as well as Jewish, have given of Palestine. Antoninus Martyr, a citizen of Placentia, who, in the sixth century, travelled to Palestine, and composed an account of his voyage, which is still extant, says, that the canton of Nazareth was not inferior to Egypt in corn and fruits, and that though the territory of that city was not very extensive, it abounded in wine, and oil, and excellent honey. The country about Jericho appeared to him still more fertile. He saw mount Tabor, which he represents as surrounded with cities; and he observed, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, vineyards, great plantations of fruit-trees, and, through the whole country, a considerable number of hospitals, monasteries, and beautiful edifices. Our learned abbé, in concluding his work, acknowledges, that the opulence and fertility of Judea might begin to diminish towards the middle of the period treated of in his second memoir; but he does not think that any argument can be drawn from hence, against its having been, at the commencement of this period, in a flourishing state; and much less can any proof be brought from hence, that in preceding periods, under the kings, or under the administration of Moses, the country of Palestine was a barren and uncultivated district.

Besides, it ought to be considered, that it was then inhabited by an industrious people, who knew how to improve every inch of their land, and had made even the most desert and barren places to yield some kind of productions, by proper care and manure; so that the very rocks, which now appear quite bare and naked, were made to produce corn, pulse, or pasture, being, by the industry of the old inhabitants, covered with mould, which, through the laziness of the succeeding proprietors, has been since washed off with rains and storms. We may add, that the kings themselves were not above encouraging all kind of agriculture, both by precept and example, and, above all, that they had the divine blessing promised to their honest endeavours and industry; whereas, it is now, and hath been long since, inhabited by a poor, lazy, and indolent people, groaning under an intolerable servitude, and all manner of discouragements, by which their aversion to labour and agriculture, farther than what barely serves to supply their present wants, is become, in a manner, natural and invincible. We may farther observe, with the judicious Mr. Maundrel, that there is no forming an idea of its ancient flourishing state, when under the influence of heaven, from what it is now under a visible curse. And if we had not several concurring testimonies from profane authors, who have extolled the fecundity of Palestine; that single one of Julian the apostate, a sworn enemy to Jews and christians, as well as to all the sacred writings, would be more than sufficient to prove it, who frequently makes mention, in his epistles, of the perpetuity, as well as excellence and great abundance, of its fruits and product. The visible effects of God's anger, which this country has felt, not only under Titus Vespasian, but much more since that emperor's time; in the inundations of the northern barbarians, of the Saracens, and of the more cruel and destructive christians during the holy war, and in the oppression it now feels under the Turkish yoke, may be easily supposed to be more than sufficient to have wrought the dismal change we are speaking of, and to have reduced the far greater part into a mere desert.

Nevertheless, if we may credit those who have viewed it in this doleful condition, they will tell us, there are, still, such visible signs of its natural richness and fertility, as plainly show, that the bare want of culture is the principal, if not the only cause, of its present poverty and barrenness. We shall hint, as a fair proof of this, what a learned traveller hath written of it from his own observations.

“The Holy Land,” says Dr. Shaw, “were it as well peopled and cultivated as in former times, would still be more fruitful than the very best part of the coast of Syria and Phenice; for the soil is generally much richer, and, all things considered, yields a preferable crop. Thus the cotton that is gathered in the plains of Ramah, Esdraelon, and Zebulon, is in

greater esteem than what is cultivated near Sidon and Tripoli. Neither is it possible for pulse, wheat, or any sort of grain, to be more excellent than what is sold at Jerusalem. The barrenness, or scarcity, which some authors may either ignorantly or maliciously complain of, doth not proceed from the incapacity or natural unfruitfulness of the country, but from the want of inhabitants, and the great aversion there is to labour and industry in those few who possess it. There are, besides, such perpetual discords and depredations among the petty princes who share this fine country, that allowing it was better peopled, yet there would be small encouragement to sow, when it was uncertain who should gather in the harvest. Otherwise the land is a good land, and still capable of affording its neighbours the like supplies of corn and oil, which it is known to have done in the time of Solomon."

And Volney, in his travels in Egypt and Syria, observes, that though the whole of Palestine is almost an entire level plain, without either river or rivulet in summer, and only watered by the winter torrents, the soil is yet good, and may even be termed fertile; so when the winter rains do not fail, every thing springs up in abundance, and the earth, which is black and fat, retains moisture sufficient for the growth of grain and vegetables during the summer. More doura, sesarum, watermelus, and beans, are sown here, than in any other part of the country. They also raise cotton, barley, and wheat; but though the latter be most esteemed, it is less cultivated, for fear of too much inviting the avarice of the Turkish governors, and the rapacity of the Arabs.

Judea, in its largest sense, was divided into maritime and inland, as well as into mountainous and champaign; and again subdivided into Judea on this side, and Judea beyond Jordan. But the most considerable division is that which was made among the twelve tribes by lot, to prevent all murmuring and discontent among that stubborn people, if these two and a half were seated beyond Jordan, and the rest on this side. The next remarkable division was made by king Solomon, who divided his kingdom into twelve provinces or districts, each under a peculiar officer, and every one of these was to supply the king with provisions in his turn, that is, each for one month in the year. But the most fatal division of all was that obtained under his imprudent son Jeroboam, who became head of this new monarchy, styled the kingdom of Israel, in opposition to that of Judah, which distinguished the kingdom of Rehoboam. Under the second temple the distinction lasted a considerable time, and as the same bloody hatred and hostilities continued between these two kingdoms, that of Israel took the name of Samaria from its capital. The inhabitants were a mixture of the old Israelites, and of new colonies sent thither by the kings of Assyria after their conquest of it, till they were

subdued by the Maccabees, and their metropolis destroyed. Under the Romans it began to be divided into tetrarchies and toparchies; the larger were of Judea, Samaria, and Galilee Upper and Lower; the lesser, those of the Geraritica, Saron, and others of less note, all which lay on this side of the Jordan. The rest, on the other side, were of Gilead, Paræa, Gaulonitis, Auranitis, Betaneu, and Decapolis. Josephus mentions another division, in Gabinius's time, into five districts, or, as he styles them, *sumedria*, or councils, agreeable to the Roman manner; these were Jerusalem, Jericho, and Sephoris, on this side Jordan; and Gadaris and Amathus on the other.

Before we proceed to consider the topography of this country, it will be proper to give some account of its principal mountains, seas, rivers, lakes, deserts, plains, &c. We begin with the mountains, of which Lebanon is the most distinguished.

Lebanon is a famous chain of mountains, which serves as a common boundary to Syria and Palestine. They have been distinguished by the names of Libanus and Antilibanus, the former name being derived from the whiteness of the snow with which the tops of these mountains are covered, during the greatest part of the year; and the latter, from the situation of that ridge, which is supposed to run in a sort of parallel apposition to the other. It is computed about one hundred leagues in compass, and hath Mesopotamia on the east, Armenia on the north, Palestine on the south, and the Mediterranean on the west. It consists of four ridges of mountains, which rise one above the other; the first of which is very fertile in grain and fruit; the second is barren and rocky, producing nothing but briars and thorns; the third, though still higher, is said to enjoy a constant verdure and spring, the gardens and orchards producing such a variety of fruits, herbs, &c. that it hath been styled an earthly paradise; this presents a striking contrast to the fourth and highest region, which is utterly uninhabitable by reason of the cold. There are several considerable rivers that have their source on this mountain, viz. the Jordan, Rocham, Nahar-Rossiah, and Nahar-Cadicha; the first only of which runs through Palestine, and will be spoken of in its place. Besides these are several others of a lesser stream that run between the valleys, particularly that of Abonali, which flows down into the Romantic valley, so called, because surrounded, on all sides, with high rocks. This river runs with a rapid course and great noise, and is so covered with trees that it is hardly to be seen. These rivers, in coming down from such heights, form several beautiful cascades, like those of the Nile. Some ancient fathers, as St. Jerome and Eusebius have described the Liban and Antiliban as one continued ridge, winding about in the form of an horse-shoe, which begins about three or four leagues from the Mediterranean, a little above Smyrna; and running southward, towards Sidon, began, there, to take an eastern course towards

Damascus; bending thence northward, towards Laodicea Cæbiosa. The western ridge is what is properly called Libanus, as the eastern is Antilibanus, and the hollow between Cælosyria. The worst of this mountain is, that it has mostly been, and is still to this day, a place of retreat and refuge for vast numbers of robbers and other desperate people.

The next in dignity for height is mount Hermon, which, like Lebanon, appears capped with snow, and was once famed for an ancient temple held in great veneration, and much resorted to by the superstitious heathens from all the neighbouring countries; and, in the Psalms, it is celebrated for its refreshing dews, which descended on the adjoining one of Sion. St. Jerome tells us, that its snow was carried away to Tyre, Sidon, &c. to be mixed with the drink of the inhabitants; and that the Chaldees and Samaritans style it the mount of snow.

Mount Tabor has its name from the Hebrew, *Thabur*, which signifies the navel, on account of its eminent form, and rising, as it were, from a plain; and it is admired for its beauty, regularity, fertility, and constant verdure. It is supposed to be here that our Lord was transfigured.

Carmel stands on the skirts of the sea, and is the most remarkable head of land in all that coast. It extends, eastward, from the sea, as far as the plain of Jezreel, lately mentioned; and from the bay of its name quite to Casarea, on the south. It seems to have been so called on account of its fertility. Carmel is the name of the mountain, and of a city built on it, and of an heathen deity worshipped in it, but without either temple or statue; though some temple there must have been on it, since Jamblichus tells us, this place was the favourite retreat of Pythagoras, who spent a good deal of time in the temple without any person with him. But what had rendered it most celebrated and revered, both by Jews and christians, is, its having been the residence of Elijah, who is supposed to have lived in a cave, which is there shown, before he was taken up into heaven; as it was also the scene where that great prophet, by calling for a miraculous fire from heaven, which consumed the divine sacrifice, convinced the Israelites of their folly, in halting between their God and Baal. On which account, the christians began, from the earliest ages, to show a more than ordinary veneration for it; and both the mountain and cave of Elias, as well as the place where they tell you was his garden, are visited and revered, not only by christians and Jews, but by the very Mohammedans.

The mount of Olives stands about a mile distant from Jerusalem, and commands the prospect of the whole city, from which it is parted by the brook Kidron, and the valley of Jehoshaphat. It is not a single hill, but rather part of a long ridge, with three (or, according to Mr. Pocock, four) heads or summits, extending from north to south, the middlemost of which is that from

the top of which our Saviour ascended up into heaven, and which, it is pretended, still wears the print of his foot.

Mount Calvary, alias Golgotha, is held in the greatest veneration, on account of our Saviour's crucifixion upon it. It had those two names, probably, from its roundness, or resemblance to an human skull, and stood, anciently, without the walls of the city, it being the place where the criminals used to be put to death according to the Mosaic law. But Constantine the Great, after his conversion, caused it to be inclosed within the new walls, and erected a magnificent church over it; and it has continued a place of as great veneration among the christians, as ever the temple was among the Jews.

Mount Moriah, on which the famous temple of Solomon was built, stands south-east of Calvary, having Millo on the west, so called, from the filling up of that deep valley, in order to raise it to a level with the rest.

Mount Gihon stood west of Jerusalem, and at a smaller distance than Calvary, viz. about two furlongs' distance from Bethlehem's gate. It was here that Solomon was, by his father's express command, anointed king, by the prophet Nathan, and Zadok the high-priest. There was a celebrated pool of that name upon it, whose water king Hezekiah caused to be brought, by an aqueduct, into the city. It is still a stately pool, one hundred and six paces long, and sixty-seven broad, lined with a wall of plaster, and well stored with water. We shall conclude this description of the mountains with observing, that those in the kingdom of Judah mostly stand southward of it, towards the land of Edom, but those of the kingdom of Israel are interspersed within it. There are, also, many other mountains of inferior note.

The most distinguished plains are two; that which is commonly called the plain of Jordan, otherwise, the wilderness of Jordan, that is comparatively barren with some other of the more delightful parts of it, of which we may have farther occasion to speak. The other is styled the great plain of Esdraelon, or great plain and valley of Jezreel, the fields of Esdrela, and the plain of Legion, the first of which names it had from the capital city Jezreel, or Esdrelon, and reached from Seythopolis to mount Carmel. Mr. Reland thinks this great plain to have reached partly into Galilee, and partly into Samaria. Besides these two, which are the most remarkable plains in all Palestine, we may add, that the whole coast, from mount Carmel down to the southernmost borders of it, towards Idumea, is, altogether, a plain, level ground, excepting here and there some small and gentle hills, or sandy heaps. This great extent, however, was not all known, or called by the same name, after the second temple; for the northern part of it, from Joppa to Cæsarea, and no further, was called Sharon, Saron, or Saronia; and was very fertile in pasture grounds.

in which, Mr. Reland thinks, the Gadites fed their numerous herds and flocks, and bred such vast quantities of cattle. The southern part of it was called Sephelah, or the plain, and extended westward and southward of Eleutheropolis, which name was given still, in Eusebius and St. Jerome's time, to all that tract. The plain of Jericho, though rather a part of the great plain, properly so called, is likewise much celebrated in scripture, for its fine palm-trees, its balm-shrub, as well as for its famed rose and rose-tree, with which the whole plain was said to be almost covered; and several wonderful virtues are, without any foundation, attributed to it, by authors, and by the inhabitants of those plains: one of them, however, is certain, viz. that it is incorruptible; and being kept some little while in water, will blow, and appear in full bloom, and being taken out, it closes up again, and this it will do at any season of the year.

We find a great many deserts and wildernesses in this country, mentioned in the sacred books, by which, however, must not be understood places quite barren, destitute, or uninhabited, there being several of them which had cities and villages, rich, and well peopled, and few cities there were here that had not some desert, according to the scripture idiom, belonging to it, for the feeding of their cattle: so that the word commonly meant no more than a land or tract, that bore neither corn, wine, nor oil, but was left to its spontaneous production. Accordingly we find in the desert of Judah, where the Baptist preached, no less than six cities, besides the villages belonging to them, to wit, Bethabara, Middin, Secacah, Nibshan, the city of Salt, and that of Engaddi.

To these we may add some woods or forests, mentioned also in holy writ, such as, particularly, those of Hareth, in the tribe of Judah, to which David withdrew from Saul; of Ephraim, where Absalom received the due reward of his unnatural rebellion; (this stood on the other side Jordan, not far from Mahanaim, where David abode while the battle was fought;) that of Lebanon, where Solomon built a stately palace, so called, in all probability, on account of the many stately trees that shaded it: the forest of Bethel, supposed to have stood near the city of that name, whence the two she bears came, and devoured the children who insulted the prophet Elisha. Others of less note we pass over, to come to the seas, lakes, and rivers, of the country.

We begin with the seas, of which there are commonly reckoned five; viz. the Mediterranean, called, by the sacred writers, the Great Sea. 2. The Dead sea, or lake of Sodom. 3. The sea of Tiberias. 4. The Samachonite sea, or lake. And, 5. The sea of Jazer; which last was but a small lake near the city of that name; so that only the first of them deserved the name of sea, and this they distinguished, not only with the

title of Great, but of Salt sea, sea of the Philistines, and also the Hinder sea, or sea behind one, from its situation with respect to the land. The Dead sea, called also, from its situation, the East sea, the Salt sea, the sea of Sodom, the sea of the desert, and sea of the plain, by the sacred writings; and by other authors, the Asphaltite lake, on account of the vast quantities of that bituminous drug, which are thrown up by its waves, and thence, by the wind, towards the shore. Josephus assures us, it rises in lumps, as big as an ox without its head. Some are even larger, and others smaller, and in great request among physicians and embalmers. Many things have been said and written of this famous, or, if they were true, rather infamous lake; such as that it arose from the submersion of the vale of Siddim, where once stood, as is commonly reported, the three cities which perished in the miraculous conflagration, with those of Sodom and Gomorrah, for their unnatural and detestable wickedness; on which account, this lake hath been looked upon as a lasting monument of the just judgment of God, to deter mankind from such abominations. Hence, it is added, that the waters of the lake are so impregnated with salt, sulphur, and other bituminous stuff, that nothing would sink or live in it; and that it cast such stench and smoke, that the very birds died in attempting to fly over it. The description, likewise, of the apples that grew about it, fair without, and only ashes and bitterness within, which were looked upon as a farther monument of God's anger: so, likewise, the description which travellers give, not only of the lake, but of all the country round about, of the whole appearing dreadful to behold, all sulphurous, bituminous, stinking, and suffocating; and lastly, what hath been farther affirmed of the ruins of the five cities, still being to be seen in clear weather, and having been actually seen in these later times; all these surprising things, and ill-grounded notions, though commonly, and so long received among christians, have been of late so much exploded, not only by the testimony of many credible witnesses, but even by the authority of scripture, that we must be obliged to give them up as pious inventions, unless we will suppose the face and nature of all these things to have been entirely changed.

As to the water, it is, though clear, so impregnated with salt, that those that dive into it come out covered with a kind of brine. There is one remarkable thing relating to this lake, generally agreed on by all travellers and geographers, viz. that it receives the waters of Jordan, (a considerable river we shall speak of in the sequel,) the brooks of Jabok, Kishon, Arnon, and other springs, which flow into it from the adjacent mountains, and yet never overflows, though there is no visible way to be found by which it discharges the great influx. The common opinion is, that it hath some subterraneous vent, either

in the Mediterranean or the Red sea. It is inclosed on the east and west with exceeding high mountains, many of them craggy, and dreadful to behold: on the north has the plain of Jericho; and, if we take in both sides of the Jordan, it has the great plain, properly so called, on the south, which is open, and extends beyond the reach of the eye. Josephus gives this lake five hundred and eighty furlongs in length, from the mouth of the Jordan, to the town of Segor on the opposite end, that is, about twenty-two leagues, and about an hundred and fifty, or five leagues, in its largest breadth: but our modern accounts commonly give it twenty-four leagues in length, and six or seven in breadth. On the west side of it is a kind of promontory, where they pretend to show the remains of Lot's metamorphosed wife. Josephus says it was still standing in his time; but when prince Radziville inquired after it, they told him there was no such salt pillar or statue to be seen in all that part. However, they have found means, about a century after him, to recover, as they pretended to Mr. Maundrell, a block, or stump of it, which may, in time, grow up, with a little art, to its ancient bulk.

The sea of Tiberias, or Galilee, is, in most respects, quite opposite to that of Sodom, and is highly commended, by the Jewish historian, amongst other things, for the sweetness, coolness, and excellency of its water, and the abundance and variety of fine fish that breed in it, contrary to the other, which suffers nothing to live in it, and whose waters are represented as altogether distasteful and horrid. The river Jordan runs quite through it, and supplies it with fresh water; and here it was that St. Peter, Andrew, John, and James, exercised their profession of fishermen. Josephus gives it an hundred furlongs in length, and about forty in breadth.

None of the rivers of Palestine, except Jordan, deserve any particular description, the others being chiefly brooks which are dried up in the summer. The Jordan has its source among the mountains of Lebanon, and taking a southerly direction, it passes through the Sanaachonite lake, a place of water mentioned in the scriptures. After this, it pursues a course of about eighteen or twenty miles more, exclusive of its windings, enters into the sea of Tiberias on the north side of it, and comes out again on the south side, at a small distance from the city of that name. It then flows still south-westward, through a plain and desert of about sixty miles more, and falls into the Asphaltite lake. Its stream is rapid, though its bed is deep. As to its breadth, a late author tells, it is about that of the Thames at Windsor, and another gives it only thirty yards in breadth, but observes, that its depth makes sufficient amends, it being three yards deep, even at the brink. Its course and banks are various, according to the places it runs through, some very beautiful, others choked up with high and thick

reeds, canes, and trees, such as willows, tamarisks, &c. which quite hide the sight of it, and are an harbour for lions and other wild beasts. The inundations of the river Jordan, which are recorded in the scriptures, as well as by Josephus and other writers, do not now take place; because the river, during the lapse of so many centuries, has worn its bed considerably deeper. It has two banks on each side, the lowest, below which it does not usually sink in the summer, and the highest, above which it seldom rises in the winter. Between these two banks the wild beasts find that shelter which we already described.

We shall begin our description of the possessions of the twelve tribes with those belonging to the two tribes and an half, who obtained a settlement, in the time of Moses, on the east side of the river Jordan; and with these it will be proper to join an account of such heathen nations as resided near them. On the east side of the Dead sea, between the rivers Zared and Arnon, the mountains Abarim, and the before-mentioned sea, was situated the land of the Moabites, which had many considerable cities, particularly that of Heshbon. It was subject to various vicissitudes, having been first possessed by the Emims, then by the Moabites, and, after that, often conquered by the Israelites. The land of Midian was partly included within these limits, being situated between mount Abarim and the river Arnon; it was hot, sandy, and, in many parts, quite desert, yet abounded with cattle, particularly sheep, goats, and deer, but more particularly with camels. As small as this country appears in the map, it was divided into five kingdoms, which maintained a war with the children of Israel. The region which was allotted to the tribe of Reuben extended from the north-east coasts of the Dead sea, along the eastern banks of the Jordan; and was divided, on the south, from Midian, by the river Arnon; on the north, from the tribe of Gad, by another small river; and was hemmed in on the east, partly by the Moabites, and partly by the Ammonites; whilst the Jordan parted it, on the west, from Canaan, properly so called. It reached $31^{\circ} 40''$ to $32^{\circ} 25''$ of latitude, and from 36° to 37° east longitude, and was every where fertile in corn, wine, fruits, and especially in pasture grounds. Josephus rightly compares this country to a peninsula, or to an island, the west side of which is washed by the river Jordan, the north by that of Jabbok, and the south by that of Arnon. It had, likewise, three celebrated mountains, viz. Nebo, Pisgah, and Peor, or Phegor. We have not room to enter into a further description of them; they were, probably, all three, parts of the same chain, and the last of them might be so called, from some filthy deity, of that name, worshipped there. The capital was Heshbon, which was conquered from the Moabites; and, among other places, it contained Bethpeor, Bethabara, Bozrah, and Laish.

On the north side of Reuben was seated the tribe of Gad,

having, likewise, the Jordan on the west, the Ammonites on the east, and the half tribe of Manassch on the north, and reaching from $32^{\circ} 5''$ to $32^{\circ} 50''$ of latitude, and $36^{\circ} 15''$ to almost 37° east longitude. It was no less rich and fertile than the former, especially in pasture grounds. Its chief towns were Mahanaim, Pennel, Ramoth Gilead, Arsar, Bethharan, and Enon, the place where John baptized.

The country of the Ammonites was formerly inhabited by a race of giants, called Zamzummim, who fell a prey to the Ammonites, together with their land and well-fortified cities, among which Rabbah was the most noted.

Northward of Gad was seated the half tribe of Manassch, having that on the south, the Jordan and Samachonite lake on the west, the hills of Bashan and Hermon on the east, and part of the Lebanon on the north. This territory, which was almost as large as the other two, extended from $32^{\circ} 36''$ to $33^{\circ} 36''$ of latitude, and was more properly called afterwards Upper Galilee, or the Galilee of the Gentiles, of which more in the next article. It had several large territories, and considerable cities: those of the former sort were known by the names of Gilead, Batanea, Gaulonitis, Auranitis, Machonitis, Geshur, Auran, or Amran, and Argob, all of them so called from their capitals. We shall just give a sketch of the chief of them. 1. Gaulonitis extended from Perea quite to Lebanon. Its capital, once a famed city, was given to the Levitical tribe of the family of Gershom, and was made a city of refuge. It was the birth-place of the famed Judas Galileus, or Gaulonitis, chief of the Galilean sect. 2. Gilead, so called, from the son of Machir, and grandson of Manassch. We have already spoken of the mountains of that name. 3. Batanea was, properly, the land or kingdom of Bashan, bounded by Gilead and the Ammonites on the east, by the brook Jabbok on the south, by mount Hermon on the north, and by the Jordan on the west; the canton of Argob was part of it, and both were famed for their stately oaks, and vast herds of cattle. 4. Auranitis, or Auran, was another fertile canton, situate between the upper spring of Jordan, and the country of Geshur. Others place it along the sea of Tiberias, and we are told, that the Syrians and Arabs called the coast by that name; and Josephus makes it the same with Iturea. 5. Machonitis, or Maachonitis, from its capital Maacah, was a small canton near the head of the Jordan, on the east side of it, in the way to Damascus. It was the utmost border north of this half tribe, and we find that the Manassites forbore to destroy the old inhabitants, and lived friendly with them; the same is said there of the Geshurites, who lived in the next canton to Maachonitis. In this half tribe were Bozrah, Gilead, Chorazin, Bethsaida, Girasa, or Girgesha, Gadara, and Ephron.

Crossing the Jordan, from the half tribe of Manassch we last described, we enter into the province of Lower Galilee, which

lay on the furthest northern verge of Judea, and in which we find the tribes of Asher, Zebulun, Naphtali, and Issachar, settled by lot. It was very fertile and champaign, except on the northern side towards Syria, and produced excellent corn, wine, oil, fruits of all sorts, with little labour; and was, in its flourishing state, so full of towns, besides villages without number, and all of them so populous, that Josephus, who was made governor of it, tells us, that the least of them contained fifteen thousand souls; but whether or no he hath spoken within compass, there is reason sufficient to believe that the country was really very rich and populous, and its inhabitants of a stout and warlike disposition, and very zealous for the Jewish religion. It had, in particular, a spacious valley, so very rich, that it was styled, by way of emphasis, the fat valley; it hath been, since, better known by the name of St. George, from a fort or castle built on it, and dedicated to that saint.

First. The tribe of Asher was seated on the north-west corner of the province adjoining, on the north side, to Phœnice; and having the Mediterranean on the west, Zebulun on the south, and Naphtali on the east. It had some considerable cities near the sea, though no sea-port of any note. It was so fruitful in corn, wine, oil, &c. of the best kinds, that it fully answered the blessing which dying Jacob gave to it, that the bread of it should be fat, and that it should yield royal dainties. It was in this tribe that the lands of Mispha and Cabul lay, which Solomon gave to Hiram, king of Tyre, who, being displeased with it, gave it that contemptible name. The chief towns belonging to this tribe were Elkath, Cana the greater, Bethshemeth, and Acre, or Ptolemais. The ruins of this latter city deserve attention. It would appear from the view of them, that the city consisted almost wholly of castles, without the mixture of private houses. It had two walls well flanked with towers and other bulwarks, and each wall had a ditch lined with stone, and many private posterns beneath; but now that huge wall, and all its arches, &c. are topsy-turvy, and its fragments like so many huge rocks upon the foundation. There is a curious pyramidal hill, about a mile east of this city, which is so improved by art, if it be not entirely artificial, that its steepness renders it inaccessible, except on the south-west side; it is about half a mile in length, and a quarter of a mile broad, and is supposed to have been used as a mound by the Turks, when they besieged Acre.

Second. The tribe of Naphtali lay on the east of Asher, between it and the Jordan, over against the half tribe of Manasseh. It was very fertile, and had on the north the spring-heads of the Jordan, formerly mentioned, and extended along the western banks of it, from mount Lebanon down to the sea of Tiberias. The chief towns belonging to the tribe were Dan, formerly

called Daish, Heliopolis, anciently called Hir-Cheresh, or the city of the sun, Kirjath Sepher, supposed, from its name, to have been an ancient university, or city of books. Bethshemeth, different from that in Asher, and Capernaum, a little city on the north side, from the sea of Tiberias, and at the same distance west from the mouth of Jordan. Heliopolis is now called Balbek, and celebrated for the very magnificent ruins of a rotunda, a heathen temple, and a palace, as well as of some other buildings. These, however, as they were the work of the Syrians, by whom this city was long possessed, we are under no necessity to describe them.

Third. On the south of Asher and Naphtali was seated the tribe of Zebulun, or Zabulon, having the Mediterranean on the west, the sea of Galilee on the east, and being parted, on the north, from Asher, by the river Jephthael, and on the south, from Issachar, by that of Kishon; and by its vicinity to the sea, the number of its ports, and largeness of its commerce, it exactly verified the blessings given to the tribe both by Jacob and Moses. The cities of it were Zabulon, the capital, Bethsaida, which was frequently visited by our Lord, Joppa, Tiberias, on the lake of that name, Tabor, Nazareth, where Christ was educated, and Cana the lesser, commonly called Cana of Galilee, where his first miracle was performed.

Fourth. The last tribe in Lower Galilee was that of Issachar, bounded, like the former, by the Mediterranean on the west, by Zebulun on the north, Jordan on the east, which parted it from that of Gad, and on the south by the other half of Manasseh. Its most remarkable places were the mounts Carmel and Gilboah, and the valley of Jezreel. The great plain of Megiddo, called also the plain of Galilee, and now Saba, from a castle built upon it, and famed, like that of Jezreel, for the many battles fought upon it, as well as for the abundance of corn, wine, oil, &c. it produced. The chief towns were Tariehea, Issachar, Shunem, or Suna, the place where the hospitable Shunammite lodged the prophet Elijah, Endor, where the witch entertained Saul, and Jezreel, the residence of Ahab, king of Israel.

South of Zebulun lay the other half-tribe of Manasseh, and south of this that of Ephraim, since known by the name of Samaria, it being in this last tribe that the fatal rupture of the two kingdoms of Judea and Israel began. The territories of these two tribes, though contiguous, varied pretty much; some parts being mountainous and rocky, barren and even desert; whilst others, and by much the larger, were pleasant, fertile, and well inhabited. That of Manasseh was hemmed in, north and south by Issachar and Ephraim, and east and west by the Jordan and Mediterranean. It had an admirable variety of plains, mountains, valleys, springs, and a good number of stately cities, among which were Bethshean, or Scythopolis, which was

built by the Scythians in the reign of Josiah Salem, where it is supposed that Melchisedec resided, and Cesarea Palestina, which was the residence of the Roman governor.

The tribe of Ephraim took up the south side of Samaria, and extended, like that of Manasseh last mentioned, from the Mediterranean, on the west, to the Jordan, being bounded on the south by the territory of Benjamin, and part of Dan. Here, likewise, some parts are rocky and mountainous, though covered with trees and good pasture; and the low lands exceedingly rich, fruitful, and even luxuriant. The cities and towns were numerous, large, and well-peopled, among which were these that follow, viz. Sarcen, or Sarona, Arimathea, Sichem, or Shechem, Samaria, and Shiloh, where the ark abode a long time.

Judea contained the tribes of Benjamin, Judah, Dan, and Simeon; was situate on the most southern side of the whole, having Samaria, or Ephraim last described, on the north; the Mediterranean on the west; Idumea and Egypt on the south; and the Jordan and Dead sea on the east. The climate was much warmer than that of the other two, being mostly under the thirty-second degree of latitude; but was so well refreshed with cooling winds from the seas and mountains, that it was quite moderate and delightful. The soil was here, likewise, beautifully variegated with plains, hills, valleys, and some deserts, most of them well watered with pleasant streams, rivulets, and a vast number of springs, which came down from the mountains; so that in the whole, it was fertile in corn, wine, oil, fruits, pasture-grounds, &c. as any of the rest.

The tribe of Benjamin lay contiguous to Samaria on the north, to Judah on the south, and to Dan on the west, which parted it from the Mediterranean. It had not so many cities and towns as most of the rest; but this was amply compensated by its containing the most considerable, and the metropolis of all the rest, viz. the so justly celebrated city of Jerusalem, the centre of the Jewish worship and religion, and the seat of all the Jewish monarchs and pontiffs, and of the famed sanhedrim, or grand court and council of the nation, of all which we shall give an account in the sequel. The other places of note, such as the mounts Moriah, Zihon, Gihon, Calvary, Olivet, &c. belonging to this tribe and city, have been already described. The other cities, besides the great metropolis above mentioned, were Jericho, Gibeon, Bethel, Gibeah, Hai, Gilgal, Anathoth, Neb, or Nebo, to which we may add the two noted villages of Bethany and Gethsamine.

The city of Jerusalem, in its most flourishing state, was divided into four parts, each inclosed with its own walls, viz. I. The old city of Jebus, which stood on mount Zion, where the prophets dwelt, and where David built a magnificent castle and palace, which became the residence both of himself and

his successors, on which account it was emphatically called the city of David. 2. The lower city, called also the daughter of Zihon, being built after it, on which stood the two magnificent palaces which Solomon built for himself and his queen; that of the Maccabean princes; and the stately amphitheatre built by Herod, capable of containing eighty thousand spectators; the strong citadel, built by Antiochus, to command the temple, but afterwards razed by Simon the Maccabee, who recovered the city from the Syrians; and lastly, a second citadel, built by Herod, upon a high and craggy rock, and called by him Antonia. 3. The new city mostly inhabited by tradesmen, artificers, and merchants. 4. Mount Moriah, on which was built the so famed temple of Solomon, described in the sixth and seventh chapters of the first book of Kings; and since then, that built by the Jews on their return from Babylon, and afterwards built almost new, and greatly adorned and enriched by Herod.

Some idea of the magnificence of this temple may be had from the following considerations. 1. That there were no fewer than one hundred and sixty three thousand three hundred men employed in the work. 2. That notwithstanding that prodigious number of hands, it took up seven whole years in building. 3. That the height of this building was one hundred and twenty cubits, or eighty-two yards, rather more than less, and the courts around it about half as high. 4. That the front on the east side was sustained by ramparts of square stone of vast bulk, and built up from the valley below, which last was three hundred cubits high, and being added to that of the edifice, amounted to four hundred and twenty cubits; to which, if we add, 5. The height of the principal tower above all the rest, viz. sixty, will bring it to four hundred and eighty cubits, which, reckoning at two feet to a cubit, will amount to nine hundred and sixty feet, but according to the length of that measure, viz. at two feet and a half, it will amount to twelve hundred feet; a prodigious height this from the ground, and such as might well make Josephus say that the very design of it was sufficient to have turned the brain of any but Solomon. 6. These ramparts, which were raised in this manner to fill up the prodigious chasm made by the deep valley below, and to make the area of a sufficient breadth and length for the edifice, were one thousand cubits in length at the bottom, and eight hundred at the top, and the breadth of them one hundred more. 7. The huge buttresses which supported the ramparts were of the same height, square at the top, and fifty cubits broad, and jutted out one hundred and fifty cubits at the bottom. 8. The stones of which they were built were, according to Josephus, forty cubits long, twelve thick, and eight high, all of marble, and so exquisitely joined, that they seemed one continued piece, or rather polished rock. 9. Ac-

ording to the same Jewish historian, there were one thousand four hundred and fifty-three columns of Parian marble, and twice that number of pilasters, and of such thickness that three men could hardly embrace them, and their height and capitals proportionable, and of the Corinthian order. But it is likely Josephus had given us these two last articles from the temple of Herod, there being nothing like them mentioned by the sacred historians, but a great deal about the prodigious cedars of Lebanon used in that noble edifice, the excellent workmanship of them adapted to their several ends and designs, together with their gildings and other curious ornaments. The only thing more we shall venture to add is what is affirmed in scripture, that all the materials of this stupendous fabric were finished and adapted to their several ends before they were brought to Jerusalem, that is, the stones in their quarries, and the cedars in Lebanon; so that there was no noise of ax, hammer, or any tool heard in the rearing of it.

At present, Jerusalem is called, by the Turks, Cudsembaric and Coudsheriff, and is reduced to a poor thinly inhabited town about three miles in circumference, situated on a rocky mountain, surrounded on all sides, except the north, with steep ascents and deep valleys, and these again environed with other hills at some distance from them. In the neighbourhood there grows some corn, vines, olives, &c. The stately church erected by the empress Helena, on mount Calvary, is still standing. It is called the church of the sepulchre, and is kept in good repair by the generous offerings of a constant concourse of pilgrims who annually resort to it, as well as by the contributions of several christian princes. The walls of this church are of stone, and the roof of cedar; the east end incloses mount Calvary, and the west the holy sepulchre, the former is covered with a noble cupola, open at top, and supported by sixteen massive columns. Over the high altar, at the east end, is another stately dome. The nave of the church constitutes the choir, and in the inside aisles are shown the places where the most remarkable circumstances of our Saviour's passion were transacted, together with the tombs of Godfrey and Baldwin, the two first christian kings of Jerusalem. In the chapel of the crucifixion is shown the very hole in the rock in which the cross is said to have been fixed. The altar in this chapel hath three crosses on it, and is richly adorned, particularly with four lamps of immense value that hang before it, and are kept constantly burning. At the west end is that of the sepulchre, which is hewn in that form out of the solid rock, and hath a small dome supported by pillars of porphyry. The cloister round the sepulchre is divided into sundry chapels appropriated to the several sorts of christians who reside there, as Greeks, Armenians, Maronites, Jacobites, Copts, Abyssines, Georgians, &c.; and on the north-west side of it are the apart-

ments of the Latins who have the care of the church, and are forced to reside constantly in it, the Turks keeping the keys of it, and not suffering any of them to go out, but obliging them to receive their provisions in at a wicket. At Easter there are some grand ceremonies performed in the church, representing our Lord's passion, crucifixion, death, and resurrection, at which a vast concourse of pilgrims commonly assist; for a particular account of them we refer the reader to Dr. Shaw and Pococke.

On mount Moriah, on the south-east part of the city, is an edifice called Solomon's temple, standing on or near the same spot as the ancient, but when, or by whom erected is uncertain. In the midst of it is a Turkish mosque, where the Jewish sanctum sanctorum is supposed to have stood. The building, which Dr. Pococke thinks must have been formerly a christian church, is held in the utmost veneration by the Turks.

The city is now under the government of a sangiac, who resides in a house, said to have been that of Pontius Pilate, over against the castle of Antonia, built by Herod the Great. Many of the churches erected in the memory of some remarkable gospel transaction have been since converted into mosques, into some of which money will procure admittance, but not into others. Both the friars and other christians are kept so poor by the tyranny of the government, that the chief support and trade of the place consists in providing strangers with food, and other accommodations, and selling them beads, relics, and other trinkets, for which they are obliged to pay considerable sums to the sangiac, as well as to his officers; and those are seldom so well contented with their usual duties but they frequently extort some fresh ones, especially from the Franciscans, whose convent is the common receptacle for all pilgrims, and for which they have considerable allowances from the pope, and other crowned heads, besides the presents which strangers generally make them at their departure.

The most remarkable antiquities in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem are, First, The pools of Bethesda and Gihon, the former one hundred and twenty paces long, and forty broad, and at least eight deep, but now without water, and the old arches, which it still discovers at the west end, are quite dammed up: the other, which is about a quarter of a mile without Bethlechem gate, is a very stately relic, one hundred and six paces long and sixty broad, lined with a wall and plaster, and still well stored with water. Second, The tomb of the Virgin Mary, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, into which one descends by a magnificent flight of forty-seven steps. On the right hand as we go down is the sepulchre of St. Ann, and on the left that of Joseph, the husband of the Virgin mother; some add, likewise, that of Jehoiakim her father. In all these are erected altars for priests of all sorts, to say mass, and

the whole is cut into the solid rock. Third, The tomb of king Jehoshaphat, cut, likewise, into the rock, and divided into several apartments, in one of which is his tomb, which is adorned with a stately portico and entablature over it. Fourth, That commonly called Absalom's pillar, or place, as being generally supposed to be that which he is said to have erected in his lifetime to perpetuate his memory, as he had no male issue. The place, however, both within and without, hath more the resemblance of a sepulchre than any thing, though we do not read that he was buried there, neither do the people here affirm that he was. There is a great heap of stones about it, which is continually increasing, the superstitious Jews and Turks always throwing some as they pass, in token of their abhorrence of Absalom's unnatural rebellion against so holy a parent. The structure itself is about twenty cubits square and sixty high, rising in a lofty square, adorned below with four columns of the Ionic order, with their capitals, entablatures, &c. to each front. From the height of twenty to forty cubits it is somewhat less, and quite plain, excepting a small fillet at the upper end; and from forty to the top it changes into a round which grows gradually into a point, the whole cut out of the solid rock. There is a room within considerably higher than the level ground without, in the sides of which are niches, probably to receive coffins. Fifth, A little eastward of this is that called the tomb of Zechariah, the son of Barachiah, whom the Jews slew between the temple and the altar, as is commonly supposed. This fabric is all cut out of the natural rock, eighteen feet high, and as many square, and adorned with Ionic columns on each front, cut out, likewise, of the same rock, and supporting a cornice. The whole ends in a pointed top like a diamond. But the most curious, grand, and elaborate pieces in this kind, are the grots without the walls of Jerusalem, styled the royal sepulchres, but of what kings is not agreed on. They consist of a great number of apartments, some of them spacious, all cut out of the solid marble rock, and may justly be pronounced a royal work, and one of the most noble, surprising, and magnificent. For a particular account of them we must refer the reader, for want of room, to Poccocke's travels.

In the neighbourhood of Jerusalem is a spot of ground, about thirty yards long and fifteen broad, now the burying-place of the Arizæniens, which is shown as the Acedama, or Field of Blood, and since styled the Holy Field, purchased with the price of Judas's treasure, for the burial of strangers. It is walled round to prevent the Turks abusing the bones of christians, and one half of it is taken up in a building, in the nature of a charnel-house. Besides the above, a great many other antiquities, in the city and its environs, are shown to strangers, there being scarcely any place or transaction men-

tioned either in the Old or New Testament, but they show the very spot of ground where the one stood, and the other was done, not only here, but all over Judea.

The territories of the tribe of Judah extended south of Benjamin about twenty-seven miles, that is, quite to the mountains of Seir, or Edom, which were the frontiers between it and Idumea, and was bounded on the east by the Dead sea, and on the west by the tribes of Dan and Simeon, both which lay between it and the Mediterranean. Judah was reckoned the largest and most populous tribe of all the twelve, and the inhabitants the stoutest and most valiant. It was, moreover, the chief and royal tribe, from which the kingdom was denominated. The land was beautifully variegated with fertile plains, hills, dales, small lakes, springs, &c.; and produced great plenty of corn, wine, oil, fruits, pasture, &c. except where it lay contiguous to Idumea. It was, properly, in the territory of Judah, that the Canaanites dwelt; and here it was, likewise, that Abraham and his descendants sojourned till their going down into Egypt. The principal places of this tribe were Libnah, Makkedah, Azecha, Beth-zor, or Bethsora, Emmaus, Nicopolis, Bezech, Bethlehem, Tekoah, Engadi, Odalla, Keilah, Hebron, Jether, Jerimoth, Japhuah, Kirjath-jearim, Maon, Holon, Gozen, Gelo, Cabzael, Hazor, or Chadzor, and Massador. At the head of these we may justly place the royal city of Bethlehem, not only on account of its being the birth-place of king David, and from him emphatically styled the city of David, but much more so as it was appointed by providence to be the birth-place of the Lord Jesus Christ, though, at present, reduced to a poor village. It is situate on a hill, in a fertile and delightful plain, about five or six miles, according to Josephus and Eusebius, but seven or eight, according to more modern travellers, south of Jerusalem; and is still held in great esteem, both for the magnificent church which the pious empress Helena caused to be built over the grotto where the divine infant was born, and for the great concourse of pilgrims who yearly repair to it. The building, which is roofed with cedar, supported by four rows of stately pillars of white marble, ten in a row, and the walls faced with the same stone, we have already described, with the other artificial rarities, together with the most remarkable things in and about it. The christians chiefly live here upon making crosses, beads, and models of the church of St. Sepulchre, with wood, inlaid with mother of pearl, which they sell to the pilgrims. Hebron, now called El-kahil, the ancient seat of David before he had taken Jerusalem, stands on a ridge of mountains which overlook a most delicious valley, twenty miles south of that metropolis. The old city hath long since lain in ruins, but near to them stands a village, in which is still a good, handsome church, built, by the same pious empress, over the cave

where Abraham, and Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and Leah, lie buried. The Turks have since turned it into a mosque, and the place is much revered by them, as well as by the Jews and christians. Lebnah, a strong city, situate in a narrow neck of land, in this tribe, which ran northwards between those of Dan and Benjamin. Emmaus, in Hebrew, Chammin, from its hot and saluferous waters, and famed for our Saviour's appearance to two of his disciples, stood, as the evangelist there tells us, about sixty furlongs, or eight miles, south-west from Jerusalem, and had a church built on the spot where Christ manifested himself to the two disconsolate travellers.

The lot of Dan was bounded, on the north, by Ephraim; on the west, by the Philistines and the Mediterranean; on the south, by Simeon; and on the east, by Judah and Benjamin. Its greatest length, from north to south, did not exceed forty miles; and it was exceeding narrow on the north side, and not above twenty-five broad on the south. But what it wanted in room was, in a great measure, made up by the fertility of the soil, and the industry and bravery of its inhabitants, some of whom, rather than be confined within their narrow limits, ventured so far as the city of Laish, in the utmost verge north of Palestine, after new settlements. As for the country, it abounded with corn, wine, oil, fruits, and all other necessaries. And here was the famed valley called Nahal Escol, or of the grapes, whence the spies, sent by Moses, brought such noble specimens of its fertility to the Israelitish camp. Dan had, besides, a good number of cities within its small extent, the chief of which were Joppa, Jammia, Casphin, Thinnah, Bethshemesh, Ajalon, Lachish, Lehi, Modin, Eltek, Gibbethon, and Zara, or Sora. Of these we shall describe here only the two former, which were maritime ones. Joppa, Japha, now Jaffa, once a considerable sea-port on the Mediterranean, and the only one which the Jews had on that sea, was seated on a high and spacious hill, which commanded a full prospect of the sea on one side, and of a delightful, fertile country on the other. It had the town of Jammia on the south; Cæsarea Palestina on the north; and Rama, or Ramula on the east; and is often mentioned both in the Old and New Testament. But this fine city was so entirely ruined during the Holy War, that it had scarcely any buildings left standing, but the old castle, which was situate on an eminence above it, and another near the sea side. At present, the town is rebuilt towards the sea, with good stone houses, and drives a considerable trade, particularly in the Roman and Jerusalem soap. There are, likewise, great quantities of rice, corn, and other commodities, brought thither from Egypt, and exported thence into other countries. The misfortune is, that the port hath been formerly so marred, that no ships of burden can come into it, but are obliged to ride on the road before it, which is, however, safe and convenient

enough. On the west side of the haven is a charming spring, which supplies the town, and refreshes all the passengers that go and come by it. Jammia is another sea-port on the same coast, between Joppa and Azotas, but is not mentioned in sacred history, unless it be that Jabne which Uzziah took from the Philistines.

The tribe of Simeon was confined to a very small lot on the most southern corner of Judea, being bounded by Dan, on the north; the little river Sichor, on the south, which parted it from Idumea; by Judah, on the east; and by a small neck of land, towards the Mediterranean, on the west. The greatest part of it was so mountainous, sandy, and barren, especially that which lay on the south side of the river Bezor, which ran across it, and on the north of which they had but a very narrow slip of fertile land, and was, moreover, so harassed by the Philistines on one side, and the Idumeans on the other, that, finding neither room nor sustenance sufficient, nor any quietness in their inheritance, they were obliged to seek their fortune among other tribes, from the very beginning, hiring themselves out to assist their brethren in the conquest of their lots, for the sake of having some small share allotted to them; whilst others dispersed themselves amongst every tribe, where, it seems, they served as scribes, notaries, schoolmasters, &c.: so truly was their father Jacob's curse verified on them, as well as on the tribe of Levi, on account of their bloody massacre of the Shechemites: "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their revenge, for it was inhuman: I will disperse them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." Their towns were few, and none of them very considerable, but rather answerable to the thinness and poverty of the inhabitants. The chief of them were Zikleg, Ain, Hormah, Debir, Gerar, and Beersheba.

The five Philistine satrapies were situated along the Mediterranean coast, between that and the tribes of Simeon, Dan, and part of Benjamin; and extending from the sea-port of Jammia to the mouth of the river Bezor. How far their territories extended in land is not easy to guess, but, upon the whole, it appears they were confined within very narrow limits; for though they were able to raise very considerable armies against the Israelites, the far greater part of them seem to have consisted of auxiliaries from Edom, or Idumea. Their names were as follow, as they lay from north to south: Gath, Accaron, or Ecron, Ashdod, or Azotus, Ascalon, and Gaza, with its sea-ports called Portus, Gazæ, and Majuma; of all which we can only say, in general, that they appear to have been strong, rich, and populous: and to have had each of them some considerable towns and villages under them, all of them situate, as far as can be gathered from the sacred records, in fertile territories, and well cultivated by the industrious inhabitants.

We shall conclude our survey with Edom, or Idumea. This country lay south of Palestine, and was part of Arabia and Petraea, having Judea on the north; Egypt, and a branch of the Red sea, on the west; the rest of Arabia Petraea, on the south; and the desert of Arabia, on the east. It lay mostly under the thirtieth degree of latitude, and thirty-fourth of east longitude. As to its extent, it hath so often changed, that there is no stating it without having regard to the various periods of time through which it passed. At first, Esau, or Edom, from whom it received its name, and his descendants, settled along the mountains of Seir, on the east and south of the Dead sea, from whence they spread themselves, by degrees, through the west part of Arabia Petraea, from that sea quite to the Mediterranean. In the time of Moses, Joshua, and even of the Jewish kings, they were hemmed in by the Dead sea on the one side, and the Euxine gulf on the other; but during the Jewish captivity at Babylon, they advanced farther north into Judea, and spread themselves as far as Hebron, in the tribe of Judah: so that Strabo, and, after him, many other geographers, have rightly divided it into eastern and southern Idumea, with regard to its situation from Palestine, the capital of the former of which was called Bozrah, and that of the latter, Petraea, or Jectael. Josephus, with regard to its different extent, at different periods, distinguishes it, when at the largest, by the epithet of *great*, in opposition to its more narrow boundaries; and even places Hebron among the Idumean cities. He seems, likewise, to make a kind of distinction between that which he calls the Lower, and Upper Idumea; but, upon the whole, the country is, both in the sacred books, and all other authors that have written on it, represented as hot, dry, mountainous, and, in some parts, barren and desert, and the mountains full of dreadful rocks and caverns; in which respect it was not at all unlike the southern parts of Judah, which is called a desert, and full of such rocky recesses and caverns, commonly afterwards the lurking-places of thieves and banditti. Its chief cities were Bozrah, Pau, and Anah.

The inhabitants of the Holy Land have been divided, from the most remote antiquity, into two classes, they that inhabited houses, and they that removed from place to place, having no other shelter than what was afforded by tents and booths. With respect to the former, we shall here give an extract from Dr. Shaw's travels into Barbary and the Levant. We have preserved his own words, as being those of an eye-witness, and are, therefore, not accountable for his interpretations of scripture.

“As there is a near relation between the buildings in this country, and those that are occasionally mentioned in the Holy Scriptures, it may be presumed, that a particular account of the structure and contrivance of the one, will not a little con-

tribute to the clearing up such doubts and difficulties as have arisen from not rightly comprehending the fashion of the other.

“ Now the general method of building, both in Barbary and the Levant, seems to have continued the same, from the earliest ages down to this time, without the least alteration or improvement. Large doors, spacious chambers, marble pavements, cloistered courts, with fountains sometimes playing in the midst, are, certainly, conveniences very well adapted to the circumstances of these climates, where the summer heats are generally so intense. The jealousy, likewise, of these people is less apt to be alarmed, whilst, if we except a small latticed window, or balcony, which sometimes look into the street, all the other windows open into their respective courts or quadrangles.

“ The streets of these cities, the better to shade them from the sun, are usually narrow, with sometimes a range of shops on each side. If, from these, we enter into any of the principal houses, we shall first pass through a porch, or gate-way, with benches on each side, where the master of the family receives visits, and despatches business; few persons, not even the nearest relations, having admission any further, except upon extraordinary occasions. From hence we are received into the court, which, lying open to the weather, is, according to the ability of the owner, paved with marble, or such proper materials as will carry off the water into the common sewers. When much people are to be admitted, as upon the celebration of a marriage, the circumcising of a child, or occasions of the like nature, the company is seldom or never admitted into one of the chambers. The court is the usual place of their reception, which is strewed accordingly with mats or carpets, for their more commodious entertainment; and as this is called *el woost*, or the middle of the house, literally answering to the *τὸ μέσον*, the midst, of St. Luke, ch. v. 19, it is probable, that the place where our Saviour and the apostles were frequently accustomed to give their instructions might have been in the like situation, i. e. in the area, or quadrangle of one of these houses. In the summer season, and upon all occasions, when a large company is to be received, the court is commonly, sheltered from the heat and inclemencies of the weather, by a vellum umbrella, or veil, which, being expanded upon ropes from one side of the parapet wall to the other, may be folded or unfolded at pleasure. The Psalmist seems to allude either to the tents of the Bedouens, or to some covering of this kind, in that beautiful expression of spreading out the heavens like a veil or curtain, Psal. civ. v. 2. see also Isaiah xl. v. 22.

“ The court is, for the most part, surrounded with a cloister, over which, when the house has one or more stories, (and I have seen them with two or three, says Dr. Shaw,) there is a gallery erected, of the same dimensions with the cloister, having

a balustrade, or else a piece of carved, or latticed work, going round about it, to prevent people from falling from it into the court. From the cloisters and galleries we are conducted into large spacious chambers, of the same length with the court, but seldom or never communicating with one another. One of them frequently serves a whole family, particularly when a father indulges his married children to live with him, or when several persons join in the rent of the same house: from whence it is that the cities of these countries, which are, generally, much inferior in bigness to those of Europe, are so exceedingly populous, that great numbers are swept away with the plague, or any other contagious distemper.

“In houses of better fashion these chambers, from the middle of the wall downwards, are covered and adorned with velvet, or damask hangings, of white, blue, red, green, or other colours, [Esther, chap. i. verse 6.] suspended upon hooks, or taken down at pleasure. But the upper part is embellished with more permanent ornaments, being adorned with the most ingenious wreathings and devices in stucco and fret-work. The ceiling is generally of wainscot, either very artfully painted, or else thrown into a variety of pannels with gilded mouldings and scrolls of their Koran intermixed. The prophet Jeremiah, chap xxii. verse 14, exclaims against the eastern houses, that they were ceiled with cedar, and painted with vermilion. The floors are laid with painted tiles, or plaster of terrace. But as these people make little or no use of chairs, (either sitting cross-legged, or lying at length,) they always cover or spread them over with carpets, which, for the most part, are of the richest materials. Along the sides of the wall, or floor, a range of narrow beds, or mattresses, is often placed upon these carpets; and for their farther ease and convenience, several velvet or damask bolsters are placed upon these carpets, or mattresses, —indulgences that seem to be alluded to by their stretching themselves upon couches, and by the sewing of pillows to the arm-holes, as we have it expressed, Amos, chap. vi. verse 4. Ezek. chap. xiii. verse 8. At one end of each chamber there is a little gallery, raised three, four, or five feet above the floor, with the balustrade in the front of it, with a few steps, likewise, leading up to it. Here they place their beds, a situation frequently alluded to in the holy scriptures, which may, likewise, illustrate the circumstance of Hezekiah’s turning his face, when he prayed, towards the wall, i. e. from his attendants, [2 Kings, chap. xx. verse 2.] that the fervency of his devotion might be the less taken notice of and observed. The like is related of Ahab, [1 Kings, chap. xxi. v. 4.] though, probably, not upon a religious account, but in order to conceal from his attendants the anguish he was in for his late disappointment.

“The stairs are sometimes placed in the porch, sometimes at the entrance into the court. When there is one or more stories,

they are afterwards continued, through one corner or other of the gallery, to the top of the house, whither they conduct us through a door that is constantly kept shut, to prevent their domestic animals from daubing the terrace, and thereby spoiling the water which falls from thence into the cisterns below the court. This door, like most others we meet with in these countries, is hung, not with hinges, but by having the jamb formed, at each end, into an axle-tree or pivot, whereof the uppermost, which is the longest, is to be received into a correspondent socket in the lintel, whilst the other falls into a cavity of the like fashion in the threshold.

"I do not remember," says Dr. Shaw, "ever to have observed the stair-case conducted along the outside of the house; neither, indeed, will the contiguity and relation which these houses bear to the street, and to each, (exclusive of the supposed privacy of them.) admit of any such contrivance. However, we may go up or come down by the stair I have described, without entering into any of the offices or apartments, and, consequently, without interfering with the business of the house.

"The top of the house, which is always flat, is covered with a strong plaster of terrace, from whence, in the Frank language, it has obtained the name of the terrace. This is usually surrounded by two walls, the outermost whereof is partly built over the street, partly makes the partition with the contiguous houses, being frequently so low that one may easily climb over it. The other, which I shall call the parapet wall, hangs immediately over the court, being always breast high, and answers to the Hebrew word in Deut. chap. xxii. verse 8. which we render the battlements. Instead of this parapet wall some terraces are guarded, like the galleries, with balustrades only, or latticed work, in which fashion, probably, as the name seems to import, was the net, or lattice, as our version renders it, that Ahaziah [2 Kings, chap. i. verse 2.] might be carelessly leaning over when he fell down from thence into the court: for upon those terraces several offices of the family are performed, such as the drying of linen and flax, [Josh. chap. ii. verse 6.] the preparing of figs or raisins, where, likewise, they enjoy the cool refreshing breezes of the evening, converse with one another, and offer up their devotions. In the feast of tabernacles, booths were erected upon them, Neh. chap. viii. verse 16. As these terraces are thus frequently used and trampled upon, not to mention the solidity of the materials wherewith they are made, they will not easily permit any vegetable substances to take root or thrive upon them, which, perhaps, may illustrate the comparison, [Isa. chap. xxxvii. verse 27.] of the Assyrians, and [Psal. cxxix. verse 6.] of the wicked, to the grass upon the house-tops, which withereth before it is grown up."

In another part of the same work Dr. Shaw proceeds thus:

“ Having thus described the several buildings peculiar to the cities and towns of this country, let us now take a view of the habitations of the Bedoweens and Kabyles. Now the Bedoweens, as their great ancestors, the Arabians, did before them, [Isa. xiii. 20.] live in tents, called *lhymas*, from the shelter which they afford the inhabitants; and *beet el shaar*, i. e. houses of hair, from the materials, or webs of goats' hair, whereof they are made. They are the very same which the ancients called *Mapalia*; and being then, as they are to this day, secured from the weather by a covering only of such hair cloth as our coal sacks are made of, might very justly be described, by Virgil, to have [*rara tecta*] thin roofs. The colour of them is beautifully alluded to, Cant. i. 5, “ I am black, but comely as the tents of Kedar.” For nothing, certainly, can afford a more delightful prospect, than a large extensive plain, whether in its verdure, or even scorched up by the sun-beams, with these moveable habitations pitched in circles upon it. When we find any number of these tents together, (and I have seen from two to three hundred,) they are usually placed in a circle, and constitute a *Dou-war*. The fashion of each tent is of an oblong figure, not unlike the bottom of a ship turned up-side down, as Sallust has long ago described them. However, they are different in bigness, according to the number of people who live in them; and are, accordingly, supported, some with one pillar, others with two or three, whilst a curtain, or carpet, laid down, upon occasion, from each of these divisions, turns the whole into so many separate apartments. These tents are kept firm and steady by bracing, or stretching their eves with cords tied to crooked pins, well pointed, which they drive into the ground with a mallet; one of these pins answering to the nail, as the mallet does to the hammer, which Jael used in fastening to the ground the temples of Sisera. [Judges iv. 21.] The pillars which I have mentioned are straight poles, eight or ten feet high, and three or four inches in thickness, serving not only to support the tent itself, but being full of hooks fixed there for the purpose, the Arabs hang upon them their clothes, baskets, saddles, and accoutrements of war. Holofernes, as we read, Judith xiii. 16, made the like use of the pillar of his tent by hanging his *faulchion* upon it, where it is called the pillar of the bed, from the custom, perhaps, that has always prevailed in these countries, of having the upper end of the carpet, mattress, or whatever else they lie upon, turned from the skirts of the tent towards the centre of it. But *konopceion*, the canopy, as we render it, verse 9, should, I presume, be rather called the great, or muskeeta net, which is a close curtain of gauze, or fine linen, used all over the east, by people of better fashion, to keep out the flies. But the Arabs have nothing of this kind, who, in taking their rest, lie stretched out upon the ground, without bed, mattress, or pillow, wrap-

ping themselves up only in their hykes, and lying, as they find room, upon a mat or carpet, in the middle, or in the corner of the tent. Those, indeed, who are married, have each of them a portion of the tent to themselves, cantoned off with a curtain; the rest accommodate themselves as conveniently as they can, in the manner I have described.

The other furniture of the common Arabian tents consists chiefly of hair sacks, and trunks, and baskets, covered with skin, in which they carry their kettles, pots, wooden bowls, hand-mills, and pitchers. To these we must add their leather bottles, in which they keep their water, milk, and other liquors. These leather bottles are made either of goats' skins or kids' skins. When the animal is killed, they cut off its feet and its head, and they draw it in this manner, out of the skin, without opening its belly. They afterwards sew up the places where the legs were cut off and the tail, and, when it is filled, they tie it about the neck.

While every year produces some alteration in our fashions, there is reason to believe that, in most instances, the appearance of the present inhabitants of Asia resembles that of their ancestors in the days of our Saviour, or even in the more remote ages of the Jewish kings and prophets. The principal articles of their dress are the hyke, the boor-noose, the turban, the tunic, the girdle, and the veil, which is worn by their females.

Dr. Shaw having observed that the Barbary women are employed in making of hykes, or blankets, as *Andromache* and *Penelope* were of old, and that they do not use the shuttle, but conduct every thread of the woof with their fingers, adds, that the usual size of the hyke is six yards long, and five or six feet broad, serving the *Kabyle* and Arab for a complete dress in the day: and as they sleep in their raiment, as the *Israelites* did of old, [*Deut. xxiv. 13.*] it serves, likewise, for his bed and covering in the night. It is a loose, but troublesome kind of garment, being frequently disconcerted and falling to the ground, so that the person who wears it is every moment obliged to tuck it up, and fold it anew around his body. This shows the great use there is for a girdle whenever they are concerned in any active employment, and, in consequence thereof, the force of the scripture injunction alluding thereto, of having our loins girded in order to set about it.

Instead of the fibula that was used by the Romans, the Arabs join together with thread or a wooden bodkin, the two upper corners of this garment; and after having placed them first over one of their shoulders, they then fold the rest of it about their bodies. The outer fold serves them frequently instead of an apron, wherein they carry herbs, loaves, corn, &c.; and many illustrate several allusions made thereto in scripture, as gathering the lap full of wild gourds, [*2 Kings iv. 19.*] rendering seven-fold, giving good measure into the bosom,

[Psalm cxxix. 12. Luke vi. 38.] shaking the lap. [Neh. v. 13.] &c. &c.

The burnoose, which answers to our cloak, is often, for warmth, worn over these hykes. It is woven in one piece, and strait about the neck, with a cape to the head, and wide below like a cloak.

If we except the cape of the burnoose, which is only occasionally used during a shower of rain, or in very cold weather, several Arabs and Kabyles go bare-headed all the year long, binding their temples only with a narrow fillet, to prevent their locks from being troublesome. But the Moors and Turks, with some of the principal Arabs, wear, upon the crown of the head, a small hemispherical cap of scarlet cloth. The turban, as they call a long narrow web of linen, silk, or muslin, is folded round the bottom of these caps, and very properly distinguishes, by the number and fashion of the folds, the several orders and degrees of soldiers, and sometimes of citizens one from another.

Under the hyke some wear a close-bodied frock or tunic, either with or without sleeves, which differs little from the Roman tunica or habit, in which the constellation Bootes is usually painted. The coat of our Saviour, which was woven without seam from the top throughout, [John xix. 23.] might be of the like fashion. This too, no less than the hyke, is to be girded about their bodies, especially when they are engaged in any labour, exercise, or employment, at which time they usually throw off their burnooses and hykes, and remain only in these tunics.

The girdles of these people are usually of worsted, very artfully woven into a variety of figures, such as the rich girdles of the virtuous virgins may be supposed to have been. [Prov. xxxi. 24.] They are made to fold several times round the body, one end of which being doubled back, and sewn along the edges, serves them for a purse, agreeable to the acceptation of the girdle in the scriptures. The Turks make a further use of these girdles, by fixing therein their knives and poniards; whilst the hojias, i. e. the writers and secretaries, suspend in the same their ink-horns, a custom as old as the prophet Ezekiel, who mentions [ix. 2.] a person clothed in white, linen with an ink-horn about his loins.

It is customary for the Turks and Moors to wear shirts of linen, or cotton, or gauze, underneath the tunics. But the Arabs wear nothing but woollen. The sleeves of these shirts are wide and open, without folds at the neck or wrists, as ours have, thereby preventing the flea and the louse from being commodiously lodged: those, particularly, of the women are oftentimes of the richest gauze, adorned with different coloured ribbands interchangeably sewed to each other.

Neither are the Bedoweens accustomed to wear drawers, a habit, notwithstanding which, the citizens of both sexes con-

stantly appear in, especially when they go abroad or receive visits. The virgins are distinguished from the matrons in having their drawers made of needle-work, striped silk, or linen, just as Tamar's garment is described, 2 Sam. xiii. 18. But when the women are at home, and in private, then their bykes are laid aside, and sometimes their tunics; and instead of drawers, they bind only a towel about their loins.

When these ladies appear in public they always fold themselves up so closely in their bykes, that, even without their veils, we could discover very little of their faces. But in the summer months, when they retire to their country seats, they walk abroad with less caution, though, even then, upon the approach of a stranger, they always drop their veils, as Rebecca did upon the sight of Isaac. [Gen. xxiv. 65.] They all affect to have their hair, the instrument of their pride, [Isa. xxii. 12.] hang down to the ground, which, after they have collected into one lock, they bind and plait it with ribbands, a piece of finery disapproved of by the apostle. [1 Pet. iii. 3.] Where nature hath been less liberal in this ornament, there the defect is supplied by art, and foreign hair is procured to be interwoven with the natural: Absalom's hair, which was sold for two hundred shekels, [2 Sam. xiv. 26.] might have been applied to this use. After the hair is thus plaited, they proceed to dress their heads, by tying above the lock I have described a triangular piece of linen, adorned with various figures in needle-work. This, among persons of better fashion, is covered with a sarmah, as they call it, which is made in the same triangular shape, of thin, flexible plates of gold or silver, artfully cut through and engraven in imitation of lace, and might, therefore, answer to the moon-like ornament mentioned above. A handkerchief of crape, gauze, silk, or painted linen, bound close over the sarmah, and falling, afterwards, carelessly upon the favourite lock, completes the head-dress of the Moorish ladies.

The corn cultivated in the Holy Land is principally wheat, barley, and millet. The first of these is the chief food of the inhabitants, barley being eaten only in times of scarcity, and the millet boiled up in their soups. Their harvest is in May, when they pluck up the corn by the roots, and carry it to an open place, where it is threshed. This last operation is performed either by means of a rolling machine, on which are small irons notched like a saw, which cut the straw and separate the grain, or by treading it out with three or four mules or horses tied together, and whipped repeatedly round the floor. This is a quick method of threshing, but not so cleanly as that performed in our own country. As they make no hay, they carefully preserve their straw, upon which, together with barley, their horses and other cattle chiefly subsist. After the grain is trodden out they winnow it, by throwing it up against the wind with a shovel. They then lodge the grain

in mattamores, or subterraneous magazines, as the custom was formerly of other nations, two or three hundred of which are sometimes together, the smallest holding four hundred bushels.

Out of these granaries they usually take as much corn at a time as may be necessary for a day's use, and, having first carefully inspected it, and cleansed it from every impurity, grind it very early in the morning in small portable handmills. This office, which is very laborious, is performed by the lowest of their female slaves, unless where families are very large, on which occasion horses are sometimes employed. For leaven they use small pieces of dough, which has been kept till it has become sour. The inhabitants of cities bake their bread in ovens, which, for want of better fuel, they heat with dried cow-dung; but such as dwell in tents, bake either immediately upon the coals, or in a ta-jen, a shallow earthen vessel, resembling a frying-pan. There is also another way of baking, which is mentioned by Dr. Arvieux, as practised by the Arabs about mount Carmel, which is, to make a fire in a great stone pitcher, and, when it is heated, they mix meal and water, as we do to make paste to glue things together with, which they apply, with the hollow of their hands, to the outside of the pitcher, and this extreme soft paste spreading itself upon it, is baked in an instant. The heat of the pitcher having dried up all the moisture, the bread comes off as thin as our wafers; and the operation is so speedily performed, that in a very little time a sufficient quantity is made. The eastern bread is usually made into small moist cakes, which are not fit for food longer than a day; they have, however, rusks, and biscuits for travelling, and delicate cakes made with yolks of eggs, and strewed with seeds.

They have, also, a food called burgle, which is thus described by Dr. Russel; "Burgle is wheat boiled, then bruised by a mill so as to take the husk off, then dried and kept for use. The usual way of dressing it is either by boiling it, like rice, into a pilaw, or making it into balls with meat and spices, and either fried or boiled; these balls are called cubby."

Such of the eastern people as are in better circumstances dip their bread in fine olive oil before they eat; but the poor either make use of oil of an inferior kind, or have no other addition than salt or summer-savoury dried and powdered. To make frequent use of oil, though it answers only to our eating of bread and butter, is accounted an expensive luxury.

Milk forms a very favourite article of their diet, and they are furnished with it, in considerable abundance, by their goats. Their butter is not very good, and always has something of the taste of tallow. They make it by churning it in *leather bottles*, which practice is not very cleanly, filling it up afterwards with milk, and so make their cheese, which is white,

and of a very bad taste, but they make no other. They drink sometimes *sweet milk*, and sometimes make broth of it; but when it curdles, they put the juice of an herb to it to make it sourer, and, consequently, more refreshing. They also put some of it upon their pilaw, (boiled rice,) and eat it mixed together. They esteem butter and honey as a most exquisite breakfast, and present it to those whom they would wish to treat with the first distinction. This mixture may, at first, seem very strange, but we are assured by travellers that it is not disagreeable.

They eat but little meat in comparison with what we do in Europe. Bread, dibbs, leban, butter, rice, and a very little mutton, make the chief of their food in winter. They esteem roast meat a great delicacy, especially roasted lamb or kid, dressed with butter and milk. But we cannot present a more agreeable picture of their hospitality and manner of living, than that which is given by La Roque concerning the Arabs.

“When strangers enter a village where they know nobody, they inquire for the Menzil, and desire to speak with the Sheik, who is as the lord of it, (or, at least, represents his person,) and the body of the community; after saluting him, they signify their want of a dinner, or of supping and lodging in the village. The Sheik says they are welcome, and that they could not do him a greater pleasure. He then marches at the head of the strangers, and conducts them to the Menzil, where, also, they may alight at once, if the Sheik is not at home, and ask for every thing they want. But they seldom have occasion for all this, for as soon as the people of the village see any strangers coming, they inform the Sheik of it, who goes to meet them, accompanied by some peasants, or by some of his domestics; and, having saluted them, asks if they would dine in the village, or whether they choose to stay the whole night there; if they answer that they would only eat a little morsel and go forward, and that they choose to stay under *some tree* a little out of the village, the Sheik goes, or sends his people into the village, to cause a collation to be brought, and, in a little time, they return with eggs, butter, curds, honey, olives, fruit, fresh or dried, according to the season, when they have not time to cook any meat.” He afterwards tells us, if it be evening, and the strangers would lodge in the village, that the women belonging to the Sheik’s house, having observed the number of the guests, “never fail to cause fowls, sheep, lambs, or a calf, to be killed, according to the quantity of meat which will be wanted for the entertainment of the guests, and of those that are to bear them company, and quickly make it into soup, roast it, and form out of it many other ragouts after their way, which they send to the Menzil for the Sheik’s servants, in wooden bowls, which they place on a great round straw mat, that usually serves them for a table. These dishes being set

in order, with many others, in which are eggs, cheese, fruit, sallad, sour curdled milk, olives, and all that they have to treat their guests with, which they set before them at once, that every one may eat as he likes: the Sheik begs of the strangers to sit round the mat, he himself sitting down with them, together with the other peasants of fashion belonging to the village, in order to do them honour. They make no use of knives at table, the meat being all cut into little bits."

The principal drink of the Asiatics is water, but they have wine both red and white, of several kinds. They keep their wine in jugs or flagons, as they have no casks, for which reason it is always thick. To slake their thirst in the height of summer, the poor people drink vinegar, and those who are in better circumstances lemonade. Their fruits are oranges, lemons, citrons, dates, figs, grapes, pomegranates, apricots, pistachio nuts, almonds, water melons, and several others. Oranges and lemons are, however, generally believed to have been unknown to the ancients. The citron is exceedingly valuable, the tree itself affording an agreeable shade, and the fruit, which is of a gold colour, being equally grateful to the smell and taste. The date grows upon a species of the palm-tree, and, as it is reckoned of a hot quality, is eaten with bread in the winter. The figs are of various kinds, and produced in different seasons of the year. The pistachio nuts of Syria, and, probably, those of Palestine, are accounted the best in the world. The water-melons are very serviceable to quench the thirst, and prevent those diseases which are the effect of excessive heat.

Their entertainments are commonly accompanied with music, of which the principal instrument is the tabret, which is played upon by women. It is described, by Dr. Russel, as "a hoop, (sometimes with pieces of brass fixed in it to make a jingling,) over which a piece of parchment is distended. It is beat with the fingers, and is the true tympanum of the ancients, as appears from its figure in several relievos." They have, likewise, a sort of a bagpipe, which numbers of idle fellows play upon round the skirts of the town, making it a pretence to ask a present of such as pass. Their field music consists of a sort of haut-boy, shorter, but shriller, than ours; trumpets, cymbals, large drums, the upper head of which is beat upon with an heavy drum-stick, the lower with a small switch. Besides these, they have small drums beat after the manner of our kettle-drums. This music, at a distance, has a tolerably good effect.

Having thus given an account of such of the customs of the inhabitants of this country, as, being of a permanent nature, may be yet traced among the Arabs and other Asiatic people; we shall proceed to relate those changes which took place after the death of Herod, and describe the state of the Jews at the commencement of our Lord's ministry.

The latter days of Herod were darkened by all those horrors which are sometimes commissioned to pursue the men of violence and blood. Having ascended the throne by the most unjustifiable means; governing a people who despised him as a proselyte, and hated him as an imitator of the Romans; and being surrounded by courtiers as daring and unprincipled as himself; he had sought security by the sacrifice of his wife Mariamne, her sons Alexander and Aristobulus, and a vast number of his subjects. His favourite son Antipater, whose false accusations had occasioned the death of the two last-mentioned princes, had been recently convicted of a conspiracy to poison Herod, but his execution was suspended till the sentence should be approved by Augustus. At length, worn down with age, sickness, and numberless cares and inquietudes, he fell into a violent disease, which, added to all his other misfortunes, made him so morose and choleric, that he became a burden to himself and every one about him. Finding his end approaching, he set about making his will, by which he appointed his youngest son his heir and successor, the misrepresentations and calumnies of Antipater having rendered his other two sons, Archelaus and Philip, obnoxious to him. He bequeathed, in legacies, one thousand talents to Augustus, five hundred to his empress, and left a considerable fortune to the unworthy Salome. The rest of his estate, lands, revenues, and money, he ordered to be divided between his children and grand-children. His disease continuing to increase, he thought of an horrid expedient to prevent the Jews from rejoicing at his death. He summoned their chief men to repair to Jericho, on a set day, under pain of death, and, upon their arrival, ordered them all to be shut up in the circus; and, having sent for his sister Salome, and her husband Alexas, gave them strict charge to have them all butchered as soon as his breath was gone. By this means, said he, I not only damp the people's joy, but secure a real mourning at my death. About this time came back his messengers from Rome, with Augustus's approbation of Antipater's sentence, and the news that Achme had been there put to death for her treachery. Herod could not but feel a sensible joy at it, in spite of all his tortures, and, finding himself at that time very hungry, called for an apple and a knife; but his pains increasing at that instant, and he, essaying to put an end to them with the knife, made a grandson of his, who tried to stop his hand, give a loud shriek, which alarmed the court, and made every body without believe he was dead. The report of it soon reached Antipater's prison, who expressed such lively joy and hopes at the news, as hastened his execution; for his gaoler, having acquainted the king with it, threw him into such a rage, that he despatched one of his guards, on the very instant, to put him to death. He outlived his son but five days, during which he altered his will

afresh ; left his kingdom to Archelaus ; made Antipas tetrarch of Galilee and Perea ; and left to Philip the regions of Trachonitis, Gaulon, Batanea, and Panias, which he erected, likewise, into a tetrarchy. To Salome, besides fifty thousand pieces in money, he gave the cities of Jamnia, Azotus, and Phaselis, with some considerable legacies to his other relations. He died in the seventieth year of his age, the thirty-seventh after his advancement to the Jewish crown, and the thirty-fourth after the expulsion and death of Antigonos, and to the no small joy of the Jews. This joy was not diminished, as Herod had intended ; for his executors, instead of fulfilling his request, permitted all the prisoners to depart to their respective houses.

Herod was no sooner dead, and the prisoners released, than Salome and Alexas summoned the chief officers and soldiery to the amphitheatre at Jericho, and read to them a letter from the deceased king, in which he thanked them for their past services and fidelity to him, and desired them to show it now to his son Archelaus, whom he had appointed his successor. His last will was read to them at the same time, by Ptolemy, the then keeper of the royal seal, in which there was this remarkable clause, "That it was to be of no force till ratified by Cæsar." The audience, however, taking it for granted that the emperor would not fail to confirm it, sent out an universal shout, Long live king Archelaus ! and both officers and soldiers promised him the same allegiance and attachment which they had shown to his father.

The new king, to show his gratitude to him, began with preparing a funeral answerable to his greatness and dignity. His body was laid on a sumptuous golden litter, enriched with variety of precious stones, wearing the royal crown on his head, and holding the sceptre in his hand. His sons and grandsons, his sister and her husband, accompanied with the rest of his relations, marched by his side, and were followed by all his officers both civil and military, according to their rank. Among the latter, his guards led the van ; then came the Thracians ; next, the Germans ; and, last of all, the Gauls, or Galatians ; all of them armed, and in order of battle. The procession was closed with five hundred of the king's domestics, with aromatic perfumes, and proceeded to his castle of Herodion, which was about eight stades, or one thousand paces distant from Jericho, and where they deposited his remains, according to his will. They returned from thence to Jerusalem, where Archelaus, having finished the seven days' mourning for his father, according to the Jewish custom, gave the people a magnificent feast. He went next to the temple, clothed in white, and in the midst of their loud acclamations ; and, being there seated on his golden throne, gave the people thanks for the zeal they expressed for him ; but added, that he would not assume the title of king till it had been affirmed to him by Augustus, though

that, as well as the royal diadem, had been offered to him at Jericho, by the suffrages of the whole army. He concluded with assuring them, that, as soon as he was confirmed by the emperor, his chief care and study should be to deserve the love they had so unanimously testified for him, and to make his reign more easy and happy than that of his father had proved to the Jewish nation. This speech was followed with volleys of huzzas; after which, they began to try the sincerity of it, by a number of petitions suitable to their different exigencies. Some begged for an alleviation of their tribute; others, for the total abolition of the customs; others, again, for the release of prisoners; all which were readily granted at this lucky juncture, Archelaus not thinking it advisable to exasperate them by a denial. The whole ceremony was concluded with suitable sacrifices, and a sumptuous entertainment, which he gave there to his friends.

The Jews, however, soon resumed their rebellious course, in spite of all these grants. That afternoon was scarcely over, before a number of malcontents, who had been, for some time, holding secret cabals for raising new mutinies, broke loose in a body, and, for want of a more plausible pretence, came beating their breasts, bewailing the deaths of Matthias and others of his accomplices, who had been burnt for pulling down the golden eagle, and demanded justice against those friends of the deceased king who had an hand in their deaths; particularly they desired that the high-priesthood might be taken from Joazar, to whom it had been given upon that occasion. This unexpected indignity failed not to exasperate the new king; but as he was upon the point of departing for Rome, and was unwilling either to have his journey stopped by this tumult, or to go away before it was quelled, he sent his master of the horse to appease them by fair words, and to remind them that the king would do nothing till he was confirmed by the emperor; but before he could utter a word to them, they fell a pelting him with volleys of stones, so that he was forced to withdraw. He sent some fresh officers on the same errand, and they met with the same reception, insomuch, that they wanted but number to have raised themselves into open rebellion. By this time the feast of the passover was come, which brought a great concourse of people, from all parts, to Jerusalem; during which solemnity the malcontents never stirred from the temple, but chose to beg subsistence from the comers, rather than leave the place, or intermit their godly work till they were driven from it by main force.

Archelaus, who justly feared lest these mutineers should spread the infection among the multitudes that repaired to the feast, sent an officer, at the head of some troops, with express orders either to disperse them, or to seize such as stood their ground. They were scarcely come in sight of the revolters,

before they found themselves briskly attacked by them, and by a great number of strangers whom their outcries had inspired with the same rebellious spirit: a bloody encounter followed, in which most of the soldiers were killed upon the spot, and the officer terribly wounded, and narrowly escaped with life. This fresh indignity obliged, at length, Archelaus to send his whole army against them, with orders to his cavalry to kill all who came out of the temple, and to hinder the strangers from assisting them. After another obstinate fight, in which three thousand of the rebels were killed, the rest were put to flight, and betook themselves to the mountains; upon which, the king published an order for all the strangers to depart to their own houses, by which an end was put to the paschal solemnity for that year. He set out soon after for Rome accordingly, leaving the government of the kingdom to his brother Philip, and took with him his mother *Mattæe*, by nation a Samaritan, *Nicholas Damascen*, an old friend and counsellor of his late father, and a great number of other friends. He was, likewise, accompanied by his aunt *Salome*, with her children, and some other near relations who pretended to assist him with their interest at the Augustan court, when their real design was to obstruct his confirmation, and to accuse him, to the emperor, of the massacre of his subjects, lately committed in the temple.

When Archelaus was come to Cæsarea, he was met there by Sabinus, Augustus's intendant of Syria, who was hastening into Judea to take care of the rich legacies which Herod had bequeathed to that emperor. He had, however, been dissuaded by Varus, in his way thither, from undertaking any thing further till the emperor's will was known, and Archelaus confirmed in his kingdom; so that he had been prevailed upon, by that Syrian governor, to stay in that city till he received further orders from Rome. He staid, however, no longer there than till Varus was returned to Antioch, his capital; after which, he went immediately to Jerusalem, lodged himself at the royal palace, and summoned the king's treasurers to give an account, and to put him in possession of those treasures; but as these had orders from Archelaus not to part with them till his return, they refused to deliver them to Sabinus, alleging, they would preserve them for Augustus till they received further directions from him. By this time Archelaus and his retinue were arrived at Rome: and among those whom the subtle Salome had brought with her, to oppose his elections, was Antipas, another of Herod's sons, whom that monarch had appointed his successor by his first will, and whom she designed to set up against his brother, under pretence that it was of greater validity than his second.

Not long after, the restless Jews had made a new insurrection in Jerusalem, which was, however, suppressed by Varus's

speedy arrival from Antioch, and the punishment of the ring-leaders; but, upon his return to Antioch, having left Sabinus with a Roman legion to keep that metropolis in awe, this general, seeing himself superior to the Jews, made a bold push upon the fortresses of the city, and the treasures of the Herodian family, with a design to convert them to his own use. He chose, however, a wrong time for such an attempt, and the Jews who came thither to the approaching feast of pentecost quickly divided themselves into three bodies, one of which besieged him and his troops in the royal palace, whilst the other two went and possessed themselves, the one of the Hippodrome, and the other of the temple, and on the east and north sides of it; so that he was inclosed on every side, and in danger of being overpowered by the Jews. These were the more exasperated against him, because he had forced his way into the treasury of the temple, and brought away four hundred talents out of it, beside other rich plunder which his soldiers had carried off in spite of all their opposition.

These two actions, therefore, could not but highly exasperate the Jewish nation, and make them double their vigour against him. Accordingly, whilst one part was taken up in undermining the palace, another was endeavouring to cause a defection from the Roman general, by promising another amnesty and free leave to march off unmolested, to as many as should leave the place. They added the like promise to Sabinus, upon the same conditions, and assured the Roman troops, that they had no other design in taking up arms but to free themselves from the tyrannic yoke of the Herodian family. Sabinus would have gladly embraced the offer, but the injuries he had done the Jews would not permit him to rely on their promise, so that he chose rather to wait for the reinforcement he expected from Varus. During this time new troubles were raised in other parts of Judea; among others, two thousand valiant veterans of the late king, who had been discharged from the service, assembled themselves in a body, and fell upon Archelaus's forces, commanded by his nephew Archiabus; but this young general, not daring to face them upon equal terms, knowing them to be old experienced soldiers, went and secured himself as well as he could, in some fortresses, and other places of difficult access.

Ezechias, a captain of a gang of banditti whom Herod had, with much difficulty, caught, and put to death, with about forty of his troops, had left a son, named Judas, who, seeing now the country labouring under a kind of civil war, took this opportunity to revenge his father's death; and, having got together a band of the most desperate free-booters at Sephoris, a city in Galilee, after several incursions into the king's dominions, forced at length into the royal armoury, where he equipped his men cap-a-pie, and from thence into the treasury

of every place where he came, and, being once furnished with men, arms, and money, injected terror into the whole province, and plundered all he could come at; and so successful was he for some time, that he began to aim at the supreme power, whence he is thought, not without good grounds, to have been the same which is mentioned by St. Luke under the name of Theudas.

He was not the only one that aimed at the crown, during these troublesome times. There started up another, named Simeon, a person of a comely stature, well esteemed by the Jews, and sufficiently conceited to think himself worthy of it. He had been employed by Herod, in affairs of great importance, with credit. As soon, therefore, as he appeared at the head of a party, the people saluted him king of the Jews; and he, to show his zeal against the two rival sons of his late master, led his men directly to Jericho, where they set the royal palace, a rich and stately building, in flames. He proceeded to do the like to several others, giving his men the whole plunder of them. But, happily for that country, Gratus, Archelaus's general, or, according to Tacitus, Varus, the Syrian governor, fell suddenly upon them, and, whilst they fought with more courage than skill, gave them a total overthrow; and Simeon was caught in his flight in some narrow defile, and, being brought to the general, had his head immediately struck off. Whilst these were plundering and burning the royal palaces in one part of the country, another gang was doing the same in another, particularly that of Amathia on the Jordan, built, probably, by Herod, for the benefit of the hot waters which that city was famed for, and took its name from.

But the most desperate and dangerous of all those seditious gangs (for they raged in every place, like an epidemic disease) was that of Athronges, heretofore an obscure shepherd, of no merit and worth, but what he challenged from his gigantic stature and brutish stoutness. At length, after many bloody and desperate exploits, the mock monarch fell into the hands of Archelaus, after his return into Judea. One of his brothers was taken by Gratus, and another by Ptolemy. The last surrendered himself upon good conditions, and so the whole gang was dispersed: But all this while the whole country was in a flame from fresh insurrections, as well as from that of the Jews against Sabinus, whilst the Herodian competitors were waiting, at Rome, for the emperor's decision.

By this time, Varus, being apprised of the danger of Sabinus and his legion, took the road to Judea, at the head of his other two legions, which were all that he had then in Syria, and with four troops of horse, and some foot, which he had got from the neighbouring tetrarchs. He ordered their rendezvous at Ptolemais, where he received some fresh auxiliaries, besides fifteen hundred more which the king of Arabia sent him to Berytus,

more out of hatred to the Herodian family, than love to the Romans. With part of his army Varus marched towards Samaria, whilst the rest, under the command of his son, made an inroad into that part of Galilee which was nearest to Ptolemais. This last, having put to flight all that opposed him, went and took Sephoris, sold all the inhabitants by auction, set fire to that noble city, and reduced it into an heap of rubbish. His father, on the other hand, passed by Samaria, because he heard that it had no hand in the Jewish insurrections, and marched straight to Jerusalem. In his way, he suffered his Arabian troops to plunder and burn several villages and towns, such as Arus, because it belonged to Ptolemy, a friend of Herod, Sampho, and Emmaus; this last, in revenge of the slaughter which Athronges had made of the Romans near that place, but the inhabitants of it, foreseeing the storm, had timely forsaken it. Whilst this was doing without the city, the besiegers, who were just going to storm the palace, having heard of Varus coming with such a force, raised the siege, and marched off in a fright; upon which, the besieged came forth, with the grand-children of Herod, to compliment him on his arrival, and to thank him for his timely help. Sabinus was the only one who did not follow their example, but stole away, privately, towards the sea. Varus gave a very severe reprimand to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for their late hostilities against the Roman legion; but was soon appeased when he was apprised, that they neither had an hand in it, nor were able to hinder it, being themselves pent up by those foreign Jews who were come to the feast, and had begun the tumult. However, as he thought it expedient to make a severe example of the ringleaders of it, he sent some of his troops through the whole kingdom, with orders to make a strict search after them, and bring them prisoners to him. Upon their return they brought a vast number of these wretches, two thousand of whom he caused to be crucified, and released the rest.

At length, after much dispute between the members of the Herodian family, who endeavoured, each of them, to get Augustus on their own side, he decided the controversy so as to convince the world of his friendship both to Herod and to his offspring. He bestowed the half of the kingdom on Archelaus, under the title of ethnarch, or governor of a nation, and backed it with a promise, that he would give him that of king as soon as he had heard that he had rendered himself worthy of it. This part, or ethnarchy, contained Judea Propria, Idumea, and Samaria; but he exempted this last of one fourth part of their taxes, in consideration of their peaceable behaviour during the late troubles in Judea and Galilee. Josephus reckons the whole yearly revenue of this new ethnarchy to have amounted to six hundred talents. The remainder of Herod's kingdom was divided between his other two sons, Philip and Antipas, the

former of whom had the regions of Batanea, Trachonitis, and Auranitis, to which Cæsar added that part of Galilee which had formerly belonged to Zeusedorus, which, alone, amounted to about one hundred talents a year. The latter had the greatest part of Galilee, and the countries beyond Jordan amounting to two hundred talents a year. Salome had, for her share, besides half a million of silver, the cities of Jamnia, Azotus, and Phasaelis, to which Augustus added that of Ascalon. The rest of Herod's legacies, particularly the fifteen hundred talents which he had bequeathed to him, he generously distributed between his other relations, his grandsons, and two virgin daughters, whom he married to Pheroras's sons, reserving for himself only a few of his moveables, not so much for their value, as out of regard to the memory of his deceased friend.

The first year of the reign of Archelaus proved peaceable enough; but the people, at length, both Jews and Samaritans, being tired with his tyrannical reign, joined in a petition to Augustus against him, which had no sooner reached him, than he sent an agent of his into Judea, without any other letter, to fetch the Jewish ethnarch to him. Archelaus, though warned, as well as the incestuous Glaphyra, by some portending dreams mentioned at length by Josephus, had given so little heed to them, that Cæsar's messenger found him in the height of his mirth when he came to acquaint him with his orders, and obliged him to hasten with him to Rome. Upon their arrival there, Augustus, with his usual equanimity, heard both the charge and the defence; after which, he condemned Archelaus to be banished to the city of Vienne, in Gaul, or Dauphine, and all his goods to be confiscated. Judea, by this sentence, being reduced to a province of the empire, was ordered to be taxed, and Cyrenius, the then governor of Syria, and a man of consular dignity, was sent thither to see it executed; after which, having sold Archelaus's palaces, and seized upon all his treasure, he returned to Antioch, leaving the Jews in no small ferment upon the account of this new tax.

Coponius, the Roman general of horse, and governor of Judea under Cyrenius, had accompanied him in that expedition; and his presence, as well as the good offices of Joazar, the then high-priest, had, for a while, kept the nation under some restraint, till Judas, the Gaulonite, and one Saducus, a turbulent Pharisee, set it again into a flame. This pretender took upon him to condemn this taxing as slavish, idolatrous, and inconsistent with their duty to God, the only sovereign who could claim any homage or allegiance from the children of Abraham. The war being thus kindled within and without, was followed by a grievous famine, and this by a pestilence, all which ended, at length, in the total ruin of that rebellious and unhappy nation, which was owing to the ambition of this

upstart sect or faction. After the death of their leader they distinguished themselves by the name of Zealots, and, under that specious title, committed the most unheard of cruelties, and carried their violence even into the very temple.

All this while the Samaritans had not forgot their old grudge against the Jews, though they had been so long quiet. Cyrenius was scarce gone out of Judea before they began to hatch new mischiefs against them: they waited till the next approaching feast of the passover, which on the eve of, a number of them, having privately slipt into the temple, strewed the galleries, and other places of resort, with dead men's bones; so that the priests, on the next morning, finding that sacred place polluted, were forced to put a stop to the solemnity; which indignity obliged them to be more cautious for the future, to guard the avenues from all such insults.

It was about this time that our Lord visited Jerusalem, and had that conversation with the Jewish rabbies which we recorded in the preceding chapter.

Coponius was, soon after this feast, succeeded by Ambivius, in whose governorship Salome died, and bequeathed her three cities mentioned a little higher, together with the fine grove of palm-trees planted by Archelaus, and all her vast treasure, not to either of her nephews, who still held their small toparchies, but to the empress Julia, or, as Josephus affects to call her, Livia. Ambivius, after a short time, was succeeded by Annius Rufus; and Augustus died at Nola, in Campania, and was succeeded by Tiberius, after the latter had been somewhat above two years admitted into the copartnership of the empire. From this period must the fifteenth year of Tiberius, mentioned by the evangelist, be taken. Tiberius, upon his coming to the empire, recalled Rufus, and sent Valerius Gratus into Judea, who was the fourth Roman governor or procurator of it, and continued in that government eleven years. About five years after his being entered into it, he deposed the high-priest Ananus, or Annas, in the fifteenth year of his pontificate, and raised Ishmael, the son of Fabus, to that dignity. Being soon after displeased with his choice, he took it from Ishmael on the next year, and gave it to Eleazer, the son of Ananus, whom he had lately deposed. Eleazer, in a year's time, was forced to resign, and was succeeded by Simon, the son of Canith, who, within the compass of another year, was turned out, and Joseph, surnamed Caiaphas, and son-in-law to Annas above-mentioned, was put in his room; so uncertain and venal was that dignity become by this time.

Gratus himself was soon after recalled, and succeeded by Pontius Pilate, a person who exceeded all his predecessors in injustice, extortion, and cruelty; and so thoroughly wedded to his own interest, that he was capable of the vilest actions to promote that favourite end. He made his whole administra-

tion, according to Josephus, one continued scene of venality, rapine, tyranny, and wickedness, delivering innocent men, without trial or condemnation, to torture, and to death, and practising every species of detestable cruelty.

We hinted, a little higher, that the other sons of Herod had still kept possession of their toparchies, notwithstanding Archelaus's deposition and banishment; it will be, therefore, very proper here to give some further account of them before we enter into a new and different scene. They had, each of them, settled themselves the best they could in their small territories. Antipas, better known by the name of Herod, who had the country of Galilee, began with rebuilding the city of Sephoris, which had, but a little before, been reduced to ashes, by the son of Varus, by a strong wall and towers, so that it became the bulwark, and one of the best cities of that canton; and as he had been successful enough to ingratiate himself with the new emperor, he built another, a fine city, on the northern banks of the lake of Gennezareth, and called it Tiberias, in honour of him, and from thence that lake came to be called the sea of Tiberias. His brother Philip followed his example, and raised the village of Bethsaida, on the opposite end of the same lake, into a magnificent city, and called it, likewise, Julias, and gave the name of Cæsarea to Paleas, the place where the Jordan had its spring head, after he had greatly enlarged and beautified it. During this time came out that edict of Tiberius, which obliged all Jews and Egyptians to depart from the city of Rome, or, according to another, out of the territories of Italy.

Hitherto, Judea, though in a violent ferment, on account of the late tax, and some other tumults which the Romans had appeased by main force, had not, however, broke into such a violent and universal flame as it did after the coming of Pilate. It was this governor, whose fierce, obstinate, and cruel temper hastened on those seditions and revolts which did not end but with the total extirpation of the Jewish state. His predecessors had, hitherto, wisely forbore to bring the Roman standards into the city, because their bearing the images of men and living creatures made them to be had in abomination by the Jews. But Pilate, who thought it beneath him to show them the same complaisance, ordered his troops, which were to winter in that metropolis, to enter it in the night with those standards covered, and caused them, on the next morning to be displayed. This new and shocking sight put the whole city into an uproar; they went to him, in a body, to Cæsarea, where he then was, and begged of him that they might be removed to some other place; but were answered that he could not comply with their request, without glancing an affront on the emperor. As they stood stiff in their petition, and he in his denial, six whole days, five of which the former had continued prostrate on the

ground before his palace, night and day; he, at length, came out to them, as with design to give them audience, and, being mounted on his tribunal, which he had reared in the circus, gave the signal to some of his troops, whom he had conveniently posted, to fall on them, and to murder all that should not immediately depart, and who instantly came out and surrounded them. The Jews, however, far from being terrified at so horrid a perfidy, meekly held out their necks to those butchers, telling them and the governor, that the loss of their lives was nothing so terrible to them as the violation of their laws; and Pilate, who expected nothing less than such a passive constancy in that turbulent nation, was so moved at it, that he, at length, granted their request, and ordered the standards to be moved out of their metropolis.

But as he seems to have been wholly bent upon mortifying the Jewish nation, he soon resumed his usual course. A project came next into his head to set up a number of shields in the royal palace of Jerusalem, in honour of Tiberius, but which the Jews failed not to represent as an indignity offered to them, rather than a compliment to that emperor. He had, it is true, taken care that there should be no carved images upon them that might give them offence, but the very inscription of them was, they thought, contrary to their law; otherwise, there was nothing more common, both before and after the Jewish captivity, than for the Jewish monarchs to cover even the front of the temple with such ornaments, as the reader must have often observed through the course of their history. The magistrates, therefore, of that metropolis, with the sons of Herod at their head, went to represent to him, in the most civil terms, that such a consecration was contrary to their laws, and to beg of him that he would pay a greater regard to them. But their remonstrances not being able to prevail with him, they immediately withdrew, and soon after sent a very pressing, but submissive, letter to Rome, which had the desired effect. Tiberius immediately despatched another to Pilate, wherein he highly blamed him for what he had done, and ordered him to remove the shields into some other place, which he accordingly did, and sent them to be hung up at Cæsarea.

His next project to vex the Jews was to find out some specious pretence for drawing money out of the sacred treasury. This, indeed, was the most effectual way to touch them to the quick, next to the rifling of the temple; for he knew, but too well, their invincible attachment to those two places. The plausible pretext he chose for it was the bringing of an aqueduct, about two hundred furlongs off, into Jerusalem, the expence of which he expected should be supplied out of that sacred depository, and commanded, accordingly, of them, that a tax should be levied upon it. However, as he knew that this would not fail to provoke the people into a mutiny, he took

care to provide against it, by causing a number of his soldiers to mix themselves with the crowd, with clubs hid under their coats, to be ready, upon a signal, to fall upon the mutineers. He was hardly seated on his tribunal before it was surrounded, accordingly, by a vast concourse of the Jews, who came exclaiming against his project, and where some of the meaner sort, as is usual in such mobs, accompanied their clamours with bitter invectives against him. Pilate had not heard them long before he gave his men the signal, who immediately fell on the Jews with their clubs, wounded, lamed, and even killed many of them indiscriminately, and dispersed the rest.

All these calamities were so far from effecting any reformation among the Jews, that their wickedness continued daily to increase. Zealously devoted to the Mosaic dispensation, and equally tenacious for the traditions of the elders, they omitted the more weighty matters of the law, justice, mercy, and truth; and while they compassed sea and land to obtain a proselyte, caused, through their abominable practices, the name of God to be blasphemed among the Gentiles. Thus did darkness cover the land, and gross darkness the people, immediately before that the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in his beams.

CHAPTER IV.

The Ministry of John the Baptist.

The public appearance of John the Baptist—His divine mission foretold by the prophets, and asserted by the evangelists—the date of the commencement of his mission—his dress and diet compared with those of the present inhabitants of the east—his baptism and general preaching—his particular address to the Pharisees, Sadducees, publicans, and soldiers—the obscurity of Christ's private life—his baptism—the testimony of the Father to the divine character of Christ—the temptation—reasons for God's permission, and for Satan's conduct in this affair—how he was shown all the kingdoms of the earth—John confesses that he is not the Christ—John, having announced Christ to be the Lamb of God, Andrew, and another disciple, Peter, Philip, and Nathaniel, become acquainted with him—at the wedding in Cana, Christ turns the water into wine—he attends his first passover—how many passovers there were during his ministry—he cleanses the temple—the forty-six years which the temple had been building—Christ converses with Nicodemus—John's last testimony to Christ—his imprisonment—reflections.

JOHN, the son of Zachariah and Elizabeth, the peculiar circumstances of whose birth and education have been already described, after remaining nearly thirty years in obscurity,

burst forth, on a sudden, upon the attention of the public. The evangelists have not only given us a brief sketch of his history, but have unanimously concurred to assert the divinity of his mission.

The evangelist John tells us that the Baptist had a special commission from God, being called to his office by inspiration, as the prophets were of old, and that he was sent to bear witness of the light, or to point out the Messiah, whom he had called, in the preceding fourth verse, the light of men, because it was one of the principal prophetic characters of the Messiah, that he was to enlighten the world. John i. 6—8, "There was a man sent from God whose name was John. The same came for a witness to bear witness of the light, that all men, through him, might believe. He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light:" though sent from God, he was not the Word of God, who has enlightened the world; but he came to point him out to mankind. Mark refers to this event, the fulfilling of Malachi iii. 1, "Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." Matthew, Mark, and Luke, observe, that John's preaching, the design of it, its efficacy upon the minds of the people, and even the place where he first appeared publicly, were all foretold by the prophet Isaiah. "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Luke, however, cites the passage more fully than the rest. Luke iii. 5, 6, "Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God." Of these metaphors, which are plainly taken from the making of roads, the meaning is, that Messiah's forerunner, by preaching the doctrine of repentance, shall produce such a change in the minds of the Jews, that many of them, laying aside their prejudices, shall receive and acknowledge Messiah when he appears. After such a preparation of the way, mankind shall behold, not a splendid temporal monarch, accompanied with a magnificent retinue, but the author of that salvation which God has prepared before the face of all people. [Luke ii. 30, 31.]

Luke has marked the commencement of the Baptist's ministry with a great degree of precision; ch. iii. 1, 2, "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." This account is, however, attended with several difficulties. 1. The reign of Tiberius had two commencements, one, when Augustus

made him his colleague in the empire, in the year of Rome 764, or 765, and the other, when he began to reign alone, after Augustus's death, in 767. The earliest of these computations is usually preferred, but it does not appear that any of them would be attended with consequences at all dangerous to the credibility of the evangelical history. 2. Luke says, Philip's dominions were Iturea and Trachonitis, but Josephus says, they were Auranitis and Trachonitis. Reland reconciles the historian with the evangelist, by supposing that Iturea and Auranitis were different names of the same country. 3. Annas and Caiaphas, we are told, were high-priests when John began his ministry. But, according to the institutions of the Jewish religion, there could be only one high-priest, properly so called, at a time, that minister being typical of the one mediator between God and man. The most probable solution, therefore, of this difficulty, is, that Annas was the high-priest, and Caiaphas his sagan, or deputy, to whom, also, the title of high-priest might improperly be given.

John the Baptist began his public labours in the wilderness of Judea, and his appearance was every way answerable to the ruggedness of the country. [Matt. iii. 4.] "And the same John had his raiment of camels' hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey." The locusts were a species of large insects, such as frequently destroy the crops in Barbary and Syria, and were, on a particular occasion, the means of executing the wrath of God. Wild honey, the other article of the Baptist's fare, is supposed, by many, to have been a kind of liquor, which, in those countries, distilled from the trees. But because this kind of juice, when used as food, was sometimes attended with bad effects, others are of opinion, that the wild honey on which the Baptist fed was that which bees deposit in the hollow trunks of trees, and of which there was great plenty in Palestine. [1 Sam. xiv. 25—27.] It will, however, be proper to compare the diet and clothing of the Baptist with those of the present inhabitants of the same countries; and here we shall be considerably assisted by the observations of the late Mr. Harmer. He is speaking concerning the use of honey as a luxury in the east, and concerning the prediction that the Messiah should eat butter and honey, that he might learn to choose the good, and refuse the evil.

"The account that is given of the diet of John the Baptist may be thought a much stronger objection. He lived on locusts and wild honey, and his way of life is represented, by our Lord, as the very reverse of the way of those who dwell in kings' courts, nay, as very different from his own; consequently, honey and locusts must be thought to have been then reckoned very coarse sort of food, whatever honey may

now be among the Arabs. But the force of this difficulty lies in taking for granted what is not to be admitted, that the management of John was like the affected rigour and pompous abstinence of some superstitious hermits; whereas, the account we have of him only expresses great simplicity, that he contented himself with what nature offered him in those retreats. This, to those that expected the Messiah's should be an earthly kingdom, and those that were concerned in introducing into it great men, after the manner of this world, might well be pointed out, by our Lord, as a thing extremely observable."

There is a passage in Rauwolff that greatly illustrates this explanation, in which, speaking of his passing through the Arabian deserts, he says, "We were necessitated to be contented with some slight food or other, and make a shift with curds, cheese, fruits, honey, &c.; and to take any of these, with bread, for a good entertainment. The honey, in these parts, is very good, and of a whitish colour, whereof they take, in their caravans and navigations, great leather bottles full, along with them; this they bring you in small cups, and put a little butter to it, and so you eat it with biscuits. By this dish I often remembered St. John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Lord, how he also did eat honey in the deserts, together with other food. Besides this, when we had a mind to feast ourselves, some ran, as soon as our master had landed at night, to fetch some wood, and others, in the mean time, made an hole in the ground on the shore, in the nature of a furnace, to boil our meat. So every company dressed, accordingly, what they had a mind, or what they had laid up in store; some boiled rice, others ground corn, &c. And when they had a mind to eat new bread instead, or for want of biscuits, they made a paste of flour and water," &c. Rauwolff speaks of honey, fruits, curds, and cheese, as sorts of food that they were obliged to make a shift with, and he opposes them to those eatables on which they sometimes feasted, but, certainly, not because these things were in themselves coarse and mortifying, for he tells us the honey was very good, and, elsewhere, speaks of the bringing some of these things to the eastern tables of delicacies, at the close of their entertainments; but he considers them, when alone, as being a slight sort of food, and which people are not wont to be pleased with, without something of a more solid kind. "Such, doubtless, was the character of the Baptist's abstemiousness; not pompous, affected, and brutal, like that of the hermits of superstition, (who more resemble Nebuchadnezzar in his distraction than the forerunner of our Lord,) but perfectly natural, as living among people of the wilderness, contenting himself, therefore, with a way of life sparing as theirs, and, perhaps, more visibly dependant on what providence presented than even they; instead of living in abundance and

profusion, after the manner of those that dwelt in king's palaces, or eating bread and meat, and drinking wine, as our Lord did."

"This explanation will, at the same time, remove a difficulty that might otherwise arise from what modern authors have told us of the agreeableness of the taste of locusts, and their being frequently used for food in the east. Dr. Shaw observing, that, when they are sprinkled with salt, and fried, they are not unlike, in taste, to our fresh water cray-fish; and Russel saying, the Arabs salt them up, and eat them as a delicacy."

Even his clothing of hair is mentioned by Rauwolff as in common use in those deserts; and he says, that he himself, in his travels among that people, put on a frock of this kind. There was nothing, then, in John, of excessive rigour, nothing of an ostentatious departure from common forms of living in order to indulge in delicacies, like those St. Jerom blames in the letter to Nepotian; but, retiring into the deserts for meditation and prayer, he lived, with great simplicity, after the manner of the inhabitants of those places, both with respect to dress and food."

To some writers, however, these reasons are not quite satisfactory. John resembled, say they, the old prophets, particularly Elijah, in the coarseness of his clothing, [2 Kings i. 8.] and in the abstemiousness of his diet. He wore a rough kind of garment made of camels' hair, probably, the sackcloth with which penitents and mourners used to cover their loins, and, sometimes, their whole bodies. [1 Chron. xxi. 16.] His extraordinary mortification, by which he acquired the air of an old prophet, was intended to make the people reverence him. Besides, such a course of life was suitable to the doctrine of repentance which he preached. Accordingly, the public attention being turned towards him, the inhabitants of the country, who were all now expecting the Messiah, went out to him in multitudes. And, because he preached the necessity of repentance, from the consideration that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, many of all ranks, sects, and characters, submitted to confession of sins, baptism in Jordan, and whatever else the prophet was pleased to prescribe as preparations for that kingdom; so eagerly desirous were all the Jews to have it erected among them without delay. "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan: And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."

The great employment of John was preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, i. e. explaining the nature, and declaring the necessity of baptism, as a testimony, on the part of those who submitted to it, of the sincerity of their repentance, and on the part of him who administered it by the commandment of God, as a seal or token of the remission of their sins. Perhaps, also, as the Jews themselves were required, by

John, to submit to baptism, it signified, that, together with their sins, they were to renounce the institutions of Moses, just as the Gentile proselytes, by their baptism, were understood to renounce, not their sins only, but the profession of heathenism also. Wherefore, if this opinion may be admitted in every view of this rite, the Baptist, by preaching it as necessary, and by administering it to all who were willing to receive it, prepared the people for the coming of Messiah.

As the chief subject of the Baptist's preaching was repentance, i. e. a complete change of principles, and, consequently, of practice, it surprised him, not a little, to find among those who came confessing their sins, and desiring baptism, many of the Pharisees, a sect generally puffed up with an high opinion of their own sanctity. He was equally astonished at the Sadducees, who, though they did not believe any thing at all of a future state, expressed the greatest earnestness to obtain remission. In a word, he wondered to see the whole people so much moved with his threatenings, especially as he knew that they confidently expected salvation on account of their being Abraham's children, a conceit of which they were extremely fond, and which they seem to have derived from a misinterpretation of Jeremiah xxxi. 35, 37. Wherefore, as a rebuke of their presumption on this head, he called them, in his exhortation, the offspring of vipers, instead of the children of Abraham, plainly alluding to Gen. iii. 15, where wicked men are called "the seed of the serpent. Who hath warned you," he asks, "to flee from the wrath to come?" By what means have you been awakened to a sense of the danger you are in from the impending judgment of God? Or his questions may imply a strong negation, as if he had said, I have not showed you that you can flee from the wrath to come merely by baptism without repentance. It seems the Pharisees and Sadducees desired his baptism only as the ceremony of admission into the Messiah's kingdom, not as an obligation to amendment. Moreover, because reason and experience prove that confession of sins, a present sorrow for them, and warm resolutions of forsaking them, neither necessarily, nor always, are attended with reformation, the Baptist insisted on the fruits of repentance, as well as on repentance itself. "Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance:" do the works that should proceed from a penitent disposition. And, that his doctrine might take the faster hold of them, he showed them the folly of expecting salvation merely on account of their descent, assuring them that their being Abraham's children would be no protection to them if they continued in their sins. He inquired, earnestly, who could have warned such unlikely people as they were to receive his instructions of their necessity of fleeing from the impending wrath of God, and exhorted them not to rest satisfied with their professions of sorrow for sin, but to bring forth fruits meet for

repentance; to do such works as would evidently prove that their professions were sincere, and their motives essentially different from those by which they had been hitherto actuated. "Think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham." God, who formed Adam and Eve out of the dust of the earth, and gave Abraham a son by Sarah, when she was past the age of child-bearing, can raise up children unto that patriarch, even out of the stones under your feet; or, as others interpret the word, can give him children from among the Gentiles, who, by imitating his piety and holiness, shall partake with him in the blessing. Thus the Baptist took from those presumptuous men the ground of their confidence, by affirming that God could perform his promises to Abraham, though the whole Jewish nation were rejected by him, and excluded from heaven, the seed, like stars in the heavens for multitude, that was principally intended in the promise, being a spiritual progeny. To enforce his exhortation, he told them they had no time to delay their repentance, because the patience of God was very nearly come to an end with respect to them. His judgments were at hand, and ready to be inflicted; so that if they continued unfruitful, notwithstanding the extraordinary means that were now to be tried with them, destruction would speedily overtake them. "And now, also, the axe is laid to the root of the trees; therefore, every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

The more clearly to illustrate the force and simplicity of John the Baptist's teaching, Luke has informed us of the answers which he gave to different descriptions of persons who requested the privilege of his baptism. The Jewish nation was become, at this time, so exceedingly depraved, that many of those who made pretensions to religion supposed that sacrifice would be accepted instead of obedience, and that they should be perfectly justified in neglecting the duties which they owed to their neighbours, or even to their parents, if they were but liberal in subscribing to the sacred treasury. When, therefore, the people inquired what they should do to avoid the judgments of God, he exhorted such of them as had two coats to impart to them that had none, and they that had meat to pursue similar conduct. The publicans, who are mentioned in the New Testament, were inferior Jewish tax-gatherers, who collected, at discretion, the taxes of small districts, and paid certain stipulated sums to the Roman knights, who were appointed to receive the revenue of the provinces. They were infamous for their habits of oppression, and greatly detested by their countrymen in general. They, therefore, were commanded to content themselves with the reasonable profits of their office, and exact no more than they were required to repay into the Roman

treasury. The Jews who had entered into the military service of the Romans were enjoined to abstain from all acts of violence on the persons and properties of their neighbours, from all attempts to enrich themselves by false information, or by manifesting a mutinous disposition to compel their officers to purchase their services by donations. Thus the Baptist, in his exhortation to penitents who asked his advice, did not follow the example of the Jewish teachers, for he was far from recommending the observation of ceremonies and precepts of men's invention. He attended to the character of the persons, reprov'd the vices to which they were most addicted, and he strenuously enjoined the great duties of justice, charity, moderation, and contentment, according as he found those who applied to him had failed in them. And so, by giving Pharisees, Sadducees, publicans, soldiers, and all sorts of persons, instructions adapted to their circumstances and capacities, he prepared them for receiving the Messiah, of whose approach he was informed by divine inspiration, though he was yet ignorant of the particular person who was prepared to sustain that exalted character.

Thus John the Baptist acquired an extraordinary reputation by the austerity of his life, the subject of his sermons, the fervency of his exhortations, and the freedom, impartiality, and courage, with which he rebuked his hearers. Yet his fame received no small addition from the various rumours current in the country at that time. For the vision which his father Zacharias had seen in the temple, the coming of the eastern philosophers to Jerusalem, the prophecies of Simeon, the discourses of Anna, the perplexity of Jerusalem, and Herod's cruelty, though they had happened full thirty years before this, must still have been fresh in the memories of the people, who, no doubt, applied them all to John. Their expectations, therefore, being raised to a very high pitch, they began to think he might be the Christ, and were ready to acknowledge him as such; so that, had he aspired after grandeur, he might, at least for a while, have possessed honours greater than the sons of men could justly claim. But the Baptist was too strictly virtuous to assume what he had no title to, and, therefore, he declared plainly that he was not the Messiah, but the lowest of his servants, one sent to prepare his way before him. At the same time, to give his hearers a just idea of his master's dignity, he described the authority and efficacy of his ministry. [Luke iii. 15.] "And as all the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ or not. John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water." I am sent from God, and the message I bring is, that all ranks and orders of persons must *repent*. Withal, to impress this doctrine the more deeply upon their minds, I address their senses by washing all my disciples with water:—

“but one mightier than I cometh;” there is an infinitely greater than I ready to appear, viz. the Messiah, “the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose,” (Matt. whose shoes I am not worthy to bear away,) i. e. to whom I am not worthy to perform the meanest servile office: “he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:” his baptism shall be unspeakably more efficacious than mine, for he will bestow on you the gifts of the Spirit. Perhaps the Baptist had, likewise, in view here, Mal. iii. 2, where Messiah is compared to a refiner’s fire, on account of the judgments he was to inflict on the Jews for their unbelief. Moreover, as the efficacy of his baptism will be much greater than mine, so will his authority be greater; for he will bring all men before his tribunal, to receive sentence according to their deeds. “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner, but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.” The Baptist here has the fore-cited passage of Malachi plainly in his eye, and, by applying it to Jesus, he intimated to the people that he was the refiner spoken of by that prophet.

While John was thus employed at Bethabara in baptizing the multitudes, our blessed Redeemer was spending his life in retirement at Nazareth. The greater part of that generation which had witnessed the miraculous circumstance of his infancy, had sunk into the grave; and most of those who remained had been, probably, so far disappointed by his not earlier assuming his extraordinary character, that they either had almost forgotten the predictions of Simeon and Anna, or supposed them to have other meaning than what the words appeared to convey. So little was the expectation of the public directed to Jesus, that John the Baptist himself, though a near relation, declared himself ignorant that he was the Messiah. John, however, was so well acquainted with our Lord’s superior piety and holiness of life, that he conceived it absolutely improper that Jesus should mingle with the crowd of abandoned characters who had offered themselves to baptism, and refused to wash him with water in whom no impurity could be discovered. Our Lord did not sustain John’s excuse, but insisted upon being baptized, because “it became them to fulfil all righteousness.” This expression might, perhaps, mean, in general, that it became the faithful to conform to every divine appointment; or he may have had the Levitical law in view, [Exod. xxix. 4. xl. 12.] which ordained that the priests, at their consecration, should be purified by washing; and desired to obey the letter, as well as the spirit of that law, before he entered on his ministry, wherein he discharged the office of high-priest for all the nations of the world. Christ’s baptism being proper on these accounts, he urged it, and John, at length, complied, baptizing him in Jordan before a multitude of spectators. But as he had no need of the instructions that

were given after baptism, he came straightway out of the water; and, kneeling down on the banks of the river, prayed, probably, for the influences of the Spirit, whereby his future ministry would be rendered acceptable to God, and effectual unto the salvation of men. "And Jesus when he was baptized went up straightway out of the water. Luke iii. 22. And, praying, the heaven was opened (Mark, to him); and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape, like a dove, upon him. Matt. iii. 17. And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is (Mark, thou art) my beloved son, in whom (Mark, in thee) I am well pleased." The epithet beloved, given to the Son on this occasion, marks the greatness of his Father's affection for him, and distinguishes him from all others to whom the title of God's son had formerly been given. Accordingly we find our Lord alluding to it, with peculiar pleasure, in his intercessory prayer. John xvii. 26, "And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them." It was, therefore, the voice of God the Father that was heard at Christ's baptism, probably, loud like thunder, as in the instance recorded, John xii. 29, making a sound which no human organ of speech was able to form, and, consequently, could not be mistaken for the whispering voice of any one present. See Prov. viii. 30, to which, it is thought, the voice alluded.

The Son of God was one of the Messiah's known characters, [Matt. xvi. 16. Mark xiv. 61. John i. 49.] founded on Psalm ii. 7. Isa. vii. 14, where it is expressly attributed to him. And, therefore, according to the received language of the Jews, Jesus was, on this occasion, declared from heaven to be their long-expected deliverer; and his mission received a most illustrious confirmation from the Father Almighty, a confirmation on which Jesus himself laid great stress, as absolutely decisive, John v. 37. For, lest the people might have applied the words of the voice of the Baptist, the Holy Spirit alighted upon Jesus, and remained visible for some time in the before-mentioned sensible symbol, [John i. 33.] which, probably, surrounded his head in the form of a large glory, and pointed him out as God's beloved son in whom the richest gifts and graces resided. Thus all present had an opportunity to hear and see the miraculous testimony, particularly the Baptist, who, as soon as he beheld the Spirit remaining on Jesus, cried out, [John i. 15.] "This is he of whom I spake, when I told you, he that cometh after me is preferred before me," namely, by God. Erasmus supposes that John here refers to the honours which he knew had been paid to Jesus in his infancy, by the angels who announced his birth to the Bethlehem shepherds, by the shepherds themselves, by the eastern magi, by Simeon and Anna, honours which could not be paralleled by any thing that had happened to him. But the words seem to

have a more extensive meaning, comprehending the superior dignity of Christ's nature, office, commission, and exaltation, as mediator. This appears plainly from Matt. iii. 11, the passage here referred to: "For he was before me:" it is fit that Jesus should be raised above, because he is a person superior in nature to me; for, though he was born after me, he existed before. The evangelist John adds, [John i. 16.] "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." The last expression is frequently translated grace upon grace, referring to the richness and freedom of the supply, which the apostles, and all succeeding christians, have derived from the inexhaustible fulness of our Saviour's perfections. [John i. 17.] "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus." It is in this present dispensation that the truth and mercy of God are more clearly revealed, than they ever were before the incarnation of the Messiah. "No man hath seen God at any time;" neither Moses, nor any other prophet, who, in former ages, delivered the will of God to men, ever saw the Divine Being; and, therefore, they could not make a full discovery of his perfections and councils to men. The only person who ever enjoyed this privilege was the Son of God, who is in the bosom of the Father. He always was, and is, the darling object of his tenderest affection, and the intimate partner of his councils; and, therefore, he was able fully to declare the great purpose of God concerning the redemption of the world. "The only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. It may not be improper to observe, that the descent of the spirit on Jesus was predicted, Isa. xlii. 1. lxi. 1. In like manner the voice from heaven is supposed to be predicted, Psalm ii. 7, "The Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my son."

Jesus having received those different testimonies from his Father, from the Spirit, and from John the Baptist, all given in presence of the multitudes assembled to John's baptism, began his ministry when he was about thirty years old, the age at which the priests entered on their sacred ministrations in the temple. Then Jesus, being full of the Holy Spirit with which he had been just anointed in so extraordinary a manner, returned from Jordan, where he had been baptized, and immediately after this was led by the strong impulse of that Spirit on his mind into that desolate and solitary place the wilderness, that he might there be exercised and tempted by the most violent assaults of the devil; and, by conquering him, afford an illustrious example of heroic virtue, and lay a foundation for the encouragement and support of his people, in their future combats with that malignant adversary.

And he was there in the wilderness forty days, and, during that time, he was tempted by Satan, and, also, was surrounded with a variety of the most savage and voracious kinds of wild

beasts; but they were so overawed by his presence, that (as in the case of Daniel, when in the den of lions, Dan. vi. 22.) none of them offered him the least injury; "and in all those days he did eat nothing at all."

And when he had thus fasted forty days and forty nights, as Moses, the giver of the law, [Exod. xxxiv. 28.] and Elias, the great restorer of it, had done before him, [1 Kings xix. 8.] having been thus far miraculously borne above the appetites of nature, at length he felt them, and was very hungry, but was entirely unprovided with any proper food.

And just at that time the tempter, coming to him in a visible form, (putting on a human appearance, as one that desired to inquire further into the evidences of his mission,) said, If thou art the Son of God in such an extraordinary manner as thou hast been declared to be, and art indeed the promised Messiah who is expected under that character, command that these stones become loaves (of bread) to relieve thy hunger, for in such a circumstance it will undoubtedly be done.

But Jesus answered and said unto him, It is written in the sacred volume, [Deut. viii. 3.] "Man shall not live by bread only, but by every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, or by whatever he shall appoint for the preservation of his life." He can, therefore, support me without bread, as he fed the Israelites in the wilderness; and, on the other hand, even bread itself, if these stones were turned into it, could not nourish me without his blessing, which I could not expect were I to attempt a miracle of this kind, merely in compliance with thy suggestions, without any intimation of my Father's will.

Then, as the devil found it was in vain that he had tempted Christ to a distrust of providence, he was for trying to persuade him to presumption; and, to this end, he taketh him along with him to Jerusalem, which, being a place where God dwelt in so distinguishing a manner, was commonly called the Holy City, and there he setteth him on one of the battlements of the temple, which, in some parts of it, and particularly over the porch, was so exceedingly high, that one could hardly bear to look down from it. And, as he stood upon the brink of this high precipice, the tempter saith unto him, If thou art, indeed, the Son of God, cast thyself down courageously from hence, and mingle with those that are assembled for the worship of God in yonder court. The sight of such a miracle will undeniably convince them of the truth of thy pretensions; and thou canst have no room to doubt for thy safety, for thou well knowest it is written, [Psalm xci. 11, 12.] "He shall give his angels a charge concerning thee to keep thee, and they shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou shouldest, by any accident, dash thy foot against a stone." And surely the Son of God may depend upon a promise which seems common to all his saints.

And Jesus answering said unto him, It is also written, to prevent the ungrateful abuse of such gracious promises as these, [Deut. vi. 16.] "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," by demanding farther evidence of what is already made sufficiently plain, as my relation to God is by the miraculous and glorious testimony he hath so lately given me.

Again, the devil being resolved once more to attack him by the most dangerous temptation he could devise, taketh him up into a mountain in those parts, which was exceeding high, and from thence, in a moment of time, showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. And with the most egregious impudence and falsehood, the devil said unto him, All this extensive power, all these splendid things will I give thee, and all the glory of them, which thou hast now before thee, (for it is all delivered to me, who am the prince of this world, and I give it to whom I please;) and, great as the gift is, I am so charmed with that wisdom and magnanimity which I have now observed in thee, that I propose to give it thee upon the easiest terms thou canst imagine, for all that I desire is, that thou shouldest pay me homage for it; if, therefore, thou wilt but fall down and worship me, upon thy making this little acknowledgment to me, all these things shall be thine.

Then Jesus, moved with indignation at so blasphemous and horrid a suggestion, answered and said unto him, with becoming resentment and abhorrence, Get thee hence, Satan, and be gone out of my sight, for I will no longer endure thee near me; for it is written as a fundamental precept of the law, [Deut. vi. 13.] "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." It would, therefore, be unlawful thus to worship thee, who art no other than a mere creature, even though thou wast indeed his deputy on earth; and how much more, then, must it be so, as thou art, in reality, the great avowed enemy of God and man, for such, under all thy disguise, I well know thee to be.

And when the devil had ended all the temptations we have given an account of, being so baffled and confounded as not to be able to present any others which seemed more likely to succeed, he departed from him for a season, yet secretly meditating some future assault. [Compare John xiv. 30.]

And then, the devil having left him, behold, a detachment of angels came and waited upon him, furnishing him with proper supplies for his hunger, and congratulating so illustrious a victory over the prince of darkness.

To have a just notion of this extraordinary event, we must consider it in two lights: 1. As it was permitted by God. 2. As it was executed by the tempter.

The reasons why God permitted his Son to be tempted of the devil were such as these: 1. That he might become a faithful and merciful high-priest; one who can succour his people in

time of need, and pity them when they happen to fall by temptation. The apostle assigns this reason expressly. [Heb. ii. 17, 18.] "Wherefore, in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high-priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people, for in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." See also chap. iv. 15. 2. That his example might be a complete pattern of all the virtues. Jesus, like a wise and valiant general, underwent, himself, all the hardships attending his service, that we, his soldiers, might be animated to sustain them together with him. He has gone before us, not only in poverty and reproach, and contempt of sensual pleasure, but was given up to be tempted of the devil, that his people might not be dismayed by such dispensations of providence, but be taught to expect them, especially after having had proofs of the divine love, and manifestations of his presence. Also, that we might know, both what sort of an enemy we have to encounter, and the kind of temptations he will assault us with; particularly, that there is no impiety or wickedness so gross, but he will tempt even the best of men to commit it.

Farther, it was designed to show us, that the devil, though a strong enemy, may be overcome, and by what means; and to stir us up to constant watchfulness. Hence this conflict, though managed in the presence of God and the angels only, was, in due time, made public, for the instruction of mankind. 3. That our Lord might, with the greater advantage, begin and carry on his ministry, in the course of which he was to accomplish the salvation of men, it was necessary that he should first of all vanquish the strongest temptations of the old serpent, who had formerly brought ruin on mankind. His sustaining the temptations of the devil, therefore, when he entered on his ministry, teaches us, that no man is so rightly qualified to preach the gospel as he who, by temptation, has been fortified against luxury, ambition, pride, lust, covetousness, and such like passions, with which the devil overthrows the simple.

On the other hand, the motives which induced the devil to undertake this temptation might be, 1. His general desire of seducing men to sin. 2. Some particular end, which he proposed to accomplish thereby. It is reasonable to believe that God's gracious intention to save the world by his Son was not entirely concealed from the evil spirits. If so, they might be led by the prophecies to conjecture, that this was the period fixed, in the decrees of heaven, for the advent of God's Son. That the devils are acquainted with the scriptures is evident from the citation which we find the tempter making out of the Psalms on this occasion. Besides, they might be confirmed in their opinion by the general expectation of the Messiah, with which all the east was now filled. If, therefore, they

had any how received intelligence of the wonderful things which accompanied the birth of Christ, or, if having been witnesses to the descent of the Spirit upon him at his baptism, some of them had heard the voice from heaven, declaring him the Son of God, they could not but have a strong curiosity to know whether he was really the great personage so long expected by men. The resolution of this point was, undoubtedly, of the greatest moment to them, because the part they were afterwards to act, in carrying on their own projects for destroying the human race, depended, in a great measure, upon it. Wherefore, all the time Jesus was in the wilderness, the chief of the evil spirits, as being best qualified for the undertaking, beset him with a multitude of temptations, in order, if possible, to discover who he was. The form in which two of his temptations run, seems to favour this conjecture. "If thou be the Son of God, command that this stone be made bread." "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence." Besides, unless the tempter had been in doubt as to the character of Jesus, it is not to be imagined that he should have attempted to seduce him at all.

A difference of opinion has been obtained respecting the way in which Satan exhibited to our Lord all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them. It is pretty generally thought that this was done only in vision; but Dr. Macknight assigns the following reasons for a contrary judgment.

"That this temptation was founded on a real, not an imaginary sight, or vision of the kingdoms of the world, is evident from the devil's carrying our Lord up into an exceeding high mountain to view them. For had it been either a delineation of the kingdoms in a map, or a visible representation of them in the air, or a vision of them in an ecstasy, or a sight of them in a dream, or a view of them by being carried round the globe in a moment of time, that is meant, might have been done anywhere, as well as on a high mountain. Nevertheless, a real sight of all the kingdoms of the world, from any high mountain whatsoever, may seem impossible, and therefore must be considered particularly. It is said, Deut. xxxiv. 1—3, "And Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho; and the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead unto Dan." Gilead was the country beyond Jordan, and Dan was the boundary northward. Moses, therefore, on the top of Nebo, saw it to its utmost limits on every hand. "And all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar. Naphtali was the most northern part of the land of Israel on this side Jordan; Ephraim was the middle region; Judah was the southernmost tribe; the utmost sea was the Mediterranean; the south was the country between

Palestine and Egypt; and the plain of the valley of Jericho unto Zoar was that which extended from Jericho to Zoar, encompassing Asphaltite lake, on the southern shore of which Zoar stood. From the top of Nebo, therefore, Moses saw, not only the country beyond Jordan, but the whole region on this side of the river, from north to south, and westward as far as the Mediterranean sea. This mountain of Nebo, over against Jericho, whence Moses had the prospect of the whole land, may have been that from which the devil showed our Lord all the kingdoms of the world, that is to say, the whole land of promise, for so the word is used in the literal sense, at least, of Rom. iv. 13, "The promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." The land of promise, in its largest signification, reached from the Euphrates to the Mediterranean, east and west; and from Egypt, on the south, to beyond Sidon northwards. [Deut. xi. 24.] In Joshua's time, that extent of country contained thirty distinct principalities, besides the Philistines and the Sidonians, as Spanheim observes. And, even in our Lord's time, it comprehended several kingdoms, some of which are mentioned Luke iii. 1. All these the devil pointed out to Jesus in the temptation, taking particular notice of their glory, that is, their great and opulent cities, their rich fields, their hills covered with woods and cattle, their rivers rolling through fertile valleys, and washing the cities as they passed along; and promised to put him in possession of the whole instantly, if he would fall down and worship him. By confining this prospect to the land of promise, the third temptation will appear to have had a peculiar force. The devil, that he might know whether Jesus was Messiah, offered to give him all the kingdoms of the land, to which Messiah had an undoubted right. See Psalm ii. 8; lxxii. 8. He hoped thus to have enticed him to commit idolatry, thinking, if he was not Messiah, he would eagerly embrace this as the speediest way of accomplishing his designs."

Before this subject is dismissed, it may not be improper to take notice, that, according to the tradition, which, at present, subsists among the christian inhabitants of Palestine, the scene of the temptation of the kingdoms was different from where I have placed it. For Mr. Maundrel, in his travels, tells us, that, in passing from Jerusalem to Jericho, after travelling some hours among hills and valleys, they arrived at the mountainous desert into which our Lord was led by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil. "A miserable, dreary place," says he, "it is, consisting of rocks and mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had here suffered some great convulsion, in which its very bowels had been turned outward. From the tops of these hills of desolation, we had, however, a delightful prospect of the mountains of Arabia, the Dead sea, and the plains

of Jericho, into which last we descended, after about five hours' march from Jerusalem. As soon as we entered the plain, we turned upon the left hand, and, going about an hour that way, came to the foot of the Quarantania, (so called from our Lord's forty days' fast,) which, they say, is the mountain where the devil tempted him with the visionary scene of all the kingdoms and glories of the world. It is very high and steep, and its ascent not only difficult, but dangerous. Nevertheless from this description it appears, that the mountain Quarantania is not so high as to afford the prospect of the kingdoms, in the literal sense, in which, alone, this article of the history, I should think, ought to be understood."

About this time the rulers at Jerusalem were informed, that the Baptist's extraordinary sanctity, zeal, and eloquence, together with the solemnity of his baptism, had made such an impression on the people, that they were beginning to think he might be the Messiah. They judged it proper, therefore, that certain of their number, whose capacity and learning rendered them equal to the task, should go and examine him. [John i. 19, 20.] "And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites to Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou: And he confessed, and denied not, but confessed, I am not the Christ." To every candid judge, the declaration which, on this occasion, John made so freely to the priests and Levites, and which, on other occasions, he repeated publicly in the hearing of the people, will appear a strong proof of his divine mission, notwithstanding he did no miracle. For when deputies from so august a body as the senate of Israel seemed to signify, that, in order to their acknowledging him as Messiah, they wanted only a declaration from himself; if he had been an impostor he would immediately have grasped at the honours offered him, and have given himself out for Messiah: but he was animated by a different spirit. Integrity and truth were, evidently, the guides of his conduct. Why, then, should we entertain any doubt of his mission, seeing he expressly claimed the character of a messenger from God. [John i. 21.] "And they asked him, What then, art thou Elias? and he saith, I am not." The Jews expected that the old prophet Elijah was to come in person before Messiah appeared. This notion they entertained very early, as is evident from the LXX. translation of the passage in Malachi, on which their expectation was founded. "And, behold, I send to you Elias the Tishbite, before the day of the Lord cometh." Wherefore, that the Baptist, on being asked if he was Elias, should have answered in the negative, needs not to be thought strange. For, though the name of Elias did truly belong to John, Malachi having called him thereby, he was not the person whom the people expected, and the priests meant, when they asked him, "Art thou Elias? Art thou that prophet" whom Moses assured us

God will raise up, and of whom we are in daily expectation ? [John vi. 14.] Or their meaning may have been, art thou Jeremiah, or any of the old prophets, raised from the dead ? for it appears from Matt. xvi. 14, that they thought Messiah would be preceded by some extraordinary personage. "And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou ? that we may give an answer to them that sent ; what sayest thou of thyself ?" We are sent by the supreme council, who have a right to judge persons pretending a commission from God, as you seem to do, by baptizing and gathering disciples. It becomes you, therefore, to give an account of yourself to us, that we may lay it before them who have sent us. "He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaias." I am really sent of God, being Messiah's harbinger, whose character and office is described by Isaias, xl. 3, and this answer you may carry to the senate. The late archbishop of Cambrai beautifully illustrates the humility of this reply, as if this illustrious prophet had said, "Far from the Messiah, or Elias, or one of the old prophets, I am nothing but a voice, a sound, that, as soon as it has expressed the thought of which it is the sign, dies into air, and is known no more."

"And they which were sent were of the Pharisees." The priests and Levites who were sent from Jerusalem to inquire concerning the Baptist's character and mission, were of the sect of the Pharisees. This the evangelist mentions, because the decisions of the Pharisees were held, by the common people, as infallible. Wherefore, as their sect had declared that only proselytes were to be baptized, they found fault with John for baptizing the Jews, seeing he was neither Messiah, nor Elias, nor that prophet. They thought his altering, in this manner, their institutions, was an exercise of authority, which, by his own confession, did not belong to him. "And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet ? John answered them, saying, I baptize," to show you the nature and necessity of repentance, but it is with water only, which cannot cleanse you from your sins, as the washing, predicted by Zechariah, will do. That more efficacious baptism will be dispensed unto you by Messiah, who is, at present, among you, though you do not know him, because he has not manifested himself. Besides, in dignity, Messiah is infinitely my superior, for I am not worthy to be his servant, or to do him the meanest offices : "but there standeth one among you whom you know not. He it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoes' latchet I am not worthy to unloose. These things were done in Bethabara, beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing ;" consequently, in presence of a great multitude of people.

It seems, Jesus returned from the wilderness about the time

that the priests and Levites arrived at Bethabara; for the day after they proposed their questions, he happened to pass by while the Baptist was standing with the multitude on the banks of the Jordan. But the business of Messiah's forerunner being to lead the people to Messiah, John embraced this new opportunity of pointing him out to them. "The next day, John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Grotius understands this of Christ's reforming men's lives. But as the words are plainly an allusion to the lambs offered for the atonement of sin, and, particularly, to the lambs offered daily, in the morning and evening sacrifices, their meaning must be this: Behold him who was represented by the lambs offered in the sacrifices prescribed by the law, and who is, himself, the great sacrifice, for whose sake God will forgive the sins, not of the Jewish nation only, but of the world. Lamb of God, therefore, is the great Lamb, as mountains of God are great mountains; or it signifies the Lamb, or sacrifice, appointed by God. [John i. 31—37.] "And I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven, like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God. Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples: And, looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." John pointed out Jesus to the two disciples, probably, because they had been absent when the Spirit descended upon him, and the voice from heaven declared him to be the Son of God. But, having now had an account of these things from their master, they desired to become acquainted with Jesus, and, for that purpose, followed him. Jesus, knowing their intentions, turned about and invited them to go along with him. "Then Jesus turned and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou? He saith unto them, Come and see; they came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour." This is supposed, by some, not to be the tenth hour, according to the Jewish reckoning, but to be ten o'clock in the forenoon, which was the tenth hour according to the Romans. [John i. 40.] "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother." Probably, John the evangelist was the other, it being his custom to conceal his own name in

his writings. "He [Andrew] first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, we have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." It seems, the Baptist's testimony, joined with the proofs offered by Christ himself, in the long conversation which the two disciples had with him, fully convinced Andrew. "And he brought him to Jesus, and when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon, the son of Jona, thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone." Though Jesus had never seen Simon before, immediately on his coming in, he saluted him by his own and his father's name, adding, that he should afterwards be called Cephas, that is, a rock, on account of the strength of his mind, and the unshaken firmness of his resolution; also, because the Christian church was to be built on his labours, as on a solid foundation. [John i. 43—45.] "The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathaniel, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses, in the law and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." It seems, Peter and Andrew, in their conversation with Philip, had persuaded him to believe on Jesus, by showing him how the predictions of the law and prophets were fulfilled in him. Perhaps this was the method which Jesus himself had taken to confirm Peter and Andrew, Philip's instructors, in the good opinion they had conceived of him, by means of the testimony which their master, John the Baptist, had given concerning him, though the evangelist had not thought fit to mention this circumstance. "And Nathaniel said unto him, Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" a proverb by which the rest of the Israelites ridiculed the Nazarenes. Nathaniel, on this occasion, applied it the rather, that Messiah's nativity had been determined, by the prophet Micah, to Bethlehem. "Philip saith unto him, come and see; come and talk with him yourself, and you will soon be convinced that he is Messiah. Nathaniel being a man of a candid disposition, resolved to go and converse with Jesus, that he might judge, with the more certainty, concerning his pretensions. He was coming therefore, with Philip on this errand, when Jesus, who knew his thoughts, honoured him with the amiable character of a true Israelite, in whom there was no guile; a plain, upright, honest man; one free from hypocrisy, and open to conviction; one who not only derived his pedigree from Abraham, but who inherited his virtues. "Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile! Nathaniel saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me?" I am a perfect stranger to you, how came you to know my character? "Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw

thee." Though I was at so great a distance from thee, that it was impossible for me to see thee with my bodily eyes, yet I knew both where thou wast, and what thou wast doing. The character that I just now gave thee is founded on what I saw thee doing there. "Nathaniel answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel." I am sensible of the truth of what you have told me, and am certain that you have discovered unto me a matter beyond the reach of human knowledge, and therefore can no longer doubt your being Messiah. I acknowledge you to be the long expected king of Israel, who is the Son of God. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these. And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." Spencer thinks he had, here, in his eye, some visions of ministering angels, which, in the course of his public life, his disciples were to behold, though the evangelists have not mentioned them. For that angels did minister to Jesus is certain from the accounts we have of his temptation and resurrection. And that they might be made visible to the disciples was a possible privilege, and such as holy men of old had enjoyed, particularly the prophets, who saw the heavenly hosts surrounding even the throne of God. Or we may suppose that our Lord, in this passage, is speaking of the angels who waited on him at his resurrection and ascension. Thus he shall have referred his disciples to the greatest of his miracles, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into heaven, by which the truth of his mission is put beyond all doubt.

Our Lord having thus, in the beginning of his ministry, proved his mission, and made several disciples at Jordan, departed from Galilee, accompanied by Philip, [John i. 48.] probably, also, by Simon, Andrew, and Nathaniel. The persons called his disciples, who were with him at the marriage in Cana, with him, also, in Jerusalem, and who accompanied him to the distant parts of Judea, and baptized those who offered themselves to his baptism, [John iii. 32. iv. 1.] were, probably, no other than the four just now mentioned. For, as these transactions happened before the Baptist's imprisonment, [John iii. 24.] we cannot think the disciples present at them had followed Jesus in consequence of the call given near the sea of Galilee, [Mat. iv. 18.] or the call spoken of by Luke, v. 1, because it is certain that neither the one nor the other was given till after the Baptist was silenced.

On the third day after Jesus and his disciples arrived in Galilee, they went to a marriage that was at Cana. Here Jesus furnished wine for the feast by miracle, by the desire of his mother, who was also bidden. Dr. Clarke thinks our Lord, in

the course of private life, had sometimes exerted his divine power for the relief of his friends ; and that his mother, having seen or heard of these miracles, knew the greatness of his power, and so applied to him on this occasion. Or we may suppose she had heard him speak of the miracles he was to perform for the confirmation of his mission, and the benefit of mankind, and begged him to favour his friends with one in the present necessity. Probably, Mary interested herself in this matter because she was a relation, or an intimate acquaintance of the new-married couple, and had the management of the entertainment committed to her care, so was anxious to have every thing gone about with decency. Or she might make the case known to her son, being desirous to see him perform a miracle before such a numerous company of friends. [John ii. 1—4.] “ And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee ? mine hour is not yet come.” We have no reason, as Dr. Doddridge observes, to conclude that there was any rudeness in his addressing his mother thus. For though, indeed, it is a manner of expression that is very unusual among us, to call a person woman when we are speaking to her, if she be one to whom we think that any respect is due, yet some of the politest writers of antiquity make the most well-bred, accomplished princes use it in their addressing ladies of the highest quality ; and even servants too are sometimes represented as speaking of their mistresses in the same language. Mary was, without doubt, blamable for presuming to direct her son in the duties of his ministry, her parental authority not extending to these matters. Therefore, he very justly gave her this gentle rebuke, in which he insinuated that his miracles were not to be performed at the desire of his relations, for civil and private reasons of conveniency, so that she acted improperly in making the request ; yet Jesus, knowing that it would tend to the confirmation of his disciples’ faith, and to the advancement of his mission, thought proper to comply, being not the less willing to exert his power, that his friends would reap some benefit from the matter of the miracle. Ordering the servants, therefore, to fill six water-pots, that were at hand, to the brim, with water, the instant the pots were filled he converted the whole mass of the fluid into excellent wine ; then desired that some of it might be drawn out, and carried to the governor of the feast, or entertainer of the company. [John ii. 5.] Among the Greeks, Romans, and Jews, it was usual at great entertainments, especially marriage feasts, to appoint a master of ceremonies, who gave directions, not only concerning the form and method of the entertainment, but likewise prescribed the laws of drinking.

Jesus, therefore, ordered the wine, which he had formed, to be carried to the governor of the feast, that, by his judgment passed upon it in the hearing of all the guests, it might be known to be genuine wine of the best kind. The governor of the feast, on tasting the wine, was highly pleased with its flavour and richness, but did not know how it had been procured. Wherefore, addressing himself to the bridegroom in the hearing of all the guests, he commended it as far preferable to what they had been drinking, and praised him for the elegance of his taste, and for his civility in giving the company better wine during the progress of the entertainment, than at the beginning of it, which showed that he did not grudge the quantity they might use. This information, no doubt, surprised the bridegroom, who knew nothing of the matter, and occasioned an inquiry to be made about it. It is reasonable, therefore, to suppose, that the servants were publicly examined, and that the company received an account of the miracle from them. For it is expressly said that by it "Jesus manifested his glory," i. e. demonstrated his power and character, to the conviction of the disciples and of all the guests. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." Being the first miracle they had ever seen Jesus perform, it tended not a little to the confirmation of their faith, and made his fame spread over all the neighbouring country.

From Cana Jesus went, with his disciples, to Capernaum, and from Capernaum to Jerusalem, to the passover, which, it seems, was approaching. "After this, he went down from Capernaum to Jerusalem, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples, and they continued there not many days. And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." None of the evangelists mention any further particulars of our Lord's history, between his baptism and this, which was the first passover in his ministry. But his transactions at the feast itself are mentioned by John. It is, therefore, probable, that though Christ's ministry really commenced immediately after his baptism, it began to be more publicly exercised at this passover.

As the evangelists have not expressly determined the number of passovers which happened between the baptism and death of Christ, or during the course of his public ministry; so it is well known that learned men have been much divided in their opinions about them. By far the greater part have supposed there were four, reckoning this the first; the feast mentioned John v. 1, the second; the passover spoken of, John vi. 4, as the third; and that at which Christ suffered, the fourth; but there are others of a different opinion. The celebrated Sir Isaac Newton reckons five; the first, that which is now before us; the second, according to him, happened four months after

Christ's discourse with the woman of Samaria [John iv. 35.]; the third, a few days before the story of the disciples' rubbing the ears of corn [Luke vi. 1.]; the fourth, a little after the feeding of the five thousand; and the last, at the time of our Lord's crucifixion. Mr. Manne, and, after him, Dr. Priestley, have, with great learning and ingenuity, attempted to revive a long exploded notion, that "Christ's ministry continued but sixteen months;" so that there were but two passovers during the whole course of it. Mr. Whiston's reasoning against this hypothesis, in the sixth of his late dissertations, appears to be unanswerable. For he there shows, that if this was true, Christ must have travelled, on an average, near ten miles a day, during the course of his ministry. Besides, the transpositions in scripture, which this would introduce, seem very unwarrantable and dangerous; and, among other difficulties, it is none of the least, that Mr. Manne is obliged to suppose that Christ only purged the temple at his last passover, and, consequently, that St. John has misplaced this story, though verse the twenty-fourth of this chapter, and verses 22, 23, 24, of the next, afford such strong arguments to the contrary.

While Jesus was at the passover he signalized himself in the metropolis, by driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and by pouring out the changers' money, and overturning their tables. It seems, the officers, whose province it was to take care of the temple, permitted a market of oxen, sheep, doves, and other things necessary for sacrifice, to be kept in the court of the Gentiles; by which means, there was often such a bustle and confusion there, that the proselytes, who came up to worship, could not but be much disturbed in their devotions. The changers of money were people who gave the Jews from foreign countries current money of Judea, in lieu of the money of the countries from whence they had come, and, for that service, took a small premium, in which the profits of their business consisted. These being gross profanations of a place set apart for the worship of God, Jesus thought fit to correct them, and he had a right to do it because the temple was his own house. [Mal. iii. 1.] "And when he had made a scourge of small cords, (with which they were used to tie the beasts to some rings fixed in the pavement for that purpose,) he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables. And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence," the cages wherein the pigeons were exposed to sale, pointing to them, "make not my Father's house an house of merchandise;" make not the temple, which is dedicated to the worship of God, a place for carrying on low traffic. It is remarkable, that the persons in the fault did not offer to make the least resistance: probably, consciousness of guilt restrained them, or the wonderful things which Jesus had performed at this festival made them

afraid to resist him. Or they may have been intimated by the energy of our Lord's miraculous power on their minds. Nevertheless, in the apprehension of the disciples, he exposed himself to great danger, by turning out a body of factious men whom the priests and rulers supported. On this occasion, therefore, they called to mind that text in the Psalms, where it is said, "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," imputing their Master's action to such a concern for the purity of God's worship, as the Psalmist of old was animated by. The truth is, this affair had the marks of an extraordinary zeal, a zeal nothing inferior to what the prophets were famed for, which was the reason the rulers came to him, and desired to know by what authority he had undertaken singly to make such a reformation in the house and worship of God, especially in reference to matters which had been declared lawful by the council, and the doctors of the greatest reputation. And if he had any real authority for doing such things, they required him to show it them, by working a greater miracle than he had hitherto done. Jesus replied by referring them to the miracle of his own resurrection. Only in appealing to it as a proof of his mission from God, he prudently expressed himself in terms somewhat obscure, that the Jews might not be hindered from accomplishing the divine purpose. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," pointing, perhaps, to his body, which, with the greatest propriety, he called a temple, on account of the divinity residing in it. But they, supposing that he spoke of Herod's temple in which they were standing, replied, "Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? but he spake of the temple of his body. When, therefore, he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." They believed the scriptures, which predicted Messiah's death; and they believed the more firmly in their Master, on account of this prophecy, which, by foretelling his resurrection so long before-hand, rendered that event, when it happened, a more illustrious proof of his mission from God.

The time which the Jews said the temple was in building deserves some remark. Josephus, in the first book of his wars with the Jews, tells us, "that in the fifteenth year of his reign, he (Herod) repaired the temple itself, and inclosed a space of ground about it, of double the compass with that which surrounded it before." But in the Antiquities, xv. 14, he corrects this note of time. "In the eighteenth year of his reign, Herod projected the rebuilding of the temple." Some attempt to reconcile the passages by supposing, that, in the one, Herod's reign is dated from the decree of the senate; and in the other, from the death of Antigonus; for the eighteenth year, from the decree of the senate, is coincident with the fifteenth from the

death of Antigonus. But though this solution of the difficulty should be admitted, it cannot be refused that we have Josephus, in one passage, telling us, Herod did that which in the other he said he only projected to do. For which reason, we may suppose, if we please, that the Jews dated the rebuilding of the temple from Herod's proposal to repair it, rather than from his actually falling about the work. The proposal was made, probably, at the passover, in the eighteenth year of his reign, from the death of Antigonus, A. U. 734. And forty-six years, the time mentioned by the Jews, and it brings us to the passover, A. U. 780, A. D. 27, the year after John began his ministry, reckoning the fifteenth year of Tiberius from its commencement two years before the death of Augustus, as Suetonius has fixed it. Or, though the offer was made by Herod at any other of the great feasts that year, it will occasion a difference only of a few months. Herod finished what he proposed in about eight or nine years' time, for he reared the temple itself in the space of one year and an half, that is, made it fit for the sacred ministrations in that time, and the cloisters in eight years. But, it seems, a number of workmen had, for many years after, been constantly employed in beautifying and improving the buildings of the temple; for the whole was not finished before the arrival of the procurator Florus, A. D. 65, as Josephus expressly testifies, *Antiq.* xx. 8, where he also informs us, that the people employed in this work amounted to eighteen thousand, and that they were paid out of the sacred treasury. The saying, therefore, of the Jews to our Lord, [John ii. 20.] is perfectly consistent with the account which Josephus has given; for though the reparation of the temple might, in so long a tract of years, meet with interruptions, it is probable they were short, and not worth mentioning.

During the whole of this passover our Lord performed many miracles, on purpose to engage the attention of the people. They read, every day, in their sacred books, astonishing accounts of miracles; but it was several ages since any thing supernatural had happened among them publicly. Wherefore, miracles being now revived again, they were beheld, no doubt, with great pleasure, and made a strong impression upon the spectators, leading many of them to believe in Jesus as the Messiah. "Now, when he was at Jerusalem, at the passover, in the feast day, or rather during the feast, i. e. the whole days of the solemnity, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, did not discover himself to be the Messiah, because he knew all men, had perfect knowledge of their dispositions. And needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man:" on the present occasion, he knew that the belief of many was not yet grown up to a full conviction, and foresaw that they would quickly fall off when they found he

was rejected by the great men, and did not erect a secular empire.

Of his knowledge of men's minds our Lord gave a remarkable proof in a conversation he had, during this passover, with one Nicodemus, of the sect of the Pharisees, and a member of the council, or, as others suppose, a ruler of some synagogue. This doctor had heard our Lord's miracles much talked of, perhaps had seen some of them, and, like many of his countrymen, was thinking that he who did such things must be Messiah. On the other hand, the meanness of his appearance occasioned scruples which he could not remove. In this state of doubtfulness he resolved to wait on Jesus, that, by conversing with him personally, he might find out the truth. [John iii. 1, 2.] He came to Jesus privately for fear of his brethren of the council, who, from the very beginning, were Christ's enemies, "and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Christ's miracles left Nicodemus no room to doubt of his mission from God, yet they did not prove him to be the Messiah, because he had not as yet called himself by that name, at least in the hearing of Nicodemus. Wherefore, when the latter told Jesus that he believed him to be a teacher come from God, he insinuated that, at present, he did not believe on him as Messiah, but that he would believe if he assumed that character; and, by these insinuations, modestly requested Jesus to explain himself with regard to his pretensions. It is remarkable that the evangelist introduces this passage of the history with observing, that Jesus knew the thoughts of all men. Probably, he meant to signify, that, in the course of the conversation, he prevented Nicodemus, by forming his discourse to him in such a manner as to obviate all the objections which his thoughts had suggested, without giving him time to propose them. This will appear the more forcibly if we consider the following brief statement of the subjects of this conversation, as given by Dr. Doddridge. Our Lord touches on the following grand points, in which it was of the utmost importance that Nicodemus and his brethren should be informed. That no external profession, nor any ceremonial observances or privileges of birth, could entitle any to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom:—that an entire change of heart and life was necessary to that purpose:—that this must be accomplished by a divine influence on the mind:—that mankind were in a state of condemnation and misery:—that the free mercy of God had given his Son to deliver them from it, and to raise them to a blessed immortality, which was the great design and purpose of his coming:—that all mankind, that is, Gentiles as well as Jews, were to share in the benefits of his undertaking:—that they were to be procured by his being lifted up on the cross, and to be received by faith in him:—but that

if they rejected him there was no other remedy, and their eternal aggravated condemnation would be the certain consequence of it. Our Lord might enlarge more copiously on these heads, which it might be the more proper to do, as some of them were directly contrary to the notions commonly entertained by the Jews concerning the Messiah's kingdom. [John iii. 3.] "Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," i. e. cannot enter into it, just as to see death is to die. By the Jews being begotten and born again, our Lord meant that their notions of things should be rectified, and their inclinations changed, particularly the notions concerning the secular grandeur of the Messiah, and their passion for sensual enjoyments, their error concerning the immutability of the Mosaic law, and their hatred of heathens, more for their opposition to the Jewish institutions than for the wickedness of their lives. He meant, also, that their manners were to be greatly reformed, even in matters which, they pretended, were allowed by the law; for example, they were to abstain from all degrees of lust, profane swearing, revenge, and uncharitableness. Nor was this change of opinions, dispositions, and actions, necessary to the Jews only. The Gentiles, likewise, needed to be begotten and born again, in order to their entering into the kingdom of God; for they entertained very low and dishonourable sentiments of the perfections of God, of the worship that is due to him, and of the method of appeasing him, not to mention that they erred in many essential points of morality, and, in their practice, came far short of their own imperfect ideas of virtue. Nay, to make even them, who, from their infancy, have been blessed with the gospel, the true subjects of God's kingdom, there must be a total change of opinions, inclinations, and actions, wrought in them; for, as the apostle tells us, 1 Cor. ii. 14, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Conversion, therefore, has, in all ages, been a great and surprising effect of the divine power upon the human mind, producing a change, the full extent of which cannot be better expressed than by the terms, regeneration, begetting again, new birth, which import the communication of a new nature. And upon the diversity of men's dispositions before and after the change, are founded the names of old and new man, by which the apostle denominates our unconverted and converted states; as if, when converted, men obtained a nature essentially different from what they had before. Nicodemus hearing Jesus affirm that the posterity of Abraham needed a second generation and birth, to fit them for becoming the people of God could not take his words in the sense which he, with other doctors, commonly affixed to them, when speaking of proselytes; because so applied, they signified conversion to Judaism, a thing not applicable to Jews. Not doubting, therefore, that

Jesus spake of a second natural generation and birth, he was exceedingly surprised. "Nicodemus saith unto him, how can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water, and of the spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" or, in plain terms, whosoever would become a regular member of it, he must not only be baptized, but, as ever he desires to share in its spiritual and eternal blessings, he must experience the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on his soul, to cleanse it from the power of corruption, and to animate it to a divine and spiritual life. For, were it possible for a man to be born again, in the literal sense that you have mentioned, by entering a second time into his mother's womb, such a second birth would do more to qualify him for the kingdom of God than the first; for that which is born of the flesh is only flesh, and what proceeds and is produced from parents that are sinful and corrupt, is sinful and corrupt as they are; but that which is born of the Spirit is formed to a resemblance of that blessed Spirit, whose office it is to infuse a divine life into the soul.

Wonder not, therefore, that I said unto thee, and have declared it as a truth that you are concerned in, that you yourselves, although you are Jews, and Pharisees, and rulers of the people, yet must be born again, since the degeneracy of the human nature is of so universal an extent as to be common to you all. Nor have you any cause to be surprised if there be some things in this doctrine of regeneration which are of an obscure and unsearchable nature, for, even in the natural world, many things are so. The wind, for instance, bloweth where it will, sometimes one way, and sometimes another, and is not subject to the direction or command of men, and thou hearest the sound thereof, and feelest its sensible and powerful effects, yet thou canst not exactly tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth; for whatever general principles may be laid down concerning it, when you come to account for its particular variations, the greatest philosophers often find themselves at a loss; and, in like manner, so it is of every one that is born of the Spirit; and you are so far from being capable of accounting for it, that it is easy to be seen there is a sovereign freedom in that divine agency, which makes it oftentimes impossible to say why it is imparted to one rather than to another; and there is a secret in the manner of its operation on the mind, which it is neither necessary to know, nor possible to explain. "Nicodemus answered and said unto him, how can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, art thou a master in Israel, and knowest not these things? Our Lord having, all along, spoken to Nicodemus in the common dialect of the Jewish divinity schools, might justly express his surprise, that he.

who was a doctor in Israel, did not understand him. For, though he affixed a meaning to the word regeneration a little different from what it bore in the mouths of the doctors, it was plainly analogous to their sense of it, and so might easily have been understood, even by a novice; the admission of a proselyte being looked on, by the Jews, as a second birth to him, his parents and relations were no longer reckoned such, and the proselyte himself was thought to have received a new soul by the change of his religion.

Farther, Jesus told Nicodemus he was to blame for rejecting the doctrine of the new birth, since the person who taught it was certain of its truth. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, we speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our witness. If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things? If ye believe not these obvious truths concerning the spiritual nature of God's kingdom, and the qualifications of his subjects, how shall ye believe the more sublime doctrines of religion, which I am come to teach you? In the mean time, you may safely receive my instructions; for I am vested with an authority, and endued with gifts, far superior to all the prophets that ever appeared. "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Perhaps Jesus mentioned his coming down from heaven, to put the Jewish doctor in mind of the acknowledgment with which, at the beginning of their interview, he had addressed him, viz. that he was a teacher come from God. And, by telling him that the death of the Messiah was prefigured by types in the law, he showed him that it was agreeable both to the doctrine of Moses, and to the counsels of heaven, that Messiah should be in a suffering state, consequently he insinuated that the meanness of his present appearance on earth was no reason why Nicodemus should doubt of his having been in heaven. The type he mentioned, as prefiguring his sufferings, both in their circumstances and consequences, was that of the brazen serpent, which, though it represented a thing noxious in its nature, was so far from being so, that all who were poisoned by the stings of real serpents obtained a perfect and speedy cure, if they but looked at it. In like manner, the Son of God, though made in the similitude of sinful flesh, would, by his death on the cross, heal all true penitents, even such as had been guilty of the greatest and most deadly sins. This unspeakable happiness, he assured him, men owed to the free and immense love of God the Father, who desired their salvation with such ardency, that he sent his only-begotten Son to bestow everlasting life on them; so far was he from sending him to condemn them, as they had reason to fear. Hence he concluded, that they who believed on the Son of God were not condemned: whereas, they who did not believe were

condemned already for that sin; and justly, because their unbelief was owing to their own wickedness, and not to any defect in the evidences of his mission, which were so full, as to work conviction in every unprejudiced mind. "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." It is the natural effect of such a person's temper and conduct, which render him incapable of eternal life. "For this is the reason of that condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved." Wicked men, who cleave to their sin because of the present pleasure they find in it, cannot endure true doctrine; for this reason, that it shows their actions in a proper light, condemns them, and raises qualms of conscience that are extremely painful. "But he that doth truth," i. e. acts in conformity to the instruction of divine revelation, "cometh to the light," endeavouring to acquire a fuller knowledge of his duty, and to be better acquainted with the state of his own heart, since this examination makes it manifest that his deeds are wrought of God. This discourse, we may believe, affected Nicodemus greatly; he perceived that Jesus saw into his heart, was convinced, and, from that time forth, became his disciple; defended him in the great council, of which he was a member; and, with Joseph of Arimathea, paid him the honours of a funeral, when all his bosom friends deserted him.

Some time after the conference with Nicodemus, Jesus and his disciples, leaving Jerusalem, went into the land of Judea, or those parts of Judea that were remote from Jerusalem. [John iii. 22—25.] "After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea, and there he tarried with them and baptized. And John also was baptizing in Enon, near to Salim, because there was much water there, and they came, and were baptized. For John was not yet cast into prison. Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying." It is generally admitted, that the purifying here mentioned means baptism; it is not however, equally agreed, what was the nature of the dispute, or by whom it was carried on. Dr. Doddridge supposes, that it was agitated between a Jew who had lately been baptized by Jesus, and the disciples of John: others, however, suppose, that our common reading is to be received, and that the unconverted Jews reproached the followers of John with the popularity which attended the preaching of Jesus. Macknight thinks, that the matter in debate was whether Christ had sufficient authority to rebaptize those who had been before the disciples of his forerunner. However this might be, it was

fully decided by John, who answered and said, [chap. iii. 27, 28.] "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him." It is the bridegroom only that hath the bride, and it is his peculiar right to enjoy her as his own: but as for the intimate friend of the bridegroom, who standeth near him, and heareth him express his delight and complacency in her, he is so far from envying and repining at it, that if he really deserves the name of a friend, he rather rejoices, with exceeding great joy, on account of the bridegroom's voice. Such, therefore, is the friendship and the high regard I have for Jesus, that this that you have told me is my joy, which is so far from being at all impaired, that it is heightened and completed on this happy occasion, which you should rather have been ready to congratulate than to have made it a matter of complaint. [John iii. 30.] "He must increase, but I must decrease:" and it is fit it should be so, for he that cometh from above, as Jesus did, is far above all the children of men, and so, undoubtedly, is above me; while, on the other hand, he that originally was of the earth, being born, like me, in a natural way, is still of the earth, mean and imperfect, and can never hope, by any refinements and improvements, to equal what is heavenly and divine; but what he says will correspond with his original, and being earthly in his rise, he speaketh of the earth; the subjects of his discourse are comparatively low, or, however noble and sublime they be, there is a mixture of infirmity and weakness in his way of teaching them: whereas he who originally cometh from heaven, and who has shown so wonderful a condescension in his visiting this lower world, is still, in the midst of all his voluntary abasement, incomparably above all that dwell upon earth, not only in the dignity and glory of his person, but in the spiritual and heavenly nature of his doctrine. "And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth, and no man receiveth his testimony;" and, among all that hear him, there are very few who are duly affected with what he delivers, and yield as they ought to its divine evidence and importance. "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true;" acknowledging his hand in these credentials given to his Son, and his veracity in sending him thus furnished to fulfil his ancient promises to his people. For he whom God hath sent into the world as the promised Messiah speaketh the words of God, and all that he reveals should be regarded as divine oracles, for God giveth not the powers and the inspiration of his Spirit (to him) by measure, under such limitations and with such interruptions as he gives it to his other messengers, but it dwells in him by a constant presence, and operates by a perpetual energy. For the almighty Father loveth the Son incomparably beyond the most faithful of his servants, and

hath not only established him as the great teacher of his church, but hath given the government of all things into his hand, that he may be regarded as the universal Lord.

So that, instead of repining at his growing glories, you should rather be solicitous to secure an interest in his favour: for this is the substance, and this the end of my whole testimony, that he who believeth on the Son hath a sure title to eternal life, and hath already the beginnings of it wrought in his soul; but he that is disobedient to the Son, and obstinately persists in his unbelief and impenitence, shall not see and enjoy that life; but, on the contrary, is so far from it, that the wrath of God, and unpardoned, aggravated guilt of all his sins, abideth even now upon him, and will quickly sink him into final condemnation and ruin.

Thus did that holy man, John the Baptist, conclude these testimonies to Christ, which are recorded in the gospel; and was, quickly after, imprisoned by Herod the tetrarch, as we shall now proceed to relate in the words of the compilers of the Universal History. Herod, whose first wife was the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, was since fallen in love with that of his brother Philip, whom he had seen at his castle, where he had stopped some days in his journey to Rome. Herodias was the daughter of Aristobulus, and grand-daughter of Herod the Great. Herod made no difficulty to discover his passion, and propose marrying her, to which she consented, upon condition that he divorced his first wife. This last, having received some information of her husband's design, wisely concealed her resentment; and, having obtained his permission to retire for some time to the castle of Macheron, which was then in her father's hands, she, instead of going thither, made all the haste she could to the Arabian court, where, being at length arrived, she acquainted the king with the whole intrigue.

This caused a rupture between Herod and Aretas, which ended in a war that lasted till the death of Tiberius, four years after their falling out. Herod, thus rid of his wife without a divorce, made no scruple to marry his sister-in-law, though she had children by his brother Philip, which was contrary to the Mosaic law. John the Baptist was not the only person who condemned that marriage as incestuous, the whole nation ventured to cry out against it; but as his character gave him a free access to the court, he had the courage to reprove both the king and his paramour in the severest terms. Herodias, being, at length, stung to the quick with his frequent reproaches of incest, and of her infidelity to Philip, resolved to ruin him, and easily persuaded Herod Antipas to cast him into prison. His pretence for it, according to Josephus, was his drawing such multitudes after him to be baptized; but the true reason was that given by the evangelists above quoted,

namely, his and Herodias's resentment. "For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man, and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they revered him as a prophet."

We cannot dismiss this subject without a few reflections. We see here, 1. What a long train of evils result from the neglect of controlling our passions. Herod, in this instance, to ensure the gratification of his desire, not only commits an act of the greatest injustice to his brother and father-in-law, but persecutes one of the most excellent men that ever existed. John well deserved the veneration and esteem of Herod, when he thus took the freedom to perform this dangerous office of friendship, and to manifest a fidelity so seldom to be found in courts, and, indeed, so often wanting elsewhere. A wise prince would have courted his friendship, and sought his advice; but he is, at length, rewarded with imprisonment. 2. We cannot doubt but John was more happy in his prison than Herod in his palace; for the former had the consolation of innocence, and the veneration even of wicked men; while the latter rendered himself despicable and detestable to all, while his own mind was agitated by such a conflict between the conviction of truth and the love of sin, as could not fail to render him miserable.

Here, also, we learn from the fear of Herod to take away the life of John, how God governs the world, and protects his church, by often making it the interest even of the worst of men to forbear those injuries and cruelties which the malignity of their natures might otherwise dictate. Let us courageously commit the keeping of our souls to him in well-doing, as firmly believing, that whatever hazards we may be exposed to, "the wrath of man shall," on the whole, be found to "praise him, and the remainder of that wrath shall he restrain."

CHAPTER V.

Our Lord's Ministry, from the imprisonment of John the Baptist to the Sermon on the Mount.

Our Lord makes many converts, who are baptized by his disciples—Christ passes through Samaria—origin of the Samaritan schism—their religious principles—their history—causes of the hatred between them and the Jews—Jacob's well—Christ's conversation with the woman of Samaria—Christ returns to Galilee—the second miracle of Cana—the sermon at Nazareth—Christ, expelled from that city, removes to Capernaum—makes the tour of Galilee—preaches the sermon on the mount.

WHILE John the Baptist was labouring and suffering in the cause of God in Galilee, our Lord was carrying on a similar work in Judea. For he continued there till the fame of his doctrine, disciples, and miracles, reaching Jerusalem, gave umbrage to the Pharisees. These men, vain and conceited, claiming it as the privilege of their sect to direct the consciences of the people, were enraged to find numbers of them acknowledging as Messiah, one whose birth and fortune so little suited the notions which they had taught concerning the great deliverer of the nation. Wherefore, to shun the effects of their malice, Jesus, who knew all that passed, retired with his disciples into Galilee, where his presence was become necessary, as the ministry of his forerunner in that country was now brought to a period. "When, therefore, the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee." Various reasons have been assigned by commentators, why Christ did not himself administer the ordinance of baptism. They suppose that it was not proper for him to baptize in his own name, as that would have afforded his enemies an opportunity of alleging that he was engaged in his own cause, and not in that of the Father. He referred the office of baptizing to his apostles, thus intimating that it was of more importance to preach than to baptize, and, consequently, that a true and sincere belief of the gospel was more essential to the salvation of christians than the submission to an outward ordinance, though it were even of divine appointment: besides, it has been observed, that those who were baptized by Christ might have taken occasion to value themselves above others, as happened

in the church of Corinth, where the brethren valued themselves upon the character of the persons who had baptized them. To conclude, the baptism, properly his, was that of the Holy Ghost.

In his way to Galilee, Christ must necessarily, unless he took a circuitous route, pass through Samaria, a country which was inhabited by a race of men almost equally distinguished from the Gentiles and the Jews. To judge properly of their character we must recall to our recollection, that the revolt of the ten tribes under Jeroboam was accompanied with a schism in religion. For that crafty prince soon became sensible, that if his subjects went regularly to Jerusalem to worship and offer sacrifice, as formerly, the majesty of the services of religion performed there, the address of the priests, the flatteries or threatenings of the prince, and the discourses of the people who remained loyal to the family of David, would soon induce them to return to their rightful sovereign. He therefore set up calves at Dan, the northern, and Bethel, the southern extremities of his kingdom, giving out that these images were emblems of the divine presence; for though, in our translation, they are called calves, they were like the cherubims in the sanctuary. Moreover, he instituted priests to attend these idols, and to offer sacrifice there, requiring all his subjects to worship there, and to abstain from the worship at Jerusalem.

Jeroboam's schism in religion was directly contrary to the law; yet God did not altogether cast off this part of the nation, for he raised up many prophets among them, particularly Elijah and Elisha, who, during the persecutions of Ahab and Jezebel, wrought many miracles in support of the true religion. At length, the ten schismatic tribes having filled up the measure of their iniquity, God sent Shalmaneser, who took Samaria, their capital, transplanted their tribes into the plains of Chaldea, and re-peopled the country with different nations, particularly the Cutheans. This mixed colony brought their idols into the land of Israel, and set up their worship there. But, to punish them, God brought up wild beasts, which destroyed numbers of them. This great calamity was, by these strangers, imputed to their having neglected to worship the God of the country. Wherefore, at their request, the king of Assyria sent them one of the Jewish priests whom he had carried away captive, to teach them the religion and sacrifices of Moses. This priest settled at Bethel, and told the idolatrous nations "how they should fear the Lord. Howbeit, every nation made gods of their own." [2 Kings xvii. 28.] From this time forth there was a confused mixture of religions in the land; for the heathens who came from Chaldea joined the worship of their different idols to the worship of the true God, which, no doubt, they performed after the manner of the schismatic tribes. The remnant of the tribes behaved as their fa-

thers had done, and served God after the manner of the schism. Others walked in the statutes of the heathens, whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel. [2 Kings xvii. 8.]

The greatest part of the Samaritans being thus idolaters and strangers, it is evident that they intruded themselves into the covenant-privileges of the Israelites. Such of them as were not strangers were schismatics, who set up a different worship for the true worship established at Jerusalem, by David and Solomon, princes whose persons and writings they, for that reason, abhorred. With respect to the prophets whom God raised up in the two tribes after the separation, the Samaritans were obliged to deny their authority, otherwise they could not have persisted in the schism. Nay, they do not seem to have acknowledged the authority of the prophets raised up, by God, in the ten tribes; for they rejected the writings of the two who have left their prophecies in writing, viz. Hosea and Amos. Probably, this might be owing to the imperfect manner in which the Samaritans had been instructed by the priest whom the king of Assyria sent to them, or to their settling in the country after the prophets were dead; so that having never prophesied unto them, they were unacquainted with their character. Whatever was the reason, it is certain that the Samaritans, even in later times, acknowledged the authority of none of the Jewish scriptures, but the five books of Moses, which they preserved still in their own character, affirming it to be the true genuine copy of the law. Their boast, however, is without foundation: for the Samaritan pentateuch having all the additions found in the Jewish copy, it is plain that they received it from the Jews probably, before the canon was settled by Ezra. For, in his days, and ever after, the rancour which subsisted between the two nations was so great, that neither can be supposed to have received any thing relative to religion from the other. Perhaps the copies of the law were spread among the Samaritans, more especially when they came up to Josiah's passover [2 Chron. xxv. 18.]; for it was one of the exercises of that pious prince's zeal, to spread copies of the law among the people.

Considering the original of the Samaritan schism, and the subsequent corruption of their religion by the coming in of the idolatrous nations from Chaldea, the Samaritans could not avoid being very odious to the Jews. The latter, to express their contempt of the Samaritans, affected, on all occasions, to call the whole nation Cuthcans, thereby upbraiding them with their idolatrous extraction. [2 Kings xvii. 24.] The hatred which the Jews bare towards the Samaritans was greatly heightened by the manner in which they behaved after the Jews returned from the captivity. Under the pretence of friendship they did the Jews all the mischief they could. [Neh. ii. 10. Ezra iv. 1.] They perceived that the rebuilding of Jerusalem would perpe-

tuate the reproach of their original, by preserving the two tribes distinct from them, in respect both of religion and government. Wherefore, pretending friendship, they assured the Jews that they worshipped the same God with them, and offered to assist them in the work, probably, with a design to ruin it. [Ezra iv. 2.] But the Jews, unwilling to receive them into their commonwealth, refused the offer; upon which, the Samaritans, throwing off the mask, accused them, to Artaxerxes, of rebellion, [Ezra iv. 11.] obtained an order to stop the work, and, when it was afterwards renewed, conspired to come and fight against the builders. [Neh. iv. 8.]

The breach between the Jews and the Samaritans became still wider in the reign of Alexander the Great. Manasseh, brother to Jaddus, the Jewish high-priest, having married the daughter of Sanballet, the governor of Samaria, was required, by the Jewish elders, to put her away because she was an alien. This Manasseh refused to do, being encouraged by his father-in-law, who promised to build a temple upon the hill above Samaria, equal to that at Jerusalem, and to make him high-priest thereof. Accordingly, Manasseh retained his wife, and was, for that transgression of the law, banished both from the temple and altar of the Jews. He retired, therefore, to Samaria, and dwelt with his father-in-law, who soon after obtained leave of Alexander the Great to build a temple for him. This was the famous temple of the Samaritans on Gerizim, which so long rivalled the temple at Jerusalem. Of this temple Sanballet made Manasseh the high-priest: and to him resorted every one that was in debt, or disappointed, or in distress, or who fled from the rigour of the law, or was in any way uneasy, at Jerusalem. This new temple, the Samaritans pretended, was more holy and acceptable to God than that which was at Jerusalem. Nay, they affirmed that it was erected on the very spot which God himself chose for his worship. Thus the preference which they gave to their temple, and the numbers who apostatized to them, rendered the hatred between the two nations more implacable than ever.

But that which most exasperated the Jews against the Samaritans was, the letter which they wrote to Antiochus Epiphanes, whilst he was persecuting the Jews in the most barbarous manner, on account of their religion. This letter the Samaritans began with the basest flattery, for they had the impudence to call Antiochus a god. Next, they expressly disclaimed their having any relation to the Jews, either in point of extraction or religion. Their ancestors, they said, were Sidonians, who, to remove certain plagues incident to the country, observed the festival which the Jews called the sabbath. That they had a temple on mount Gerizim, dedicated to the nameless God, in which they performed sacrifice. That as their temple had, hitherto, the name of no god, they begged leave of him to dedi-

eate it to the Grecian Jupiter. A letter of this kind, wrote while the Jews were under the greatest hardships for the sake of their religion, could not fail to enrage them exceedingly against the Samaritans; and the remembrance of the injury, in all ages afterwards, continued fresh in their minds.

Passing on in his journey Christ came to Jacob's well, which received its name from its being dug by that patriarch, who gave it to his son Joseph. It is thus described by Maundrel: "About one third of an hour from Naplosa, the ancient Sychar, as it is termed in the New Testament, stands Jacob's well, famous, not only on account of its author, but much more for the memorable conference which our blessed Lord had there with the woman of Samaria. If it should be inquired whether this be the very place it is pretended, seeing it may be suspected to stand too remote from Sychem for the woman to come and draw water, we may answer, that, in all probability, the city extended farther in former times than it does now, as may be conjectured from some pieces of a very thick wall (the remains, perhaps, of the ancient Sychem) still to be seen not far from hence. Over it stood, formerly, a large church, erected by that great and devout patroness of the Holy Land, the empress Irene. But of this, the voracity of time, assisted by the hands of the Turks, have left nothing but a few foundations remaining. The well is covered, at present, with an old stone vault, into which you are let down by a very strait hole, and then removing a broad flat stone you discover the well itself. It is digged in a firm rock, and is about three yards in diameter, and thirty-five in depth, five of which we found full of water. This confutes a story commonly told to travellers who do not take the pains to examine the well, viz. that it is dry all the year round, except on the anniversary of that day on which our blessed Saviour sat upon it, but then bubbles up with abundance of water. At this well the narrow valley of Sychem ends, opening itself into a wide field, which is, probably, part of the parcel of ground given by Jacob to his son Joseph. It is watered by a fresh stream running between it and Sychem, which makes it so exceedingly verdant and fruitful, that it may well be looked upon as a standing token of the tender affection of that good patriarch to the best of sons." [Gen. xlviii. 22.]

Christ being wearied with his journey sat down immediately by the side of the well, and it was about the sixth hour. Whether this hour was noon, or six o'clock in the evening, has been the subject of considerable dispute; those who entertained the former opinion, supported it by Christ's weariness, and its conformity to the general language of scripture; while those who maintain the latter, contend that it is chiefly in the evening that the eastern women are accustomed to draw water.

While his disciples were gone into the city to purchase food, a Samaritan woman came with a bucket to draw water out of

the well, and Jesus, being thirsty, desired her to give him some of it. For as he was not spirited with the passions of his countrymen, he did not think himself bound by the rules which they observed, especially when they hindered the common offices of friendship and humanity. Nevertheless, his demand surprised the woman, who, knowing him to be a Jew, either by his speech or dress, could not understand how he came to ask any good office of her who was a Samaritan. "Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, how is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings," intercourses of friendship, "with the Samaritans." On this occasion Jesus showed the greatness of his condescension and benevolence; for though this was a person of an infamous character, and though he himself was pressed with thirst, he delayed refreshing himself, that he might bring her who was spiritually dead to the waters of life. "Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." To understand this last verse, it is necessary to remark, that many of the eastern wells are not furnished, like ours, with a line and bucket, but travellers are obliged to carry those things with them for their own accommodation. It may surprise an English reader, unacquainted with the oriental idiom, that this woman, who appears, by the sequel, to have totally misunderstood our Lord, did not ask what he meant by living water, but proceeded on the supposition that she understood him perfectly; and only did not conceive how, without some vessel for drawing and containing that water, he could provide her with it to drink. The truth is, the expression is ambiguous. In the most familiar acceptation, living water meant no more than running water. In this sense, the water of springs and rivers would be denominated living, as that of cisterns and lakes would be called dead, because motionless. Thus Gen. xxvi. 19, we are told, that Isaac's servant digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water. It is living water both in the Hebrew and the Greek, as marked on the margin of our Bibles. Thus, also, Lev. xiv. 5, what is rendered running water in the English Bible, is, in both those languages, living water. Nay, this use was not unknown to the Latins, as may be proved from Virgil and Ovid. In this passage, however, our Lord uses the expression in the more sublime sense for divine teaching, but was mistaken by the woman, as using it in the popular acceptation. "Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?" Are you a person of greater power, or more in favour with God than our father Jacob, that you can procure water for yourself by supernatural means? He was obliged to dig this well, in order to provide drink for himself and his family.

Can you create water? "Jesus answered and said unto her, whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again;" this water can allay the pain of thirst only for a little while, because, though it be drank ever so plentifully, the appetite will soon return. "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst:" shall at no time be subject to any vehement, painful sensations, arising from unmortified, irregular appetites;—"but in the water that I shall give him shall be a well of water springing up into everlasting life:" shall yield him divine satisfaction now, and shall be the source of his happiness to all eternity in heaven, where he shall feel none of the bodily appetites or wants so troublesome to men in this life.

Thus Jesus, under the image of living or springing water, taken from the well beside which he was sitting, as his manner was, beautifully described the efficacy of the influences of the Spirit of God; for, as water quenches thirst, these, by quieting the agitation, and cooling the fervency of earthly desires, beget an unspeakable inward peace. By this image, also, he sets forth the plenitude and perpetuity of the celestial joy flowing from holy dispositions, produced by the influences of the Spirit of God. For these, by an innate power, satisfying all the capacities and desires of the soul, render it so completely happy, that it is not able to form a wish or a thought of any thing better.

"The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Some suppose that she intended this as claiming his promise; but others, that she designed only to ridicule his words; and that he, to check this impudence, showed her that he was perfectly acquainted with her character, for he bade her call her husband; and, when she replied that she had no husband, he told her that she had had five husbands, and was then living in adultery with a man that was not hers, but another's husband. The woman hearing such a particular account of her life from such an entire stranger, was not only humbled by the discovery, but concluded that he certainly had intercourse with heaven. And, being glad of the opportunity, perhaps also desiring to shift the discourse, she mentioned the principal point in controversy between the two nations, that she might have his opinion upon it. The dispute was, whether mount Gerizim or Jerusalem was appointed by God for worship and sacrifice. The Samaritans declared for Gerizim, because it was in their country, and because Abraham and Jacob, whom they called their fathers, had built altars, and worshipped in that mountain. Jesus replied, you need not be very solicitous about settling that point, for the time is at hand when an end will be put to the worship both at Jerusalem and mount Gerizim. Nevertheless, I must tell you that Jerusalem is the place which God has appointed for offering sacrifice, as you yourselves are bound to allow,

since you acknowledge that you derive your religion from the Jewish sacred books. For these books fix the worship of God to a place which he promised to choose in our tribes, [Deut. xii. 5,] and which he did choose, by putting his name, or symbol of his presence, in the temple of Jerusalem, as soon as it was dedicated, making it his habitation, according to his promise. [2 Kings xxiii. 27.] “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what, we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews.” This last expression, that salvation is of the Jews, points out that Messiah was to come of that nation. “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” God is the supreme mind or intelligence, who, by one act, sees the thoughts of all other intelligences whatever, so may be worshipped in every place. And the worship to be offered him from henceforth does not consist in sacrifices, or other external rites, but in faith and love; for these constitute the true spiritual worship due to the supreme Being from all his creatures, and which cannot but be acceptable to him wherever it is offered. The woman, being affected with this doctrine, replied, that she could not but acknowledge, as he said, that Messiah was to arise among the Jews; but she hoped when he did come he would teach the Samaritans also. “The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, (namely, from among the Jews,) which is called Christ; when he is come he will tell us all things.” The general expectation, which now prevailed, that a great prince was to arise in Judea, together with Moses’s prophecy concerning him, constrained the Samaritans to a right faith with respect to the Messiah’s nation. For though they contended that the true place of acceptable worship was in their country, they did not assume the honour of being progenitors of the deliverer of mankind. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. It is remarked that Christ was more cautious of acknowledging himself to be the promised Messiah in his conversing with the Jews, is very apparent; [compare Matt. xvi. 20, Mark viii. 29, 30, Luke xxii. 67, and John x. 24,] and the reason was, that the Jews had such notions of the temporal kingdom of the Messiah, that they would have construed an open declaration of himself under that character as a claim to the throne of David; in consequence of which many would have taken up arms in the cause, [John vi. 15,] and others would have accused him to the Roman governor, as a rebel against Cæsar, [Luke xx. 20,] as they afterwards did, [Luke xxiii. 2.]

Thus far had Jesus proceeded in his conversation when the

disciples returned from the city. His condescension in talking with and instructing her who was both a Samaritan and a woman, raised their astonishment; yet none of them presumed to find fault with him, or to ask the reason of his conduct. When the woman heard Jesus call himself the Messiah, she set down her pitcher and ran into the city, where she published the news in the streets, and desired all she met to go with her and see him, assuring them that he had told her the principal occurrences of her life; so strong an impression had that circumstance made upon her mind. The Samaritans, struck with wonder and curiosity, did not delay, but accompanied her instantly, wishing, no doubt, that her news might prove true.

While these things were doing, the disciples set the meat which they had brought before their Master. But he did not mind it, though he stood then very much in need of refreshment. It seems, he was wholly intent on the duties of his mission, preferring them to his necessary food. Hence, when his disciples entreated him to eat, he told them he had meat to eat which they knew nothing of, meaning the satisfaction he was about to receive from the conversion of the Samaritans. The disciples understanding his words in a natural sense, asked one another whether any one, in their absence, had supplied him with provisions. "Therefore said the disciples one to another, hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work." I have greater satisfaction in doing the will of God than in any sensual enjoyment whatever. [John iv. 35.] "Say not ye, There are yet four months and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest." This, says Dr. Macknight, is a proverbial expression, taken from the time that commonly intervenes between sowing and reaping, and signifies, that after having used the means of procuring a thing, the effect must not be expected to follow all of a sudden, but must be waited for with patience. Our Lord told his disciples that, in the present case, they could not apply that proverb; because, if they would lift up their eyes, they would see the fields white already to harvest, would see a multitude in a fit disposition to believe, notwithstanding the seed had been sown but an hour or two before: so that he had, what was his proper food to eat, a convenient opportunity of doing the will of him that sent him, and of finishing his work. But to this interpretation Dr. Doddridge objects, 1. Because neither Whitby, nor Grotius, nor Lightfoot, who is large on this text, could produce any such proverb. 2. Because, indeed, there could be no foundation for it, since the distance between seed-time and harvest must differ according to the different kinds of grain in question. And, 3. Because, if there had been such a proverb, it would have been improper to apply it here; since our

Lord was not speaking of the period of time between the prophets' sowing and the apostles' reaping, (to which four months has no analogy,) but only means to tell them, that though they reckoned yet four months to the earthly harvest, the spiritual harvest was now ripe. So that he chooses, as Sir Isaac Newton does, to take words in their plainest sense, as an intimation that it was then four months to the beginning of harvest. And he takes this passage to be of very great importance for settling the chronology of Christ's ministry. "And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together. And herein is that saying true, one soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours. Ye are employed to reap that which the prophets, with great difficulty, sowed; for ye are gathering into the kingdom of heaven those, who, by the writings of the prophets, having been imbued with a sense of piety and virtue, are prepared for entering into it. This application of the proverb, "one soweth and another reapeth," does not imply any discontent in the persons who sow without reaping, as it does in common use; for the sower and the reaper are represented as rejoicing together in the rewards of this spiritual husbandry.

It seems, many of the Samaritans had been so struck with the account which the woman gave of Jesus, that they believed him to be the Messiah on her testimony. Accordingly, being come to him, they begged him to take up his residence in their city. Jesus, in compassion to their wants and desires, complied so far as to stay with them two days, during which time, what sermons he preached were attended with great power, as appeared by their success; for they brought many of the Sycharites to believe on him as Messiah. "And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did. So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them, and he abode there two days. And many more believed because of his word; and said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of this saying; for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

When Christ had stayed two days in Sychar, and finished his appointed work in that city, he went a considerable way into Galilee, passing by Nazareth, his native city, on account of the prejudices which his townsmen entertained against him. Luke, speaking of this journey, says, [iv. 14,] "And Jesus returned, in the power of the Spirit, into Galilee;" that is, he went thither to work miracles and to preach, by the assistance of the Spirit; or, in other words, to exercise his ministry, a character whereby this ministry is distinguished from that which he made after his

baptism, and which the three evangelists have omitted, because he did not till now begin his ministry in Galilee, which is the subject of their history. On his arrival, he preached [Mark i. 15.] "the gospel of the kingdom of God, saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye, and believe the gospel." The time is accomplished that was pre-determined by the divine wisdom for erecting the Messiah's kingdom, even the kingdom of God and of the saints, in which the Mosaical ceremonies shall be no longer obligatory, but righteousness alone shall be required from men. Wherefore, repent ye, and believe this doctrine. [Luke iv. 14.] "And there went out a fame of him through all the region round about:" the fame of the miracles which he performed in Jerusalem at the passover, and Judea, during the course of his ministry there, spread the more through Galilee now that he was come: for, at this time, he had done only one miracle there, namely, the turning of water into wine. He spent a considerable time in Galilee, preaching, for the most part, in their synagogues, where was the greatest concourse of people; and on the sabbath-days, when they could attend his sermons without neglecting their worldly affairs. The effect of his first exercise in Galilee was, that the excellency of the doctrines which he taught, and the greatness of the miracles which he wrought, made all the people admire and applaud him exceedingly. John, likewise, has informed us, that, at his first coming into Galilee, he was received, that is, acknowledged as Messiah, and followed as such. [John iv. 45.] "Then, when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast:" they treated him courteously, and attended his ministry with a disposition to believe, having conceived a favourable opinion of him, by reason of the miracles they had seen him perform in Jerusalem during the passover.

Soon after this Jesus went to Cana, the town that had been honoured with the miracle of water turned into wine. Here a courtier, who had heard of his fame, came from Capernaum, and entreated him to go down and heal his son, who was extremely ill of a fever. The story is thus told by the evangelist John, ch. iv. 46—54, "So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine: and there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way, thy son liveth; and the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way. And as he was now going down, his servants

met him, and told him, saying, thy son liveth. Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend, and they said unto him, yesterday, at the seventh hour, the fever left him: So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, thy son liveth, and himself believed, and his whole house. This is again the second miracle that Jesus did when he was come out of Judea into Galilee."

To illustrate this account we submit the following remarks.

1. The word which is here translated nobleman, may be more properly rendered courtier, or officer, as there was no hereditary dignity among the Jews answerable to our titles of nobility. 2. Cana was a day's journey distant from Capernaum; so that our Lord, by effecting the cure in this manner, made no unnecessary display of his miraculous power, but avoided a considerable inconvenience. This consideration has still greater force if we admit, with some commentators, that John follows the Roman method of reckoning the hours, and that, therefore, this miracle was performed at seven o'clock in the evening. 3. It is probable, that the recovery of the child was sudden, so as to prove the interference of an extraordinary cause. Lastly, it is supposed by many, that this courtier and his family not only were induced to reverence the character of Christ, but truly to receive him as the Messiah of God.

At length Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been educated. The evangelist mentions the circumstance of our Lord's education in Nazareth, to put his readers in mind that it was a place where Jesus could not but be well known, having lived there from his infancy. The Nazarenes knew all his relations, they remembered the manner of his education, and they were perfectly acquainted with his character. Wherefore, from their knowledge of him, they ought to have given him a favourable reception; but the wickedness of their disposition was such, that this very circumstance, which should have conciliated their affection, they turned into an occasion of rejecting him, as we shall see anon, [Luke iv. 16.] "And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath-day." The synagogue being a place of worship, the evangelist, by making this observation, informs us, that Jesus never neglected attending on divine service. Besides, as the people, on the sabbath, rested from their worldly occupations, and assembled for public worship, they had leisure and opportunity to receive his instructions. Wherefore, he always improved those occasions, by disseminating the knowledge of salvation among the multitudes, with cheerfulness. "And stood up for to read." The reading of the scriptures made an essential part of the Jewish public worship. But it was not confined to those who were properly the ministers of religion. The rulers of the synagogue assigned it to such persons in the congregation as they knew were

capable of it. Nay, they sometimes conferred the honour upon strangers, and incited them to give the people an exhortation on such subjects as were suggested by the passage read, see Acts xiii. 15. Wherefore, though Jesus was none of the stated ministers of religion in the town of Nazareth, the office of reading the scriptures, and of exhorting the people, which they now assigned him, was agreeable to the regulations of the synagogue. Perhaps the rulers, knowing the reports which went abroad of his miracles, and having heard of the Baptist's testimony concerning him, were curious to hear him read and expound the scriptures; the rather, because it was well known in Nazareth that he had not had the advantage of a learned education. Wherefore, as the Hebrew was now a dead language, Jesus had not been taught to read; his actually reading, and with such facility, the original Hebrew scriptures, as well as expounding them, was a clear proof of his inspiration. "And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,"—The books of the ancients consisted of one long sheet of paper, or parchment, which they rolled up neatly upon a round piece of wood. When a book of this kind was to be read, they unrolled it gradually as they read it, and put what was read round another piece of wood of the same sort as the former. Wherefore, as the scriptures were read in order, the passage of the prophet Isaias, which fell, of course, to be read in the synagogue of Nazareth, would naturally present itself on separating the two rolls of the book. This happened to be the celebrated prediction, [Isa. lxi. 1.] in which Messiah is introduced, describing his own mission, character, and office. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me,"—this was said of the prophets when they were under an immediate afflatus of the Spirit, "because he hath anointed me," i. e. commissioned me, in allusion to the Jewish priests, kings, and prophets, who were consecrated to their office by anointing, "to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted." The reason why I, Messiah, enjoy so great a degree of inspiration, and am endowed with the power of working such astonishing miracles, is because God hath commissioned me to preach the glad tidings of salvation to the poor, and, by so doing, hath sent me to heal all without distinction, whose hearts are broken by sharp convictions of sin and fears of punishment. To one who considers the matter attentively, it must appear an unspeakable recommendation of the gospel dispensation, that it offers the pardon of sin and salvation to all, on the same terms. The rich, here, have no pre-eminence over the poor, as they seem to have had under the law, which prescribed such costly sacrifices for the atonement of sin as were very burdensome to the poor.

The prophet Isaias, therefore, in describing the happiness of gospel times, very fitly introduces Messiah, mentioning this as

one of the many blessings which would accrue to the world from his coming, that the glad tidings of salvation were to be preached by him and his ministers to the poor, and, consequently, were to be offered to them "without money and without price," as it is expressed Isa. lv. 1. "To preach (to proclaim) deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." This is a magnificent description of Messiah's miracles. All that he needed to do for the deliverance of such persons as were held captives, or, as the apostle expresses it, [Acts x. 38.] "were oppressed of the devil," was to proclaim, or declare them delivered. In like manner, to give recovery of sight to the blind, or to work any other miracle of healing whatever, no more was requisite but that he should speak the word. "To preach the acceptable year of the Lord;" to proclaim that happy period of the divine dispensations towards mankind, in which a full and free remission of all their offences was to be offered them, and which might be fitly represented in prophecy by the Jewish jubilee, wherein debts were forgiven, slaves released, and inheritances restored to their original owners. It is observable, that, in this description of Messiah's ministry, Isaiah has alluded to the manners of the easterns, who, in ancient times, were so inhuman, as to lead captive into far distant lands those whom they conquered. Their principal captives they cast into prison, loaded with irons, which sore bruised their bodies, and to render them incapable of making fresh disturbances, or, it may be, to increase their misery, they sometimes put out their eyes. In this manner Nebuchadnezzar treated Zedekiah. Wherefore, as Messiah, in many other prophecies, had been represented under the notion of a great and mighty conqueror, Isaiah, in describing his spiritual triumphs, with great propriety introduces him, declaring that he was come to subdue the oppressors of mankind, and to deliver from captivity and misery those wretches whom they had enslaved, by opening their prison-doors, healing the wounds and bruises occasioned by their chains, and even by giving sight to those whose eyes had been put out in prison. Some, understanding this prophecy in a literal sense, are of opinion, that it foretells the alteration which, by the christian religion, hath been made in the policy of nations, but especially in the manner of making war, and of treating the vanquished; in both which much more humanity is used now than anciently, to the great honour of the christian institution, and of its author.

"And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, (the servant who had brought it to him,) and sat down: and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him:" they looked on him with great attention, expecting to hear him explain the passage. "And he began to say unto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears."

In speaking to the congregation from the prophecy, he told them it was that day fulfilled in their ears. For, although no miracle had been done in their city, they were credibly informed of many that had been wrought by him, and, it may be also, at the passover, had seen him do such things as fully answered the prophets' description of Messiah. By some illustration of this kind Jesus proved his assertion, in a sermon, probably, of considerable length, the subject of which is only mentioned by Luke, though, at the same time, he leads us to think of the sermon itself; for he tells us, verse 22, "that (and) all the congregation bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." It seems, on this occasion, Jesus delivered his thoughts with such strength of reason, clearness of method, and beauty of expression, that his townsmen, who all knew he had not had the advantage of a liberal education, were so astonished, that, in their conversation with one another, they could not forbear expressing their admiration. At the same time, the malevolence of their disposition led them to mingle with their praises a reflection, which they thought sufficiently confuted his pretensions to Messiahship, and showed the absurdity of the application, which he had made of Isaiah's prophecy to himself as Messiah. It appears, that when our Lord went into Galilee, with a view to exercise his ministry, he did not go to Nazareth; on the contrary, he passed by it, and went straight to Cana, which lay not far from Sidon. This exasperated the Nazarenes. Besides, he had not performed any miracle in their town, far less had he done any like that which they heard he had performed in Capernaum, where he cured the nobleman's son without stirring from Cana. It seems, they thought since their townsman could so easily give health to the sick at a distance, there ought not to have been so much as one diseased person in all Nazareth. Our Lord's own words suggest this conjecture. "And he said unto them, Ye surely say to me," ye apply to me this proverb, "Physician, heal thyself: whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country;" plainly alluding to the cure of the nobleman's son: as if they had said, Since thou possess-est powers so great, and art able to cure sick people at a distance, we cannot help thinking, that, in thine absence, thou oughtest to have recovered the sick of thy native city rather than those of any other town; it being expected of every physician that he will bestow the healing virtue of his art upon his own relations and friends, who need it sooner, than upon strangers. In answer to their ill-natured whispers, Jesus told them plainly, that his character would suffer nothing by their rejecting him, because it ever had been the lot of the prophets to be despised in their own country. "And he said, verily I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country." And, with relation to his having wrought no miracle of healing

in their town, he insinuated that the very heathens were more worthy of favours of this sort than they; to such a pitch of wickedness had they proceeded: in which respect they resembled their ancestors, whose great sins God reprov'd, by sending his prophets to work miracles for heathens rather than for them, in a time of general calamity. "But I will tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel, in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the days of Eliseus the prophet, and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian." But putting them thus in mind of Elijah's miracle in behalf of the widow of Sarepta, a heathen inhabitant of a heathen city, in a time of famine, when many widows of Israel were suffered to starve; and of Elisha's miracle on Naaman, the Syrian leper, while many lepers in Israel remained uncleansed; he showed them both the sin and the punishment of their ancestors, and left it to themselves to make the application. The Nazarenes, understanding his meaning, were enraged to such a pitch, that, forgetting the sanctity of the sabbath, they gathered round him tumultuously, forced him out of the synagogue, and rushed with him through the streets to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. "But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way;" in the midst of the confusion he escaped, probably by making himself invisible.

From the time of year in which the fore-cited lesson is appointed to be read in the synagogue, it is probable that this transaction took place in the latter end of August, or beginning of September.

The rude treatment which Jesus met with from his townsmen made him quit all thoughts of residing at Nazareth. From that time forth, therefore, he resolv'd to dwell at Capernaum, a town situated northward from Nazareth, on the borders of Zabulon and Naphthali. By settling in Capernaum our Lord fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy, [ch. ix. 1.] which elegantly describes the effect of the Messiah's residence in Galilee. [Mat. iv. 13—15.] "And leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt at Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea beyond Jordan." This latter clause, both in the Hebrew and Greek, is detached from that which goes before it, being a description, not of the land of Nephthalim, but of two distinct countries; first, the country round the sea of Galilee, and next, the country on the other side Jordan. For "the way of the sea" is an Hebraism for any country that lies round a sea or lake; and "beyond Jordan" is

the name by which the land of Israel, on the other side Jordan, commonly went. The translation, therefore, ought to run thus ; “ The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, the sea-coast, the country beyond Jordan—Galilee of the Gentiles. The people which sat in darkness saw great light, and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.” In scripture, darkness represents ignorance and misery ; consequently, the shadow of death, being the blackest darkness, must signify the greatest ignorance and misery. On the other hand, light being the pleasantest work of God, represents happiness and joy ; it signifies knowledge likewise, especially the knowledge of divine things, because this is to the soul what light is to the body. Hence, the Son of God, who has dispelled the thick darkness of sin and misery, wherein the world was involved, is described, by the prophet Malachi, under the idea of a sun, the sun of righteousness ; and his appearing on earth is called, by Isaiah, the springing up of light, and the people among whom he lived are said, while sitting in darkness, to have seen great light. The Jews, indeed, interpret this prophecy, of the deliverance which their fathers obtained by the miraculous destruction of Sennacherib and his army. But, from the context, it is evident that the prophecy has a much grander meaning ; for it promises the universal restoration of the church of God, whose darkness of death should be turned into the light of life, and that by a son born to the Israelites, in conformity to the promises made unto Abraham and David, upon whose shoulders the government shall be, and who was to be named “ Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace,” &c. From that time Jesus began to preach the necessity of men’s reforming their lives. This he urged by the consideration of the approach of Messiah’s kingdom. The same doctrine John the Baptist had frequently preached : but his ministry was now at an end. Jesus, therefore, thought fit to add weight to his forerunner’s exhortations, by inculcating the things which he had made the great theme of his sermons.

Thus the countries round the lake, but especially Galilee, became the scene of Christ’s public life, and Capernaum, the place of his ordinary residence. When he was at home, he always taught in the synagogue on the sabbath-days. During the rest of the week the inhabitants were employed about their affairs, and Jesus did not choose to take them from their business. Being the place which he considered as his home, he waited for the returns of the sabbath, when they met together in the synagogue, and then preached the word to them with such energy and power, as raised their admiration to astonishment. [Luke iv. 31, 32.] “ And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the sabbath-days. And they were astonished at his doctrine, for his word was with

power." He did not, however, confine himself to Capernaum, for he frequently went into the neighbouring country, and, on such occasions, no doubt, preached every day, perhaps oftener than once.

Some time after his removal to Capernaum, Jesus intending to make a larger circuit than ordinary, would have his disciples to accompany him. Accordingly, going out to the lake, where their business of fishing led them frequently to be, he saw two of them casting their nets into the sea, and called them away. [Mat. iv. 18.] Simon and Andrew, formerly inhabitants of Bethsaida, but now of Capernaum, [Mark i. 29.] had become our Lord's disciples before this, at Jordan, [John i. 40, 41.] and, probably, when Philip received orders to accompany him into Galilee, had been required to attend. This, therefore, was not the first time that he saw and called them, as those who read the gospels singly are apt to imagine. The calls given to the disciples in the first year of Christ's ministry were only temporary, extending no farther than to the particular occasions on which they were given. After that they returned home with their Master, and pursued their occupations, as formerly, in Capernaum, where they and he resided; till, at length, twelve of them were chosen to be with him always, [Mark iii. 13.] an expression which plainly implies, that, till then, they had attended him only occasionally. Jesus having thus called Simon and Andrew from their business, saw other two brothers, viz. James and John, whom he ordered, likewise, to follow him. They obeyed instantly. From their ready compliance we may believe that they, as well as Simon and Andrew, were acquainted with Jesus, and had believed on him at Jordan. Or, we may suppose, that their willingness proceeded from the secret energy of his power upon their minds. [Mat. iv. 21.] "And now going on from thence, (Mark, a little further thence,) he saw two other brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a ship, with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. And he called them, and they immediately left the ship, and their father, (Mark, with the hired servants,) and followed him; [Mark i. 21.] and they went into Capernaum." The four disciples above named went with Christ to Capernaum, and, soon after that, accompanied him through the different quarters of Galilee, whither he went to preach. The evangelists have not told us what time he spent in this tour, neither have they given us a particular account of the transactions of it. They only say, in general, that he went about all Galilee, that is, through both Galilees, teaching in their synagogues every where, and preaching the good news of the approach of Messiah's kingdom; that he wrought an infinite number of miracles on diseased persons of all sorts; and that the fame of his miracles drew the people after him from Galilee, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan, that is, from all the

different corners of the country: nay, that the report of them was spread even through the neighbouring heathen countries, particularly Syria, insomuch that they brought the sick from thence, also, to be cured by him. Wherefore, since the transactions of this tour were noised so far abroad, it must have taken up a considerable space of time, although there is but little said concerning it by the evangelists. [Matt. iv. 23.] “And 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.” Pliny, 5. 12. tells us, that Syria contained several provinces; Comagene to the north, Phœnicia to the west, Cœlosyria to the south, Palmyrene and the province of Seleucia in the middle part. If, by all Syria, the evangelist mean all these different provinces of Syria, our Lord’s fame, at this time, must have been exceeding great. Nor is there any thing incredible in the evangelist’s affirmation, taken in the largest sense: for, considering the number and greatness of the miracles which he performed, it would not have been beyond belief had the historian told us, that the fame of them reached as far as the communication of the Jews with the rest of the world extended. “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. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judea, and from beyond Jordan.

Our Lord’s fame being now very great, a vast concourse of people attended him; some with their sick to obtain cures (for he never rejected any who applied to him); some out of curiosity and the love of novelty; some with a design to find fault; and some to hear his doctrine, which seldom failed to make a deep impression on those who had any share of good sense or piety. Such a vast multitude of men bewildered in the darkness of ignorance excited the compassion of the Son of God; he looked on them, was sensible of their sad condition, and felt, in himself, a strong desire to give them more particular instruction than ever. For this purpose he went up into a mountain, and, sitting down on an eminence where he could be heard, he inculcated many important points of religion, which, in general, were contrary to the opinions then received, and which, without miracles, would have been but coldly received by his hearers. Whereas, the multitude have seen him freely and instantly restore health to the diseased, than which there is no gift more god-like, more acceptable, or which strikes men with a higher admiration of the giver, they could not but entertain the greatest good-will towards him, and must have been sensible that the spirit and power by which he acted were divine.

[Matt. v. 1.] “And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain, and when he was set his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth,—(a phrase used by the Jewish writers when they introduce a person speaking gravely on any subject of great importance. For instance, Job iii. “After this opened Job his mouth, and cursed his day, and Job spake and said.”)—and taught them: he explained to them the great doctrines of religion and morality.

This sermon Jesus began with the doctrine of happiness, a subject which the teachers of wisdom have always considered as the principal thing in morals, and, for that reason, they have laboured to give their disciples a true idea of it. Most of the Jews seem to have considered the enjoyments of sense as the sovereign good. Riches, mirth, revenge, women, conquest, liberty, fame, and other things of the same kind, afforded them such pleasures, that they wished for no better in the Messiah's kingdom, which they all considered as a secular one; even the disciples themselves, who afterwards were made apostles, long retained this notion of the kingdom, having followed their Master first, with a view to the honours, profits, and pleasures, attending the posts which they expected under him. Therefore, to show his hearers in general, and his disciples in particular, the grossness of their error, our Lord declared that the highest happiness of man consisteth in the graces of the Spirit; because from the possession and exercise of them the purest pleasure result, pleasures which satisfy the great God himself, and constitute his ineffable felicity. Said the Wisdom of God, the rich, the great, and the proud, are not happy, as you imagine, who covet the pleasures of high life, and consider prosperity as a mark of God's favour; but they are happy who rest contented with their lot, whatever it is, discharging the duties well that belong to it; and particularly, if, while they fill high stations, they are perfectly humble and mortified, having their affections as much weaned from sensual pleasures as the poor, who, because they are deprived of the means, have, in a great measure, lost their taste for such enjoyments. “Saying, Blessed are they poor in spirit; for,” though they be excluded from the honour of earthly kingdoms, “theirs is the kingdom of heaven:” they have a peculiar title to the honours and privileges of the Messiah's kingdom. The merry and the gay are not happy; but the afflicted, if they improve their afflictions aright, being excited by them to mourn for their sins, to amend their lives, and seek a better country.

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted: they shall have consolation here in the hope of forgiveness, and hereafter in the fruition of eternal joys. Affliction awakens serious thoughts in the mind, composes it into a grave and settled frame, very different from the levity which prosperity inspires. Moreover, it gives a man a fellow-feeling of the sorrow

of others, and makes him sensible of the evil of departing from God, the source and centre of his joys.

“Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth:” they shall enjoy the protection of civil government, with all the blessings of the present life, the greatest and best of which flow from meekness itself. Meekness, consisting in the moderation of our passions, makes a person beautiful and venerable in the eyes of his fellows; so that he possesses their inward esteem: while the man devoid of this grace is despicable, though dignified with ever so many titles of honour. Hence it is called “the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit.” Farther, this grace secures a man against many injuries, which he may be exposed to, a soft answer being powerful to turn away wrath; or, if an injury is done to a meek person, his meekness prevents the storms which pride, anger, and revenge, raise within, enables him to bear the injury with tranquillity, and strengthens him to overcome it with good. Luxurious men, who enjoy the pleasures of eating and drinking in the nicest perfection, are not happy, but they who have a vehement desire of holiness. This passage may, however, be understood as referring to heaven, the land of eternal felicity. “Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled:” by the assistance of God’s Spirit they shall obtain what they desire; and, in the practice of righteousness, shall be greatly blessed, as well as in the fulness of its future rewards. They who successfully resent the injuries which they meet with are not happy; but they who forgive them, and who, being of a humane, beneficent disposition, do all the good in their power, especially to persons in distress.

“Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy:” when they are judged they shall find forgiveness. Nor is this all the merciful shall be recompensed with, even in this life: for, after many days, they shall find the bread which they have cast upon the waters of affliction returned to them ten-fold by God, who, in the course of his providence, will give them abundant prosperity. Besides, the delight which arises from making others happy, whether by rescuing them from want, or by restoring them to the paths of virtue, is the most ingenuous pleasure imaginable, it is godlike and divine.

“Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.” We reckon it a delightful thing to behold the light, to contemplate this beautiful theatre of the world, and to look on the sun, by whose beams all other things are seen. How much more delightful must it be to behold the Creator of the sun and of the world, in the unveiled beauties of his nature! But the pure, having their hearts cleansed from those evil passions that cloud the mind, are favoured with peculiar manifestations of God here, and hereafter shall see him face to face, perhaps, by some new unknown faculty; and, in him, shall contemplate all truth

and goodness, for truth and goodness subsist in him substantially: blessed privilege! and, by that contemplation, shall be raised to high degrees of illumination, perfection, and happiness.

“Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.” They shall be acknowledged by God as his children, and admitted to a participation of his happiness, an honour which those who take pleasure in war, however eminent they may be for courage, shall certainly miss, though it be the aim of their ambition; because they pursue it, not by the godlike disposition of diffusing happiness, but by spreading desolation and death among their fellows; so that, having divested themselves of the nature of God, they have no title to be called the sons of God.

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Fame, or the applause of the world, does not give solid contentment, by satisfying true ambition; but to be reviled falsely in the ways of righteousness, and to share in affronts with God, is a dignity that yields infinitely greater joy, and is that by which the saints and prophets have been distinguished in all ages.

“Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” Thus spake the Son of God; and it may easily be believed, that the persons whom he thus described shall be blessed as he declared; for reason itself showeth, that the “poor in spirit, the mourners for sin, the meek, those who hunger after righteousness, the merciful, the pure, the peace-makers, the reviled and persecuted for righteousness’ sake,” and such like, are beloved of God. But they who are beloved of God must be supremely happy. None of the sensations of pleasure which now enter the human mind, properly speaking, are produced by the objects which occasion them, but by the power of God, who uses these objects only as instruments. Therefore, without mentioning the divine joys that arise from the possession of holy dispositions, if God can, by low and terrestrial objects, give such great and manifold delights as we now possess, may he not carry the joys of his favourites vastly higher, by objects infinitely nobler; even such objects as we have reason to believe will subsist in heaven, the state which the wisdom of the Almighty has contrived, and his power formed, for the happiness of his friends and people.

Having thus described true happiness, Jesus addressed himself to his disciples in general, and explained their duty as teachers appointed to lead others in the road thither. For, as they were all eye-witnesses, they were all to become ministers of the word. Hence he compared them to salt, representing

the efficacy of their good example, to season men's minds with a love of piety and virtue, which is the proper preservative of spiritual substances. "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under-foot of men." If ye, whose business it is to reform mankind, be wicked yourselves, ye cannot be reclaimed, but will be the most useless and contemptible of men.

In the next place, Jesus compared his disciples to the sun, representing the efficacy of their ministry, to fill the world with the gladsome light of truth; a thing as necessary in the moral world as light is in the natural. "Ye are the light of the world." And that they might be excited to diligence in dispensing the salutary influences of their doctrine and example, he bade them call to mind, that "a city that is set on a hill cannot be hid," or, that the conduct of persons in eminent stations is the object of general observation. He added, "Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick: and it giveth light to all that are in the house." The knowledge of divine things is given you by inspiration, not to be concealed, but to be imparted to mankind around you. Therefore, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Make your doctrine and example bright in the eyes of all who behold you, that they may honour God; first, by acting up to the precepts of the gospel strongly impressed on their understandings by your penetrating sermons, and powerfully recommended to their hearts by your exemplary lives; next, by their returning thanks to God for sending such men to enlighten and reform the world. But because his doctrine concerning happiness was contrary to that which the Jews were accustomed to hear, and which their teachers pretended to derive from the prophets, whose descriptions of the glory of Messiah's kingdom they understood in a literal sense, as well as from the law, whose rewards and punishments were all of a temporal kind; also, because he was about to give explications of the moral precepts of the law, very different from those which the scribes and Pharisees commonly gave, but which his disciples, as instructors of mankind, were to inculcate; he ended this branch of his discourse, and introduced that which followed, with declaring, that he was, by no means, come to destroy the law or the prophets, that is, the moral precepts contained in them. "Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil," to confirm; so the word is used in 1 Kings i. 14, marginal translation. Accordingly our Lord adds, "For 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." The precepts of the law were of two kinds, ceremo-

nial and moral ; the former Christ fulfilled by his sufferings, the latter he inculcated on his followers by his life and teaching.

There is nothing in the universe so stable as the eternal truths of morality : the heavens may fall, and the whole frame of nature may be unhinged, nay, every part of it may be dissolved : but the rules of righteousness shall remain immutable and immortal. Wherefore he ordered his disciples, on the severest penalties, both by their doctrine and example, to enforce the strict observation of all the moral precepts contained in the sacred writings, and that in their utmost extent. "Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so," teach men that their obligation is dissolved, shall be called (or, according to the idiom of the original languages, shall be) "the least in the kingdom of heaven:" since the moral precepts of the law are eternal and immutable, whosoever weakens their obligation shall never enter into heaven. But whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven : whosoever shall himself carefully practise the moral precepts of the law and the prophets, and shall inculcate their universal obligation, shall be highly rewarded. "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness," the righteousness which you practise yourselves, and enjoin upon others, "shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees," the Jewish doctors of the strictest sect, "ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven;" for, like them, ye will be corrupters of others, and, consequently, monsters of the blackest kind. But because this was a subject of great importance, he mentioned various particulars wherein theirs should excel the doctrine and practice of the Jewish teachers.

He began with doctrine, and spake concerning murder, adultery, divorce, perjury, resentment of injuries, and benevolence, showing them what they were to believe and teach concerning these points. It seems, the doctors gave it as their opinion, that the law, "Thou shalt not kill," prohibited nothing but actual murder committed with a man's own hand ; and, therefore, if he hired another to kill him, or turned a wild beast upon him that slew him, according to them, it was not murder punishable by the law, though they acknowledged it might deserve the judgment of God. The doctrine of his disciples was to be more sublime, exhibiting the intention and spirit of the law, which forbids not the outward act of murder only, but whatever may tempt or prompt a man to commit it ; for instance, our being angry with another, our affronting him, and judging evil concerning his spiritual state without good reason ; for the limitation added to the first member of the sentence must be understood throughout the whole. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not

kill ; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment : But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment :” by causeless anger he exposes himself to a degree of punishment in the life to come, which may fitly be represented by that which the judgment inflicts. “ And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, without a cause, shall be in danger of the council :” he who derides and affronts his brother causelessly, is liable to a degree of punishment which may be represented by that which the council used to inflict. “ But whosoever shall say, thou fool,” without a cause ; whosoever, judging uncharitably of his brother, shall call him a wicked wretch and an apostate, without cause, “ shall be in danger of hell-fire,” i. e. by a common figure of speech, “ obnoxious to the fire of the valley of Hinnom,” obnoxious to a degree of punishment which may fitly be represented by that fire. But because men are very apt to fall into rash anger, and to express their anger by contemptuous speeches and abusive names, fancying that there is no sin in these things, or but little, and that compensation may easily be made for them by acts of devotion ; Jesus declared that atonement was not to be made for these offences by any offerings, how costly soever, and, therefore, prescribed immediate repentance and reparation as the only remedies of them. He insisted particularly on reparation, assuring us, that unless it be made, God will not accept the worship of such offenders, being infinitely better pleased with repentance than with sacrifices, or external worship of any kind, how specious soever those duties may appear in the eye of vulgar understandings. Vain, therefore, is their presumption, who fancy they make amends for yet more gross acts of injustice by acts of devotion. “ Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother has aught against thee,” any just cause of complaint against thee ; “ leave there thy gift before the altar ;” do not lay aside thoughts of worshipping God because thou art not in a proper state, but prepare thyself for his worship without delay ; “ go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” This exhortation Jesus enforced, from the consideration of what is reckoned prudent in ordinary law-suits. In such cases, wise men always advise the party that has done the wrong, to make up matters with his adversary whilst it is in his power, lest the sentence of a judge, being interposed, fall heavy on him. For the same reason, we, who have offended our brother, ought to make it up with him whilst an opportunity of repentance is allowed us ; and that, though our quarrel should have proceeded to the greatest lengths, lest the sentence of the supreme judge overtake us, and put reconciliation out of our power for ever. “ Agree with thine adversary quickly, whilst thou art in the way with him, lest at any time

he deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing."

[Matt. v. 27.] "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery." To explain the opinion of the Jewish doctors in this matter, Lightfoot cites Trip. Targ. in marg. ad Exod. xx. by which it appears, that they were very loose moralists. In opposition to them, therefore, our Lord declared, "That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Whosoever cherishes unchaste desires and intentions, or, as it is expressed in the tenth precept, whosoever covets his neighbour's wife, is really guilty of adultery, though he never should find an opportunity of committing the act with her. For which cause, all such use of our senses as inflames the mind with lust, must be carefully avoided. "If thy right eye offend thee," i. e. cause thee to offend, "pluck it out and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." There is here an allusion to the practice of surgeons, who, when any member of the body happens to be mortified, cut it off, to prevent the sound part from being tainted. The meaning of the passage, stript of the metaphor, is this, Deny thyself, not by amputation of the members, but by force of a strong resolution of the use of thy senses, though ever so delightful, in all cases, where the use of them ensnares thy soul.

"It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement." The doctors of the school of Sammai affirmed, that, in the law, concerning divorce, [Deut. xxiv. 1.] the words, some uncleanness, were to be understood of adultery only; whereas, they of the school of Hillel interpreted them of any matter of dislike whatever. Hence the Pharisees asked Jesus, [Matt. xix. 3.] "if it was lawful to put away his wife for every cause?" From his answer to that question it appears, that the interpretation of the law of divorce given by the school of Hillel, and adopted by the Jews, as we learn from their practice and their writings, represented, in some measure, the meaning of the law. Nevertheless, by multiplying the causes of divorce far beyond the intention of their lawgiver, they took occasion, from the law, to give unbounded scope to their lusts. This abuse Jesus thought fit to reform by correcting the law itself. Accordingly, having his eye upon the original institution of marriage in paradise, and upon the laws of that relation then established, he assured his disciples, that he who divorces his wife for any of the causes allowed by the doctors, whoredom excepted, layeth her under a strong temptation to commit adultery, un-

just divorce being no divorce in the sight of God; and that, since such marriages still subsisted, he who marrieth the woman unjustly divorced committeth adultery also. "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, (fornication here, as elsewhere, is often used for adultery; in general, it denotes the exercise of all the different species of unlawful lusts,) "causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths." As to oaths, the doctors affirmed that they were obligatory, according to the nature of the thing by which a man swears. [Matt. xxiii. 16.] Hence they allowed the use of such oaths in common conversation, as they said were not obligatory, pretending that there was no harm in them, because the law which forbids them to forswear themselves, and enjoined them to perform their vows, meant such solemn oaths only as were of a binding nature. It is this detestable morality which Jesus condemned in the following words, "But I say unto you, swear not at all;" never swear by an oath, on the supposition that it does not bind you. For all oaths whatever, those by the lowest of the creatures not excepted, are obligatory, in regard, that if these oaths have any meaning at all, they are an appeal to the great Creator, consequently are oaths by him, implying a solemn invocation of his wrath on such of the creatures sworn by, as are capable of God's wrath; and, for the others, the oath implies a solemn imprecation, in case of your swearing falsely, that you may for ever be deprived of all the comfort or advantage you have in or hope from these creatures. Swear, therefore, "neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black." By comparing Matt. xxiii. 16, it appears, that our Lord is here giving a catalogue of oaths, which, in the opinion of the doctors, were not obligatory. His meaning, therefore, is, swear not at all in common conversation, nor on other occasions, unless you have a mind to perform; because every oath being really obligatory, he who, from an opinion that some are not, swears voluntarily, by heaven, by earth, or by Jerusalem, or by his own head, is, without all doubt, guilty of perjury. Much more is he guilty, who, when called thereto by lawful authority, swears with an intention to falsify. But, by no means does Jesus condemn swearing truly before a magistrate, or upon grave and solemn occasions: because that would have been to prohibit both the method of ending controversies, [Heb. vi. 16.] and an high act of religious worship; [Deut. vi. 13. Isa. lxx. 16.] an oath being

not only a solemn appeal to the divine omniscience, from which nothing can be hid, but a direct acknowledgment of God as the great patron and protector of right, and the avenger of falsehood. "But let your communication be, yea, yea, nay, nay: maintain such sincerity and truth in all your words as will merit the belief of your acquaintance; so that, in common conversation, to gain yourselves credit, you need do no more than barely assert or deny any matter, without invoking the name of God at all; "for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil," or, as it may be translated, cometh of the evil one. In common discourse, whatever is more than affirmation or negation ariseth from the temptation of the devil, who prompts men to curse and to swear, that he may lessen in them, and in all who hear them, that awful reverence of the divine Majesty, which is the grand support of society, and the soul of every virtue; and by this means, lead them, at length, to perjury, even in the most solemn instances, considerations which show the evil nature of sin in the strongest light.

With respect to men's resisting and revenging such injuries as are done them, Jesus assured his disciples, that although, for the preservation of society, Moses had ordained the judges to give eye for eye, and tooth for tooth, if the injured party demanded it; yet the doctors were greatly in the wrong, not only when they enjoined men to insist on retaliation as their duty, but declared it lawful, in many cases, for the injured party, at his own hand, to avenge himself, provided, in his revenge, he did not exceed the measure prescribed in the law. Christ's doctrine was, that a good man is so far from revenging private injuries, that oftentimes he does not even resist them, and always forgives them when they happen to be done to him; a generosity which he warmly recommended to his disciples. "Ye have heard that it hath been said" by the ancient doctors, "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," ought to be demanded: "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." To understand this passage aright we must take notice, that the Jews, under the sanction of the law of retaliation mentioned above, carried their resentments to the utmost length; and, by so doing, maintained infinite quarrels, to the great detriment of social life. This abuse of the law Jesus here detemned, by ordering men, under the gospel-dispensation, to proportion their resistance of injuries to their nature and importance. And, to direct them in this manner, he here puts five cases wherein christian meekness must especially show itself. I. When any one assaults our person, in resent-

ment of some affront, he imagines we have put upon him. 2. When any one sues us at the law, in order to take our goods from us. 3. When he attacks our natural liberty. 4. When one, who is poor, asks charity. 5. When a neighbour begs the loan of something from us. In all these cases our Lord forbids us to resist. Yet, from the examples which he mentions, it is plain that this forbearance and compliance is required only when we are slightly attacked, but by no means, when the assault is of a capital kind. For it would be unbecoming the wisdom which Jesus showed in other points, to suppose that he forbids us to defend ourselves against murderers, robbers, and oppressors, who would unjustly take away our life, our estate, or our liberty. Neither can it be thought that he commands us to give every idle fellow all he may think fit to ask, whether in charity or in loan. We are only to give what we can spare, and to such persons as, out of real necessity, seek relief from us. Nay, our Lord's own behaviour towards the man who, in presence of the council, smote him on the cheek, gives reason to think he did not mean that, in all cases, his disciples should be passive under the very injuries which he here speaks of. In some circumstances, smiting on the cheek, taking away one's coat, and the compelling him to go a mile, may be great injuries, and therefore are to be resisted. The first instance was judged so by Jesus himself, in the case mentioned: for, he had forborne to reprove the man who did it, his silence might have been interpreted as proceeding from a conviction of his having done evil, in giving the high-priest the answer for which he was smitten. Wherefore, it appears plain, that the expressions, of "smiting on the cheek," "taking away the coat," &c. are of the same kind with those, verse 19, viz. "the cutting off the right hand, and plucking out the right eye." They are all figurative, and denote something less than they literally import.

Admitting this explication as just, our Lord's rule has for its objects small injuries, which he represents by the strong, metaphorical expressions of smiting on the cheek, &c. because to men of keen passions, though they be in themselves small injuries, they are difficult to be borne. Under such slight injuries, therefore, our Lord orders his disciples to be passive, rather than resist them to the utmost. Viewed in this light this precept is liable to no objection, it being well known, that he who bears a slight affront consults his honour and interest much better than he who resists or resents it; because he shows a greatness of mind worthy of a man, and uses the best means for avoiding quarrels, which oftentimes are attended with the most fatal consequences. In like manner, he who yields a little of his right rather than he will go to law, is much wiser than the man who has recourse to public justice in every instance;

because, in the progress of a law-suit, such animosities may arise as are inconsistent with charity.

To conclude, benevolence, which is the glory of the divine, and the perfection of the human nature, rejoices in doing good. Hence, the man that is possessed of this god-like quality cheerfully embraces every occasion in his power of relieving the poor and distressed, whether by gift or loan. Some are of opinion that the precept concerning alms-giving and gratuitous lending, is subjoined to the instances of injuries which our Lord commands us to bear, to teach us, that if the persons who have injured us fall into want, we are not to withhold any act of charity from them on account of the evil they have formerly done us. Taken in this light the precept is generous and divine. Moreover, as liberality is a virtue nearly allied to the forgiveness of injuries, our Lord joined the two together to show that they should always go hand in hand. The reason is, revenge will blast the greatest liberality, and a covetous heart will show the most perfect patience to be a sordid meanness of spirit, proceeding from selfishness.

He proceeded, in the next place, to consider the doctrine of the Jewish teachers concerning benevolence. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy." The passage in the law referred to is Lev. xix. 18. "Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people; but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; I am the Lord." The clause, and hate thine enemy, is not in the law; but the doctors pretended that it was deducible from the first part of the precept, which seems to limit forgiveness to Israelites. Besides, they supported their own opinion by the tradition of the elders, and the precepts concerning the idolatrous nations. In opposition to this narrow spirit, our Lord commanded his hearers to show benevolence, according to their power, unto every individual of the human species, without respect to country or religion; benevolence even to their bitterest enemies. "But I say unto you, love your enemies;" that is, charitably and sincerely wish unto your enemies all manner of good, both temporal and spiritual: bless them that curse you; give them kind and friendly language who rail at or speak evil of you: "and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you:" besides doing all in your own power to advance their happiness, study, by your prayers, to engage God also to befriend and bless them. The particulars mentioned are, certainly, the highest expressions of enmity; for what can be worse than cursing, and calumny, and insults, and persecutions? yet we are commanded to love, and to bless, and do good to, and pray for, our enemies, even while they persist in their enmity against us. This may be thought contrary to the precept, [Luke xvii. 3.] where for-

giveness seems to be enjoined only on condition the injurious party repents; "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent, forgive him." But the difficulty will disappear when it is remembered, that, in the two passages, different persons and different duties are spoken of. In the sermon, the duty we owe to mankind in general, who injure us, is described; but in Luke we are told how we are to behave towards an offending brother, one with whom we are particularly connected, whether by the ties of blood or friendship. The forgiveness we owe to mankind is, in the sermon, said to consist in the inward affection of benevolence, civil language, good offices, such as we would have done to them had they never injured us, and hearty prayers; all which men may receive, even while they persist in their enmity. Whereas, the forgiveness due to a brother implies that he be restored to our friendship and affection, which he held before he offended. But, in order to this, his repentance is justly required; because, without a sense of his offence, and due evidence of his reformation, he is both unworthy and incapable of being restored.

This doctrine of loving our enemies so far as to do them good, Jesus enforced from the noblest of all considerations, that it renders men like God, who is good to the evil and unthankful. "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Being thus benevolent towards all, the bad as well as the good, ye shall be like God, and so prove yourselves his genuine offspring; for he maketh his sun common to them who worship, and them who contemn him; and lets his rain be useful both to the just and to the unjust, alluring the bad to repentance, and stirring up the good to thankfulness, by this universal and indiscriminate benignity of his providence. "For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? do not even the publicans so?" These are common things practised by people of the worst of characters, which, therefore, do not prove you to be of a virtuous disposition, but only endowed with the essential principles of human nature; so that ye merit no reward at all for doing them. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The perfection of the divine goodness is proposed to our imitation, as it is promiscuous, extending to the evil as well as the good, and not as it is absolutely universal and infinite; for, in this respect, the imitation of it is impossible.

Thus the doctrine and precepts of the disciples, the righteousness which they preached, was to excel the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. Our Lord spake next of the righteousness which the Jewish teachers practised, showing that his

disciples, especially such of them as were instructors of others, ought to excel them in that respect also. The particulars which he mentioned, though few, are of great importance, viz. alms-giving, prayer, fasting, heavenly-mindedness, candid judging, and self-reformation. He began with alms-giving, because, in the branch of his discourse preceding, he had exhorted them to beneficence toward their enemies, from the example of the divine goodness. [Matt. vi. 1.] "Take heed that ye do not your alms (your works of mercy) before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven." He does not forbid us to do works of charity publicly, for, on some occasions, that cannot be avoided: but to do them publicly, with a view to be seen of men, and to be applauded for them. "Therefore, when thou dost thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues, and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." The praises of men, which they are so fond of, is all the reward such hypocrites shall ever obtain. "But when thou dost alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth:" let not thy most intimate friend know what thou dost; perform these offices as privately as thou canst, and never speak of them afterwards, unless there be good reasons for making them known. "That thine alms may be in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly:" Perform works of charity from no other principle but a love of goodness, and a regard to the will of God, who looks on in secret, and will reward all thy good deeds openly, at the judgment. Thus, if thou be content to forego, at present, the applause of the few to whom thou art known, and who are not competent judges of true worth, it shall be abundantly compensated to thee hereafter, by the admiration and love of all the beings in the universe, who have any relish of virtue, or are capable to judge of it.

"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to stand in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward." Our Lord is here treating of private prayer, for which reason his rules must not be extended to public devotion. "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Perform thy private devotions without noise or show, by which it will appear that thou art influenced by a sense of duty. "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye, therefore, like unto them; for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." Your Father not only knows, but compassionates all your wants and weaknesses. Hence much

speaking in prayer, with a view to inform the Deity of our wants, or to persuade him to comply with our desires, is foolish and impious, because it casts a reflection both upon his omniscience and upon his infinite goodness. But it is far from being culpable when used with a view to excite in our minds a sense of the divine goodness, to affect us with sorrow for sin, and to beget, or cherish, in us a love of virtue; valuable ends, to which a decent length and variety in prayer may be very subservient.

“After this manner, therefore, pray ye:” The word *ye* is emphatical in opposition to the heathens, who used vain repetitions in their prayers. Christ’s meaning is not that his disciples are to use the words of this prayer in all their addresses to God; for in the Acts and Epistles, we find the apostles praying in terms different from this form: but his meaning is, that we are to frame our prayers according to this model, both in respect to matter, and manner, and style.

“Our Father which art in heaven.” If they are called fathers who beget children and bring them up, Almighty God has the best right to that title from every creature, and particularly from man; being the father of their spirits, [Heb. xii. 9.] the maker of their bodies, and the continual preserver of both. Nor is this all. He is our father in a yet higher sense, as he regenerates and restores his image upon our minds; so that, partaking of his nature, we become his children, and can, with holy boldness, name him by the title of that relation. In the former sense, God is the father of all his creatures, whether good or bad; but in the latter, is father only of such as are good. Of all the magnificent titles invented by philosophers or poets in honour of their gods, there is none that conveys so grand and so lovely an idea as this simple name of Father. Being used by mankind in general, it marks directly the essential character of the true God, namely, that he is the first cause of all things, or the author of their being; and, at the same time, conveys a strong idea of the tender love which he bears to his creatures, whom he nourishes with an affection, and protects with a watchfulness, infinitely superior to that of any earthly parent whatsoever. But the name *father*, besides teaching us that we owe our being to God, and pointing out his goodness and mercy in upholding us, expresses also his power to give us the things we ask, none of which can be more difficult than creation. Farther, we are taught to give the great God the title of Father, that our sense of the tender relation in which he stands to us may be confirmed, our faith in his power and goodness strengthened, our hope of obtaining what we ask in prayer cherished, and our desire of obeying and imitating him quickened; for natural reason teaches that it is disgraceful in children to degenerate from their parents, and that they cannot commit a greater crime than to disobey the just command-

ments of an indulgent father. To conclude, we are directed to call him our *Father*, in the plural number, and that even in secret prayer, to put us in mind that we are all brethren, the children of one common parent; and that we ought to love one another with pure hearts fervently, praying, not for ourselves only, but for others, that God would give them likewise "daily bread, and the forgiveness of sin, and deliverance from temptation." The words, "which art in heaven," do not confine God's presence to heaven, for he exists every where; but they contain a comprehensive, though short description of the divine greatness. They express God's majesty, dominion, and power; and distinguish him from those whom we call fathers on earth, and from false gods, who are not in heaven, the region of bliss and felicity, where God, who is essentially present through all the universe, gives more especial manifestations of his presence, to such of his creatures as he has exalted to share with him in his eternal felicity.

"Hallowed be thy name." The name of God is a Hebraism for God himself, his attributes, and his works. To sanctify a thing is to entertain the highest notion of it, as true, and great, and good; and, by our words and actions, to testify that belief. Thus it is used, I Pet. iii. 15; Isa. viii. 13. The meaning of the petition, therefore, is, May thy existence be universally believed, thy perfections loved and imitated, thy works admired, thy supremacy over all things acknowledged, thy providence revered and confided in! May we, and all men, so think of the divine Majesty, of all his attributes, and of his works; and may we and they so express our veneration of God, that his glory may be manifested every where, to the utter destruction of the worship of idols and devils! The phraseology of this and other prayers recorded by the inspired writers, wherein the worshippers address God in the singular number, by saying, *thou* and *thy* to him, is retained by christians with the highest propriety, as it intimateth their firm belief that there is but one God, and that there is nothing in the universe equal or second to him, and that no being whatever can share in the worship which they pay to him.

"Thy kingdom come." By the kingdom of God, whose coming we are directed to pray for, is to be understood the Messiah's kingdom, or the gospel dispensation; because, taken in any other sense, the petition will not be distinct from that which follows, namely, "Thy will be done," wherein our wishes, that the dominion of righteousness may be established in the hearts of men, are expressed.

"Give us this day our daily bread." Give us day by day food sufficient to sustain life, and strengthen us for serving God with cheerfulness and vigour. Wherefore, since we are not allowed to ask provision for rioting and luxury, but only the necessaries of life, and that not for many years, but from day

to day, the petition forbids anxious cares about futurity, and teaches us how moderate our desires of worldly things should be. And, whereas, not the poor only, whose industry all acknowledge, must be favoured by the concurrence of Providence to render it successful, but the rich are enjoined to pray for their bread, day by day; it is on account of the great instability of human affairs, which renders the possession of wealth absolutely precarious; and because, without the divine blessing, even the abundance of the rich is not of itself sufficient so much as to keep them alive, far less to make them happy.

“And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” The earth, and the fulness thereof, being the Lord’s, he has a right to govern the world, and to support his government, by punishing all who presume to transgress his laws. The suffering of punishment, therefore, is a debt which sinners owe to the divine justice; so that, when we ask God in prayer to forgive our debts, we beg that he would mercifully be pleased to remit the punishment of our sins, particularly the pains of hell; and that, laying aside his displeasure, he would graciously receive us into favour, and bless us with eternal life. The manner in which we are to ask forgiveness of our sins is remarkable, forgive us as we forgive. We must forgive others if we wish to be forgiven ourselves, and are allowed to crave from God only such forgiveness as we grant to others; so that if we do not pardon our enemies, we, in this petition, seriously and solemnly beg God to damn us eternally. For which reason, before men venture into the presence of Almighty God to worship, they ought to be well assured that their hearts are thoroughly purged from all rancour and malice.

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil; from the evil one,” the devil. Or the clause may be translated, And lead us not into temptation, but so as to deliver us from evil, either by removing the temptation itself when it proves too hard for us, or by mitigating its force, or by increasing our strength to resist it, as God shall see most for his glory. The correction of the translation proposed is built upon this argument, that to pray for an absolute freedom from all solicitation, or temptation to sin, is to seek deliverance from the common lot of humanity, which is absurd; because trials and temptations are wisely appointed by God for the exercise and improvement of virtue in good men, and that others may be encouraged by the constancy and patience which they show in afflictions. Hence, instead of praying to be absolutely delivered from them, we are taught to rejoice, when, by the divine appointment, “we fall into temptations.” This petition teaches us to preserve a sense of our own inability to repel and overcome the solicitations of the world, and of the necessity of assistance from above, both to regulate our passions, and to conquer the difficulties of a religious life.

“For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.” Because the government of the universe is thine for ever, and thou alone possessest the power of creating and upholding all things also, because the glory of infinite perfections remains eternally with thee; therefore all men ought to hallow thy name, submit themselves to thy government, and perform thy will; also, in a humble sense of their dependence, should seek from thee the supply of their wants, and pardon of their sins, and the kind protection of thy providence. But, because the forgiving of injuries is a duty contrary to the strongest passions in the human heart, and, at the same time, is highly proper for beings who need so much forgiveness from God, Jesus inculcated the necessity of it by assuring his hearers, that if they forgave they should be forgiven, whereas, if they did not forgive, there remained no pardon for them. “For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive you your trespasses.” From what our Lord says in verse 14, we are not to imagine that the forgiving of injuries alone will entitle us to pardon. Indeed, all negative declarations concerning the terms of salvation being, in their own nature, absolute, and without exception, he who does not forgive never shall be forgiven, as it is in the fifteenth verse. But affirmative declarations always imply this limitation, that no other essential of salvation be wanting; because the meaning of such declarations is no more than this, that the subject they affirm is one of the things necessary to salvation. Behold, then, the necessity of forgiving all kind of injuries, established by Jesus Christ himself, in opposition to the foolish opinions of the men of this world, who, associating the idea of cowardice with the greatest and most generous act of the human mind, the pardoning of injuries, have laboured to render it shameful and vile, to the utter disgrace of human reason and common sense.

Of fasting he said, “Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward.” Do not follow the example of the hypocrites, who, in order to show that they fast, veil themselves, or, it may be, disfigure their countenances, by sprinkling ashes on their heads. I assure you, persons of this character shall have no other reward but the esteem of those whom they deceive by such appearances. “But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, come abroad in thine ordinary dress; that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, which is in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.” That, desiring the approbation of God, and not the applause of men, thou mayest chiefly be solicitous to appear before God as one that fasteth; and God, who is ever with thee, and knoweth thy most secret

thoughts, shall openly bestow on thee the rewards of a true penitent, whose mortification, contrition, and humility, he can discern without the help of looks, or dress, or outward expressions of any kind. But it must be remembered, that our Lord is speaking here of private fasting, to which alone his directions are to be applied; for, when public sins are to be mourned over, it ought to be performed in a public manner.

Having thus spoken of fasting, he proceeded to consider heavenly-mindedness, which he inculcated with peculiar earnestness; because it was a virtue which the Jewish doctors were generally strangers to, but which he would have his disciples eminent for, [Mat. x. 9.] being an excellent ornament to the character of a teacher, and adding much weight to what he says. This virtue our Lord powerfully recommended, by showing the deformity of its opposite, covetousness, which has for its object things perishable. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." In the eastern countries, where the fashion of clothes did not alter, as with us, the treasures of the rich consisted not only of gold and silver, but of costly habits, and fine-wrought vessels of brass, and tin, and copper, liable to be destroyed in the manner here mentioned. [See Ezek. vi. 69. Job xxvii. 16. James v. 2, 3.] "But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal." Nothing can be conceived more powerful to damp that keenness with which men pursue the things of this life than the consideration of their emptiness, fragility, and uncertainty; or to kindle in them an ambition of obtaining the treasures in heaven, than the consideration of their being substantial, satisfying, liable to no accident whatever. These considerations, therefore, were fitly proposed by our Lord on this occasion. He next showed them that covetousness always leads a man astray, by corrupting the faculties of his mind. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also:" if your treasure is upon earth, your heart will be earthly and sensual; and, consequently, piety, resignation, and charity, will, in a great measure, be banished from you. "The light of the body is the eye: if, therefore, thine eye be single," simple, not mixed with blood and other noxious humours, but clear, and sound, "thy whole body shall be full of light:" every member of thy body shall be enlightened by the light of thine eye, and directed to perform its proper office. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness:" none of thy members shall be able to perform its office. "If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" If the organ of the body, whose office it is to supply light to every member, does itself occasion darkness, how great, how pernicious, is that darkness! Reason performs to the mind the office which the

eye does to the body. Therefore, as the body must be well enlightened if its eye is sound and good, or greatly darkened if it is spoiled with noxious humours, so the mind must be full of light if reason, its eye, is in a proper state, or full of darkness if it is perverted by covetousness and other worldly passions; but with this difference, that the darkness of the mind is infinitely worse than the darkness of the body, and attended with worse consequences, inasmuch as the actions of the mind are of far greater importance to happiness than those of the body.

In the third place, he assured them that it was as impossible for a man to be heavenly-minded and covetous at the same time, as it is for one to serve two masters. For, to make the most favourable supposition imaginable, though their commands should not be contrary, they must be, at least, different. And experience shows us that the faculties of the human mind are so limited, that the generality of mankind cannot mind two things at once with any tolerable degree of earnestness. By this means it must always happen, that he who serves two masters will attach himself either to the one or to the other; and, therefore, while he employs himself in the service of the one, he must, of course, neglect the interest of the other. "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

Lastly, he insinuated that all the arguments by which covetousness is usually justified, or palliated, are entirely overthrown by considering the power, perfection, and extent, of the providence of God. This grand subject he handled in a manner suitable to its dignity, by proposing a few simple and obvious instances, wherein the provision that God has made for the least and weakest of his creatures shines forth illustriously, and forces on the mind the strongest conviction of that wise and fatherly care which the Deity takes of all the works of his hands. From what they were at that instant beholding, the birds of the air, the lilies, the grass of the field, he led even the most illiterate of his hearers to form a more elevated and extensive notion of the divine government than the philosophers attained to, who, though they allowed, in general, that the world was ruled by God, had but confused conceptions of his providence, which many of them denied to respect every individual creature and action. He taught them, that the great Father Almighty has every single being in his hand and keeping, that there is nothing exposed to fortune, but that all things are absolutely subjected to his will. This notion of providence affords a solid foundation for supporting that rational trust in God which is the highest and best act of the human mind, and furnishes us, at all times, with the strongest motives to virtue.

"Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, nor yet, for your

body, what ye shall put on." The thought for our life, our food, and our raiment, which Christ forbids us to take, is not that which prudent men use in providing sustenance for themselves and friends; for, in other passages of scripture, diligence in business is inculcated, that men, instead of being useless loads on the earth, may, at all times, have it in their power to discharge the several duties of life with decency. [Tit. iii. 14.] But it is such an anxious care as arises from want of faith, that is, from improper conceptions of God's perfections, and wrong notions of his providence; and therefore such an anxious solicitude as engages all the desires, engrosses all the thoughts, and demands the whole force of the soul, to the utter exclusion of spiritual affections and pursuits. "Is not the life more," or a greater blessing, "than meat, and the body than raiment?" And will not he who has given us the greater blessing give the lesser also? "Behold the fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." Why are ye anxious about food? look to the fowls of the air that now fly round you! Without foreseeing their own wants, or making provision for them, they are preserved and nourished by the unwearied benignity of the divine providence. "Are ye not much better than they?" Are ye not beings of a nobler order, and destined for a higher end than they, and, therefore, more the objects of the divine care? Moreover, "Which of you, by taking thought, can add one cubit unto his stature? By all the pains you can possibly take, you may not prolong your lives one moment beyond the period assigned in the divine decree.

"And why take ye thought for raiment? consider the lilies of the field, how they grow! they toil not, neither do they spin." By the lilies of the field our Lord understood the flowers of the meadows in general; for, in the following verse, he calls them "the grass of the field." He mentions the flowers, because they are made not so much for use as for beauty, in which light his argument is the stronger. "And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these." Solomon, when in the height of his prosperity, and dressed in his most magnificent apparel, was but poorly arrayed in comparison of the flowers of the field, whose beautiful forms, lively colours, and fragrant smells, far exceed the most perfect productions of art. He mentions Solomon rather than any other prince, because, in wealth, and power, and wisdom, which are the instruments of magnificence and splendour, he excelled all the kings that had been before him, or were to come after him.

"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? If an inanimate thing, so trifling in its nature, and uncertain in its duration, is

thus beautifully adorned, will not God take care to clothe you who are more valuable, as ye are men, endowed with reason, but, especially, as ye are my servants and friends? He calls them who distrust the providence of God men of little faith; yet it does not follow from hence that it is an exercise of faith to sit with our arms folded, expecting support from the divine providence without any action of our own: but, after having done what prudence directs for providing the necessaries of life, we ought to trust in God, believing that he will make our labours effectual by his blessing. "Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or wherewithal shall we be clothed? (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek.)" It was the general character of the heathens that they prayed to their gods, and laboured themselves for no blessings but the temporal ones here mentioned, as is plain from the tenth satire of Juvenal; and that, because they were, in a great measure, ignorant of God's goodness, had erred fundamentally in their notions of religion, and had no certain hope of a future state. "For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." In no part of this discourse does Jesus call God the father of the fowls; but he calls him our Father, to make us sensible that men stand in a much nearer relation to God than the brute creation does, and, consequently, that we may justly expect much greater expressions of his love.

Farther, there is a noble antithesis in this passage. Christ sets God's knowledge of our wants in opposition to the anxiety of the heathens about having them supplied, to intimate that the one is much more effectual, for that purpose, than the other. "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Let it be your chief aim to obtain the happiness of the life to come; and, in order thereto, make it your principal care to acquire that universal goodness which God possesses, which he sets you a pattern of, which he has declared he will accept, and which is necessary to your enjoyment of him in heaven: for these are objects far more worthy of your attention than the perishing goods of this life. Besides, if you seek the kingdom of God first and principally, all things pertaining to this life shall, in the course of the divine providence, be bestowed on you as far as they contribute to your real welfare, and more you would not desire.

"Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow." In the Hebrew idiom to-morrow signifies futurity. Thus the word is used Gen. xxx. 33. Since the extent and efficacy of the divine providence is so great, and since you are the objects of its peculiar care, you need not vex yourselves about futurity; "for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself;" or rather, according to the Hebrew idiom, "shall make you take

thought for the things of itself," viz. in a proper time, it being sufficient that you provide the necessaries of life for yourselves as they are wanted. Besides, "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Every time has abundant necessary troubles of its own; so that it is foolish to increase present distresses by anticipating those that are to come, especially as, by that anticipation, it is not in your power to prevent any future evil.

Having thus condemned covetousness, Jesus proceeded in his discourse, and forbade all rash and unfavourable judgments, whether of the characters of others in general, or of their actions in particular. [Matt. vii. 1.] "Judge not, that ye be not judged." Be not censorious, lest you make both God and man your enemies. Luke, in the parallel passage, [vi. 37.] adds, "condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned." From this it is plain, that the judging which Jesus reproves in the present passage comprehends, not only that restless curiosity of prying into the character and actions of others, which is so prevalent among men, but that proneness to condemn them upon the most superficial inquiry, which men discover always in proportion to their own wickedness. Accordingly, it is added, "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." If you judge charitably, making proper allowances for the frailties of your brethren, and are ready to pity and pardon their faults, God and man will deal with you in the same kind manner. But if you always put the worst construction on every thing that it will bear, and are not touched with a feeling of your brother's infirmities, and show no mercy in the opinions you form of his character and actions, no mercy will be showed to you from any quarter; God will treat you as you deserve, in the just judgment he shall pass upon your actions, and the world will be sure to retaliate the injury. Our Lord does not forbid judging in general, but rash and uncharitable judging of such actions and characters as can easily admit of a favourable interpretation. Last of all he pressed self-reformation upon them, as absolutely necessary in those whose office it is to reprove and reform others. "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?" Nothing can be more unreasonable than to observe and condemn the faults of your brethren, while you yourselves are guilty of the same. Or, though you should be free from them, to remonstrate against them is absurd if you are contaminated with worse pollutions. "Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?" With what countenance can you undertake to reprove others, while you are guilty of much greater faults yourselves, and neither are sensible of them, nor have the integrity to mend them. "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see

clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye." As by the eye we judge of things relating to the body, so by the understanding we judge of things pertaining to the soul. You may, therefore, lay down this as fixed and certain, that the more exalted your own virtue is, the better will you be able to judge of your brother's faults, and the better qualified both in point of skill and authority to reclaim him. Your judgment of his character and actions will be so much the more charitable, and, for that reason, so much the more just; your rebukes will be so much the more mild, prudent, and winning; and your authority to press a reformation upon him so much the more weighty. How happy would the world be if all who teach the christian religion would conscientiously observe the precept given them here by their Master!

These are the several branches of the righteousness which the reformers of mankind ought to practise; yet, to render their labours successful, there must be in mankind a willingness to receive instruction; if that is wanting, it is needless to attempt reclaiming them. Wherefore, our Lord added, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you." Do not reprove persons of a snarling or sottish disposition, because the effect, which advice has upon such, is generally bad. They will be provoked by it to do you a mischief, or, at least, will despise both you and your admonition. Persons of this kind will not be instructed, far less will they receive a direct rebuke. You may warn others against them, you may weep over them, and you may pray for them; but you cannot reprove them with success and safety; for which cause they are, by all means, to be avoided.

But lest the disciples should have imagined that his precepts were above the reach of human attainment, he directed them to seek from God the aids of his spirit, with all the other blessings necessary to their salvation. "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Withal he encouraged them to pray for these things with earnestness and perseverance, from the consideration of the divine goodness, the blessed operations of which attribute, he illustrateth by what proceedeth from the feeble goodness of men. "For every one that asketh, (viz. from God,) receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." "Or what man is there of you, whom, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?" Will he deny him the necessary food that he asks, or give him, in its stead, something useless or hurtful? The words, "which of you," are emphatical, giving great strength to our Lord's argument. If, said he, the wicked wretches among yourselves, the most peevish, weak, and ill-natured of you all, will readily give good gifts to your children

when they cry for them, how much rather will the great God, infinite in goodness, bestow blessings on his children, who endeavour to resemble him in his perfections, and, for that end, ask the assistance of his Holy Spirit! "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things [Luke xi. 13, the Holy Spirit] to them that ask him?" And, because he was referring them to what passed within themselves, he took occasion to ingraft upon those feelings the noblest precept of morality that ever was delivered by any teacher. "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Look inward, and consider what sentiment the doing or not doing to others the things about which you deliberate would raise in you towards them, were you in their situation, and they in yours: think seriously what you would, in these circumstances, approve of as just and equitable, and what you would think yourselves entitled to demand. Consult, I say, with your own hearts; and, on all occasions, do to others as you would be done to. This rule has a peculiar advantage above all other rules of morality whatever. For, by making the selfish passions operate in behalf of others, it altogether changes the influence of their suggestions: and so these passions, instead of prejudicing us, and rendering us blind to the rights and interests of others, become so many powerful advocates in their favour. Our self-love thus changes its object for a little, and presents to our view every humane sentiment that can be urged in behalf of our neighbour. Properly speaking, therefore, this is not so much a rule of action as a method, both of preparing our understandings for the impartial discernment, and of disposing our hearts unto the sincere approbation of what is just and honourable in life. "For this is the law and the prophets." This is the voice both of the law and of the prophets; it is the sum and substance of the moral precepts contained in them.

Having thus spoken, he exhorted them, in a humble dependence on the assistance of the Spirit, to strive to enter in at the strait gate, that is, vigorously to attempt the work of religion, how difficult soever it may appear. "Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." As if he had said, vice, it is true, though nearly allied to destruction, is adorned with many false beauties, promises much, and has numberless votaries; whilst an austere and mortified course of life, though the safest, looks stern, and invites but few. Nevertheless, in your choice of the way to happiness, you are to consider, not how much pleasure it is attended with, but how certainly it will bring you to your desired end; neither are

you to regard the numbers, but the manners of them you would accompany.

But because the difficulties of religion are oftentimes greatly increased by false teachers, who, under pretence of conducting men in the road to happiness, lead the simple astray ; our Lord cautioned his disciples to beware of them, and proposed marks to know them by. " Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." False teachers will come to you with a mortified air, pale countenances, emaciated bodies, and mean clothing. They will pray loud and long, bestow largely on the poor, and seem earnest to give the people right instruction ; in a word, they will assume the most specious appearance of humility, piety, and innocence. So disfigured, and so disguised, you may be apt to take them for sheep, persons very innocent and useful ; while, in reality, they are ravening, though concealed, wolves, whose intention is to tear the flock in pieces, that they may gorge themselves with their carcasses. But ye shall know them by the nature and tendency of their doctrine, and by the more secret actions of their lives, better than by those showy qualities, whose value depend entirely on the right application of them. Accordingly, if you look more narrowly at this sort of teachers, you shall discern them to be wolves ; for you will find them to be immensely proud, revengeful, pleasers of themselves ; sometimes, also, addicted to their belly, and always, at the conclusion, much more employed in doing their own work than God's. " Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles ? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit ; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore, by their fruits ye shall know them." Remember to judge of teachers by the nature and tendency of their doctrine, rather than by the more public actions of their lives ; for even some of those whom I have commissioned to teach, and enabled to work miracles, shall, by the wickedness of their lives, fall under condemnation.

" Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doth the will of my Father, which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name ?" We preached by virtue and authority from thee, " and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name have done many wonderful works." Bad men, on some occasions, have, in the wisdom of providence, been commissioned by God to signify his pleasure, and have been furnished with powers to prove their mission ; witness Judas Iscariot, who was admitted into

the college of apostles by our Lord himself. Prophesying, ejection of devils, and other miracles, are mentioned, to show that no gift, endowment, or accomplishment whatsoever, without faith and holiness, will avail to our acceptance with God ; a caution very proper in those days, when the gifts of the Spirit were to be bestowed, in such plenty, on them who made profession of Christianity. He added, "And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me ye that work iniquity." Though I called you to be my servants, and you professed yourselves such, I never knew you to be such, nor approved of you. I knew, indeed, that you were the slaves of other masters, mammon, your own belly, and ambition ; wherefore, as your lives have been contrary both to my precepts and your own profession, begone ; I will have nothing to do with you. That this is the true meaning of the expression, I never knew you, will appear, if the appellation, Lord, Lord, wherewith these wicked men addressed the judge, is attended to ; for, in this connection, it is as if they had said, Master, dost thou not know thine own servants ? Did not we preach by thy authority, and by thy power foretell future events, and cast out devils, and work many miracles ?

Because Jesus had now spoken a great deal, he concluded his discourse with the parable of the houses built on different foundations. "Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand : and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it." In calm, serene weather any edifice will stand : but it is the wintry blasts that try the strength of a structure. The wise man, foreseeing these, provides against them by building his house upon a rock, where it stands immovable in the midst of hurricanes. But the fool, not thinking of winter, is so charmed with the beauty of a particular situation, that, without considering, he builds his house there, even though it be a hillock of loose sand. The winter comes, heavy showers of rain fall, an impetuous torrent, from a neighbouring mountain, rushes by, and saps the foundation of his building. The storms beat upon it, the house shakes, it totters, it falls with a terrible noise, and makes the whole circumjacent plain to resound. He who hears my precepts, and puts them in practice, may be compared to the wise man, that built his house upon a rock. He provides for himself a place of shelter and accommodation that will subsist in the wreck of the world. On the other hand, he who hears my precepts,

and does them not, may be compared to the fool who built his house upon the sand. The edifice which he has reared for his future accommodation being built upon a bad foundation, will quickly fall. By this parable, therefore, our Lord has taught us, that the bare knowledge of true religion, or the simple hearing of the divinest lessons of morality that ever were delivered by men, nay, the belief of these instructions, if possible, without the practice of them, is of no importance at all. It is doing of the precepts of religion alone which can establish a man so stedfastly that he shall neither be shaken with the temptations, afflictions, and persecutions of the present life, nor by the terrors of the future. Whereas, whosoever heareth and doth them not, will be overwhelmed and oppressed by the storms of both worlds; oppressed in this life, and utterly overwhelmed in that which is to come.

“ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” The words of Christ made a wonderful impression on the minds of his auditors, who never had heard the like before. They began to relish the holy sweetness of truth, and were astonished at the freedom and boldness with which he spake. For he taught them as one having authority immediately from God, and, consequently, did not teach them as the scribes, whose lectures, for the most part, were absolutely trifling, being drawn from traditions, from the comments of other doctors, which these ignorant and corrupt teachers substituted in the place of scripture, reason, and truth.

CHAPTER VI.

From the Sermon on the Mount to the first mission of the Apostles.

The cure of the leper—the centurion’s servant or son—the demoniac in the synagogue of Capernaum—Peter’s wife’s mother—the miraculous draught of fishes—Christ stills a storm—cures the demoniacs of Gadara—herd of swine perish—returns to Capernaum—the paralytic borne by four—calls Levi, or Matthew—whether they were the same—heals the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda—vindicates his disciples for rubbing the ears of corn—recovers the man with a withered hand—retires from the persecution of his enemies—chooses the apostles—their names and characters.

WE are now arrived at a part of the history of Jesus which has much exercised the abilities of critics and composers of Harmonies. We do not, therefore, wish to be considered as

affirming, in every instance, the order in which the facts, here recorded, succeeded each other; but have arranged them according to the most probable opinion we have been able, after a careful examination, to form. It is, however, with great satisfaction we observe, that though it appears, in many instances, impossible to compose a perfect harmony of the four evangelists; yet, if their expressions be candidly compared, they will not be found to contradict each other, or to make any other variations than might be expected from faithful witnesses, who had not consulted together upon the precise manner of delivering their evidence.

Immediately after the sermon upon the mount there was performed the cure of the leper, mentioned by Matthew in the eighth chapter of his gospel. We shall give the story in the translation of Dr. Campbell, and afterwards subjoin a few explanatory remarks.

Being come down from the mountain, followed by a great multitude, a leper came, who, prostrating himself before him, said, Sir, if thou wilt, thou canst cleanse me. Jesus stretched out his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou cleansed. Immediately he was cured of his leprosy. Then Jesus said to him, See thou tell nobody; but go, show thyself to the priest, and make the oblation prescribed by Moses for notifying (the cure) to the people.

I. It is remarkable that, in many instances, as Dr. Macknight justly observes, our Lord was at the greatest pains to conceal his miracles. Perhaps he did not intend that he should be universally believed on during his own life-time. He was, indeed, to fulfil the whole prophetic characters of the Messiah; that when the time appointed for erecting his kingdom came, the foundation, on which it was to rest, might want nothing of the strength and solidity that was necessary to support so great a fabric as the faith of the world. But all those prophetic characters of the Messiah, Jesus fulfilled and appropriated to himself; when in his own life-time, he proved his mission from God by miracles, communicated the knowledge of divine things to a competent number of disciples, in order to their propagating it through the world; and, in the conclusion, by his sufferings and death, not only confirmed his doctrine, but made atonement for the sins of men.

The wisdom of this plan was worthy of its author. For, had our Lord, during his ministry, proposed to convert great numbers of the Jews, he might, no doubt, have done it with as much success as after his ascension. But then the consequences would have been inconvenient in two respects. First, Had the Jews become universally Christ's followers, they would have endeavoured to make him a king; by which means, one main end of his coming must have been defeated, his dying an atonement for sin, and the christian religion have been deprived of

the evidence which it derives from the greatest of all his miracles, his resurrection from the dead. Second, This general good reception given to Jesus by his countrymen might have made the Gentiles reject him, supposing it was a contrivance to support the sinking credit of the nation. On the other hand, if it should be said that our Lord would not have convinced more than he did, though he had attempted it, this consequence, at least, must have followed from the attempt. Herod in Galilee, or the governor in Judea, provoked at him for affecting popularity, would have cut him off. Or, though they had despised him, and let him alone, the haughty priests would certainly have destroyed him before his time. We are warranted to say this by what happened toward the conclusion of his ministry, when he went into Judea, taught in the temple, and wrought his miracles publicly before the world. They pursued him so hotly, that though he was innocent of every crime, they constrained the governor to condemn him, and execute upon him the punishment of the vilest malefactor. But it was necessary that Jesus should perform many miracles for the confirmation of his mission, and preach many sermons in order to prepare his disciples for their future work; he was obliged, at least in the beginning of his ministry, to keep himself as private as the nature of his work would admit. And this he supposes was one of the reasons that induced him to spend so large a share of his public life in Galilee, and the other countries around the lake.

But farther, our Lord kept himself private, that he might not be too much incommoded by the crowds. For, though he used every prudent method to prevent it, he was often hurried to such a degree that he had not leisure to take his necessary meals, far less leisure for instructing his disciples. [Mark. i. 45; iii. 20; vi. 31.] To conclude: besides these general reasons, there may oft-times have been particular circumstances which made it fit to conceal the miracle, on occasion of which the caution was given. We know there was a reason of this kind attending the miracle under consideration. Jesus intended that the priests should pass judgment on the cure of the leper, before they knew how it had been brought about; because, had they known this, it is more than probable, that, in order to destroy the credit of the miracle, they would have refused to pronounce the man clean.

2. The same able writer observes, that it has been generally thought that this is the leper whose cure is recorded, Mark i. 40; Luke v. 12. But the cures, in his opinion, are different. That was performed in a city, this in the fields. Having cleansed the leper here mentioned, Jesus entered into Capernaum, and cured the centurion's son that was sick. Whereas, the other leper having published the miracle, Jesus could not, at least in the day time, go into the town, but was obliged to remain with-

out, in desert places, to shun the crowd. It must be acknowledged, indeed, that there are some things similar in the two cures; for instance, both the lepers say to Christ, "If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But it was so natural to address their desires unto the Son of God in this form, by which, also, they expressed their belief in his power, that it is rather matter of wonder we do not find it more frequently made use of. We have a parallel example, Matt. ix. 27; Luke xviii. 38; whose different blind men, at different times, desiring cures, make use of the same form of address, "Son of David, have mercy on us." Farther, there is the same command given to the lepers, to go show themselves to the priest. But this command must have been repeated, not twice, but twenty times, on the supposition that Jesus cleansed lepers so often. Accordingly, we find him repeating it to the lepers whom he cleansed at one time, in Samaria. [Luke xvii. 14.] As for the circumstance of bidding the cured person tell no man what had happened, it occurs almost in every miracle performed by Christ during the two first years of his ministry.

But however convincing these arguments may appear to the learned commentator, they have not been able to obtain our consent to his opinion; for we still think it probable that it was the same miracle, which might be performed within the precincts of Capernaum, and might be the cause, though a little remote, of our Lord's leaving that city, and retiring into the desert.

3. Dr. Campbell vindicates his translation of the last verse by the following note. Both the sense and the connexion show that the *them* here means the people. It could not be the priests, for it was only one priest (to wit, the priest then entrusted with that business) to whom he was commanded to go. Besides, the oblation could not serve as an evidence to the priest. On the contrary, it was necessary that he should have ocular evidence, by an accurate inspection in private, before the man was admitted into the temple, and allowed to make the oblation: but his obtaining this permission, and the solemn ceremony consequent upon it, was the public testimony of the priest, the only legal judge, to the people that the man's uncleanness was removed. This was a matter of the utmost consequence to the man, and of some consequence to them. Till such testimony was given, he lived in a most uncomfortable seclusion from society. No man durst, under pain of being also secluded, admit him into his house, eat with him, or so much as touch him. The antecedent, therefore, to the pronoun *them*, though not expressed, is easily supplied by the sense. To me it is equally clear, that the only thing meant to be attested by the oblation was the cure. The suppositions of some commentators on this subject are quite extravagant. Nothing can be more evident than that the person now cleansed was not

permitted to give any testimony to the priest, or to any other, concerning the manner of his cure, or the person by whom it had been performed. See thou tell nobody. The prohibition is expressed, by the evangelist Mark, in still stronger terms. Prohibitions of this kind were often transgressed by those who received them; but that is not a good reason for representing our Lord as giving contradictory orders.

When the leper was dismissed, Jesus proceeded to Capernaum, and, as he was entering the town, a Roman centurion, in Herod's pay, met and told him of the grievous distress that a young person, belonging to him, was in, by reason of a palsy which he laboured under. [Matt. viii. 5.] "And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him, and saying, Lord, my servant, (or, as others render it, my son,) lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented." Jesus kindly replied, that he would come and heal him. The centurion answered, that he did not mean he should take the trouble of going to his house, being a Gentile, but only that he would be so good as to command this young man's cure, though at a distance; for he knew his power was equal to that effect, diseases and devils, of all kinds, being as much subject to his command as his soldiers were to him. If I, says he, who am but an inferior officer, can make the soldiers under my command, and the servants in my house, go whither I please, and do what I please, merely by speaking to them; much more canst thou make diseases go or come at thy word, seeing they are all absolutely subject to thee. "When Jesus heard it, he marvelled." Our Lord's marvelling on this occasion, by no means implies that he was ignorant, either of the centurion's faith, or of the grounds on which it was built. He knew all fully before the man spake one word; but he was struck with admiration at the noble notion which this heathen Roman captain had conceived of his power; the passion of admiration being excited by the greatness and beauty of any object, as well as by its novelty and unexpectedness. Jesus expressed his admiration of the centurion's faith, in the praises which he bestowed on it, with a view to make it the more conspicuous; for he declared publicly, that he had not met with any one, among the Jews, who possessed such just and elevated conceptions of the power by which he acted, notwithstanding they enjoyed the benefit of a divine revelation, directing them to believe on him. Some of the heathens, indeed, formed very grand ideas of the divine power; but the excellency and peculiarity of the centurion's faith consisted in his applying this sublime idea to Jesus, who, by outward appearance, was only a man. His faith seems to have taken its rise from the miraculous cure that was performed some time before this, on a nobleman's son in Capernaum; for, as the centurion dwelt there, he might know that, at the time of the cure, Jesus was not in

Capernaum, but in Cana, at the distance of a day's journey from the sick person, when he performed it. From this exalted pitch of faith, found in a heathen, Jesus took occasion to declare the merciful purpose which God entertained towards all the Gentiles, namely, that he would accept their faith as readily as the faith of the Jews, and set them down with the founders of the Jewish nation, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in heaven; while the children of the kingdom, i. e. such of the professed people of God as came short of the faith of the patriarchs, should be shut out for ever. "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." This passage, Dr. Gill remarks, shows, that the faith of Old and New Testament saints, Jews and Gentiles, is the same; their blessings the same, and so their eternal happiness; they have the same God and Father; the same Mediator and Redeemer; are actuated and influenced by the same Spirit; partake of the same grace; and shall share the same glory. The allusion is to sitting, or, rather, lying along, which was the posture of the ancients at meals, and is here expressed, at a table, at a meal, or feast: and, under the metaphor of a feast, or plentiful table, to sit down to, are represented the blessings of the gospel, and the joys of heaven, which are not restrained to any particular nation or set of people; not to the Jews, to the exclusion of the Gentiles. Our Lord, here, goes directly contrary to the notions and practices of the Jews, who thought it a crime to sit down at table, and eat with the Gentiles; [see Acts xi. 3.] and yet Gentiles shall sit at table, and eat with the principal men, the heads of their nation in the kingdom of heaven, and they themselves, at the same time, be shut out. "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The allusion in the text, as the last quoted learned writer remarks, is to the customs of the ancients, in their feasts and entertainments, which were commonly made in the evening; when the hall, or dining-room, in which they sat down, was very much illuminated with lamps and torches, but without, in the streets, was entire darkness; and where nothing was heard but the cries of the poor, for something to be given them, and of the persons that were turned out as unworthy guests; and the gnashing of their teeth, either with cold in winter nights, or with indignation at their being kept out. This miracle is commonly supposed to be the same which is recorded in the seventh of Luke, but Dr. Macknight has given pretty good reasons for a contrary opinion.

On the sabbath following Jesus taught in the synagogue of Capernaum, where he performed a miracle of healing on one of the congregation, who, being possessed by an evil spirit, was afflicted with a falling sickness. It is remarkable, that, in all

cures of this distemper which our Lord performed, matters were so ordered, that the person to be cured was seized with it at the time of the cure, and raised from the stupor of the fit to perfect health in an instant. Thus, the reality and greatness, both of the distemper and the cure, were fully proved, to the conviction of every spectator. [Mark i. 27, 28.] "And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned (Luke, spake) among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine is this? (Luke, what word is this? i. e. how powerful is this man's word or command!) for with authority (Luke, with authority and power) commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him. (Luke, they come out.) And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee. (Luke, the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.)"

From the synagogue Jesus went home to Peter's house, and cured his wife's mother, who was ill of a fever. [Luke iv. 38.] "And he arose out of the synagogue. [Mark i. 29—31.] And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John. (Luke, Simon's house.) But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever, and anon they tell him of her. And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up, (Luke, he stood over her, and rebuked the fever,) and immediately the fever left her." Her cure was effected in an instant; and not slowly, like the cures produced in the course of nature, or by medicine. For the length and violence of her distemper had brought her into a weak and languid state; her full strength returned all at once, insomuch, that, rising up immediately, she prepared a supper for them, and served them while at meat, showing that she was restored to perfect health.

The news of this miracle being spread through the town, those who had sick relations or friends resolved to apply to Jesus for a cure. Only, because it was the sabbath, they did not come immediately to him. They waited till the holy rest was ended, which, according to the Jewish form of the day, was at sun-setting, and then they brought the sick, in great numbers, to him, fully persuaded that he would heal them. The persons who attended the sick, or who brought them to be cured, together with the towns-people, whose curiosity and admiration was excited by the reports which were immediately spread abroad of the two miracles that day performed, made such a crowd at the door of Peter's house, that it looked as if all the city had been gathered together. However, what drew Christ's attention was the diseased and the possessed. The sight of so many of the human kind in distress moved him; he took pity on them, and cured them all. [Luke iv. 40, 41.] "And he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them. And devils, also, came out of many, crying out and

saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God. And he, rebuking them, suffered them not to speak, for they knew that he was Christ. [Matt. viii. 16.] And he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick." By assuming the human nature, with its infirmities and diseases, as well as by his sufferings, he made atonement for sin, and freed men from the punishment of it, both temporal and eternal. In this, he now gave the clearest proof in his miracles, healing, with sovereign authority, all diseases, originally inflicted on men as the temporal punishment of sin. Hence, the curing of these diseases is called by Christ himself, the forgiving of sin. [Matt. ix. 2.] Christ's miracles augmenting his fame exceedingly, the crowds that were drawn together in Capernaum began to be troublesome. He, therefore, rising early in the morning, retired to a solitary place, for the purposes of prayer and meditation; but the inhabitants of Capernaum, unwilling to lose the presence of so great a prophet, followed him thither, and begged that their town might always enjoy the favour of his presence. He informed them, however, that this was impossible, as it was necessary to the fulfilment of his mission that he should preach in other parts of the country; and, conformably to this declaration, he visited the next towns, taught in their synagogues, and delivered such as had been oppressed by infernal spirits.

After Jesus returned home, his four disciples betook themselves, as usually, to their ordinary occupations; for, in the following passage of the history, we find them washing their nets, after having fished with them in the lake. But, though they thus minded their worldly affairs, they did not neglect attending on the public instructions which their Master gave, from time to time, in their city.

It seems, the sermons which Jesus preached in the last tour had made a great impression on the people; for they either accompanied him to Capernaum, or went thither soon after his return, in expectation of hearing him. This disposition he would not discourage, and therefore he went out to the lake and taught them, standing upon the shore. But the crowd growing continually greater, they pressed upon him to such a degree, that he could not continue his discourse. He, therefore, went into Simon's boat, and preached the word to them as they stood round upon the shore. The subject of his discourse at this time is not mentioned by the evangelist: he introduces the transaction only because it was followed by an extraordinary miracle, which he was going to relate. For Jesus, having finished his sermon, and dismissed the people, desired Simon, who was the owner of the boat, and his own disciple, to launch forth, and let down his net for a draught, intending, by the multitude of fishes which he would make him catch, to show him the success of his future preaching, even in cases when little success was to be expected. And now the net was

no sooner let down, than such a shoal of fishes ran into it, that it was in danger of breaking. When they inclosed this great multitude of fishes, they were, it seems, not far from the shore; for they beckoned to their companions, who belonged to the other boat, to come and assist them. So great a draught of fishes had never been seen in the lake before. Wherefore, it could not miss being acknowledged plainly miraculous by all the fishermen present; especially, as they had toiled in that very place, to no purpose, the whole preceding night, a season much more favourable than the day-time for catching fish in such clear waters. Peter, in particular, was so struck with the thing, that he could not forbear expressing his astonishment in the most lively manner, both by words and gestures. [Luke v. 8.] "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees," who was in the boat with them, "saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken." Peter's words, on this occasion, may be variously interpreted. For we may suppose that, conscious of his iniquity, he was afraid to be in Christ's company, lest some infirmity or offence might have exposed him to more than ordinary chastisements [compare Judges vi. 22. xiii. 22.]: or, it being an opinion of the Jews that the visits of prophets were attended with chastisements from heaven, [1 Kings xvii. 18.] he might be struck with a panic when he observed this proof of Christ's power. Or he may have said to his Master, Depart, because he was not able to show him the respect he deserved, and was not worthy to be in his company. In this latter sense Peter's words were full of reverence and humility, being not unlike the centurion's speech, so highly applauded by Jesus himself, "I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof." Though Peter was the only person who spake on this occasion, the rest were not unaffected. It seems, they all thought this a more notable miracle than the cures which he had performed on the sick. "And so was also James and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said, Simon, fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men." The fishes were brought together on this occasion, by the power of Christ, to show Peter and his companions that from thenceforth they were to be employed in a more noble business; they were to catch men, that is, by the power of their doctrine were to draw them out of the gulph of ignorance, wickedness, and misery, in which they were immersed. Doubtless, before this, the disciples entertained an high idea of their master, as they believed him to be Messiah. But the miracle of the fishes was such a striking demonstration of his power, that they became absolutely devoted to his will; and, in the greatness of their admiration, followed him, neglecting their booty. This seems to have been the evangelist's meaning in the eleventh verse,

where he tells us that, "(And) when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him."

A little after that this event had taken place, the sea of Tiberias became the scene of another of our Lord's miracles. Finding himself incommoded by the great multitudes which followed him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side of the lake. Upon this a scribe, who happened to be present, offered to follow him. But Jesus, knowing that he had nothing in view but the pleasures and profits of the supposed kingdom, would not accept of his service, telling him that he was quite mistaken if he purposed to better his worldly circumstances by attending him; for, though the foxes had holes, and the birds found their places in which to shelter, the Son of man was not possessed of so much as a habitation where he might lay his head. The willingness of the scribe to follow Jesus, though from a wrong motive, reproved the backwardness of a particular disciple, who, being commanded to attend, requested permission first to "go and bury his father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead." This reply appears the more proper, if we may suppose, with some commentators, that the father of this disciple was living, and that he wished to wait till after his death before he obeyed the command of Christ. We may then admit Dr. Macknight's paraphrase as just; Let such as are dead in sin, who have neither hope nor desire of immortality, and who are not devoted to my service, as you profess to be, perform that office to your father when he dies; for if you have a mind to be my disciple, you must not neglect my work by waiting for his death, which may not happen so soon as you are imagining.

When all things were made ready, Jesus went on board the vessel in the evening, which was attended by a number of other little boats full of people. As they sailed, Jesus fell asleep in the ship, being fatigued with the work of the day. In the mean while the weather suddenly changed, and a storm came on, which threatened to sink them to the bottom. The tempest increased the horrors of the night; the sky loured, and the wind roared; the sea and the clouds were driven with the fury of the storm. Now they were tossed up on the tops of the billows, then hurled down to the bottom of the deep, buried among the waves. The disciples exerted their utmost skill in managing their vessel, but to no purpose; the waves, breaking in, filled her, so that she began to sink. "Their souls melted because of trouble:" they gave themselves up for lost, and were on the very brink of perishing, when they ran to Jesus, shrieking out, Master, Master, we perish! Their cries awoke him. He arose, and rebuked the wind and sea; the wind instantly became silent; the sea, which had well nigh swallowed them up, trembled at his rebuke; the huge waves sunk down, on every side, in a moment. "And there was a great calm;" the

sea was perfectly still around them, and there was not a breath of wind moved, nor the least sound was heard, except from the oars and sails of the boats, which composed this little fleet. And they, being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this? for he commandeth even the wind and water, and they obey him. This reflection, as well as their fear in time of the danger, may seem unaccountable, considering how many, and what miracles the disciples had been witnesses to. But both may be explained, in some measure, by the following remark:—that hitherto his miracles were generally upon diseased persons; and that he had given, as yet, no proofs of his dominion over the elements, the wind, and the water, which, it seems, were thoughtless subject to human power than distempers. Or, if this does not account for the reflection which the disciples made on seeing the present instance of Christ's power, it may be attributed to the fear and confusion they were in, occasioned by the greatness of the jeopardy from which they were but just delivered. Or it may have been the reflection, not of the disciples, but of the men in the other little boats, who, being along with them, were partakers both of the danger and of the deliverance.

This remarkable display of Christ's command over the elements was succeeded by another miracle, which strikingly displayed the extent of his empire over the powers of darkness. When Jesus and his disciples, with the people who had come in the other little ships, [Mark iv. 36.] and who had partaken in the miraculous deliverance from the storm, two madmen, possessed with devils, came towards them, from certain tombs that happened to be in that part of the country. The residence of these men is said to have been in the tombs, which were generally caves, digged out of rocks, or in the sides of mountains. Mark and Luke speak of but one demoniac, but Matthew says expressly that there were two of them. The demoniac, of whom Mark and Luke speak, was, probably, much more furious than the other, for he had been often bound with chains and fetters, but had as often broken them with great fury: so that no man attempted farther to restrain him. Being, therefore, at liberty, he shunned the society of men, wandering day and night in desert places, among the sepulchres, or caves, in which the dead, according to the custom of the country, were buried, making miserable outcries, roaring, and cutting himself with stones. Wherefore, the madness of this person being more remarkable, and of longer continuance, than that of his companion, his cure made a greater noise, which is the reason that Mark and Luke speak of him only, omitting the other for the sake of brevity. [Mark v. 4.] "And no man could bind him, no, not with chains: because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces; nei-

ther could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Of all these circumstances the disciples may have been informed, either by the man himself, after his recovery, or by the keepers of the swine, or by the inhabitants of Gadara, who came out to see the effects of the miracle; for that they were well known, is evident from Luke's mentioning them likewise. Jesus, observing the disciples terrified at the approach of these furious madmen, dispelled their fears immediately: for, while the men were yet at a distance, he commanded the devils to come out of them. His command had the desired effect: for the men, though furious, showed signs of submission, they fell down before him; and the demons, who possessed them, expressed great dread of being driven out. [Mark v. 6—8.] "But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him. (Luke, fell down before him.) And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee," (or, as it might be translated, What hast thou to do with me,) "Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, (Luke, I beseech thee,) that thou torment me not. (Matthew, Art thou come to torment us before the time?) For he said unto him, Come out of the man, thou unclean spirit." He commanded the devil to be gone while the madman was at a distance, in order to remove the perturbation which his approach had occasioned in his disciples. The title of the Most High is given to God by the inspired writers of the Old Testament, to distinguish him from all others who are called gods. Hence it was fitly ascribed to him, on this occasion, by the demons, who expressed great dread of being tormented before the time, that is, of being sent to hell before the day of judgment, against which evil spirits are reserved, [Jude, verse 6.] that they may be publicly doomed to condign punishment in presence of the whole creation. Our Lord thinking it proper that the misery of those men should be known before he delivered them, asked one of the devils his name. [Mark v. 9.] "And he asked him, saying, What is thy name? and he answered, saying, my name is Legion, for we are many. (Luke, because many devils were entered into him.)" [Luke viii. 31, 32.] "And they besought him that he would not command them to go out into the deep," the place where wicked spirits are punished. "(Mark, send them away out of the country.) And there was there, (Matthew, a good way off from them,) a herd of swine feeding on the mountain, (Mark, nigh unto the mountains,) and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them." By this the devils proposed to prevent any good effect which the miracles might have had on the Gadarenes, and to render Christ odious to that wicked people. Their design could not be hid from Jesus. Nevertheless, he granted their request, making it subservient to his own gracious purposes. He permitted the

devils to enter into the swine, not only because he knew it would render the miracle more public, but because it would prove the reality of the possession, and make men understand, both how great the power of evil spirits is, and how terrible the effects of their malice would be if they were not restrained. For no sooner was the permission granted, than the keepers, who were with the swine, and the disciples, who were at a distance, beheld, to their great astonishment, the whole herd running furiously down the mountain, and leaping from the tops of the rocks into the sea, where they were drowned, to the number of two thousand ; while the possessed, furious madmen became, all of a sudden, meek and composed, having recovered the entire use of their reason, the first exercise of which, doubtless, would lead them to an high admiration of his goodness who had delivered them from the oppression of the devil. Jesus might permit the devils thus to fall on the herd, as a punishment also to the Gadarenes for keeping swine, which were a snare to the Jews ; and to make trial of their disposition, whether they would be more affected with the loss of their cattle, than with the recovery of the men, and the doctrine of the kingdom. Whatever were the reasons, it is certain, that though he might rightfully have used all men's properties as he pleased, yet this, and the withering of the barren fig-tree, are the only instances wherein man suffered the least damage by any thing our Lord ever did. However, neither the owners of the herd, nor of the fig-tree, could justly complain of their loss, since the good of mankind, not in that period and corner only, but in every succeeding age, through all countries, has been so highly promoted at so trifling an expense to them.

The destruction of the swine being speedily reported by their keepers, the Gadarenes were thrown into the utmost consternation. For when they came and saw the men that had been possessed sitting gravely in their right understanding, and decently clothed, they perceived the greatness of Christ's power, and were exceedingly afraid, from the consciousness of having violated the Mosaic law. They therefore besought him to depart out of their coast, lest he should, as some of the old prophets had done, afflict them with dreadful plagues on account of their sins. As Jesus was entirely free from ostentation, he never forced his company on people, nor wrought miracles of healing without being asked, lest it should have been imagined that he had chosen objects within his power. The madmen, indeed, whose cure is here related, and such like, were excepted for a reason too obvious to be mentioned. In all his actions, our Lord preserved a becoming dignity tempered with great modesty, and, by that means, has left as little room for objection as possible. The request of the Gadarenes, therefore, being a sufficient reason for his withdrawing from such a stupid people, he entered into his vessel, and returned to the

country whence he had come; leaving to them a valuable pledge of his love, and to us a noble pattern, not only of bearing rebukes and discouragements in the prosecution of good designs, but of perseverance in well-doing, even when our kindnesses are contemned, or, it may be, requited with injuries. For, notwithstanding the men, from whom the devils had been expelled, entreated him to take them along with them, fearing, perhaps, that their tormentors might return after he was gone, he ordered them to stay behind, as a standing monument both of his power and goodness, very proper to induce the Gadarenes to believe, when they found the miracle real, and that Jesus could restrain the devils as well when absent as present. And this was the reason, that, in the instance before us, Jesus acted contrary to his usual practice, ordering the men to go and publish the miracle among all their relations and acquaintance. Besides, there were many heathens in Gadara and the neighbourhood, upon whom the publication of his miracles would not have the ill effect it was apt to have on the Jews. Or he might give this order, because he did not intend to return soon into that corner of the country. From whatever motive the command of Christ proceeded, it was punctually obeyed, and produced a general admiration among all that heard the report. But as Christ did not court the favour of men, he again embarked, and returned to the side of the lake, where he soon found a congregation waiting to receive him; and, having spent several days in their instruction, entered the city of Capernaum, which is denominated, by Matthew, his own city; probably, because Christ had resided for the space of thirty days in it, which was deemed sufficient by the Jews to entitle them to be reckoned among the inhabitants of a city.

His arrival at Capernaum was no sooner known, than such a multitude gathered that the house could not contain them, nor even at the court before the door. The multitude of people who gathered round Peter's house, the ordinary place of our Lord's residence, was exceeding great. Mark, "insomuch that there was no room to receive them, no not so much as about the door." He preached, however, to as many as could hear him, and, among the rest, to many Pharisees and teachers of the law, who, on the report of his miracles, were come, from all quarters, to see his works, and judge of his pretensions. As he determined to leave them without excuse, he embraced an opportunity, which now offered, to show his power on one afflicted with the palsy to such a degree that he could neither walk, nor stand, nor sit, nor move any member of his body, nor utter so much as a word importing the least desire of relief; but seemed a carcase, rather than a man. This miserable object was carried in his bed, or couch, by four persons, who, when they could not bring him in at the door for the crowd that was gathered to see how Jesus would behave before such learned judges,

they bare him up, by another stair, to the roof of the house, [see Mark xiii. 15.] which, like other roofs of that country, was flat, with a battlement round it, [Deut. xxii. 8.] and had a kind of trap-door, by which persons within could come out upon it to walk and take the air. Sometimes, also, they performed their devotions here, for the sake of privacy. [Acts x. 9. 2 Kings xxiii. 12.] This door, when shut, lying even with the roof, made a part of it, and was commonly well fastened, to secure the house against thieves. They, therefore, took off the tiles, wherewith, not only the roof, but the door was covered; and, forcing the door open, let down the paralytic through the tiling, on his bed, or carpet, which they held by the corners, or by ropes fastened to the corners of it, and so placed him before Jesus, who, if this was one of the higher kind of houses, might be sitting in the second floor, at a window, preaching both to the people who were within, and to those who stood without in the court. When Jesus saw the faith of the bearers of the paralytic, he had compassion on the afflicted person: and, previously to his cure, declared publicly that his sins were forgiven. But the Pharisees, hearing this, were exceedingly provoked. And, though they did not openly find fault, they said in their own minds, or, perhaps, whispered to one another, Why doth this fellow thus blaspheme? This charge of blasphemy was founded on their supposition that Christ was a mere man, and their knowledge that none but God had the prerogative of forgiving sins: their crime, therefore, consisted, not in any improper thoughts of God, but in their resisting the miraculous evidence by which the divine mission of our Saviour was attested. At this very time, Christ proved, upon their own principles, that he was entitled to their deepest veneration; for, whereas, the Jews held, that, when Messiah came, he should be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, discovering the characters of men with whom he had no acquaintance, he discovered that he was possessed of this marvellous faculty, by replying to their thoughts which they had not openly expressed. "And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?" Why do you indulge such foolish and uncharitable thoughts?

In the next place, by what he said to them, he demonstrated that the power he claimed did really belong to him. "For whether is it easier to say," (Mark, to the sick of the palsy,) to command, for so the word signifies, [Matt. iv. 3. Luke xix. 15.] "Thy sins be forgiven, or to say, (command,) Arise and walk?" that is, whether is it easier to forgive sins, or to remove that which is inflicted as its punishment? The Pharisees could not but be sensible that these things are one and the same, and therefore ought to have acknowledged that the power that does the one really does the other also. But they were incorrigibly stubborn, and made him no answer: for which reason, without

troubling himself any farther, except to tell them that what he was about to do would demonstrate his power on earth to forgive sins, he turned to the paralytic, and bade him rise up and carry away his bed. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." He called himself, on this occasion, not the Son of God, but the Son of man, that they might know he was speaking of himself, and be sensible that even in his state of humiliation, and while he was on earth, he acted as God. Perhaps, likewise, by calling himself, in the hearing of such a company of literati, the Son of man, he meant to tell them that he was Messiah, Son of man, being one of the names of Messiah in Daniel's prophecy. "Then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house." While the words were pronouncing, the cure was accomplished. The man was made active and strong in an instant. He arose, took up his bed with surprising vigour, and went off astonished in himself, and raising astonishment in all who beheld him. The perfection of the cure, and its suddenness, together with the remembrance of the obstinacy of the distemper, no doubt, impressed the man with a lively sense of the benefit that was conferred upon him. He, therefore, went straight home, and spent some time in returning thanks to Almighty God, by whose good pleasure so great a happiness had befallen him. When the Pharisees beheld this miracle, they were obliged to pronounce it a most wonderful event; and, by this concession, glorified God, by unwillingly confirming the mission of his Son. It is also said, that they were filled with fear, probably, lest he, whom they had reproached as an impostor, should now exercise his power in punishing their insolence. Considering the impression which this miracle made upon them, we may consider, that these learned men did not forthwith lay aside their enmity against Jesus. Probably, in this, as in other instances, they resisted the dictates of their own mind. Or, after the first impression was over, they might forget the miracle, and continue to find fault, with the expression uttered when it was performed. The truth is, with respect to good, the minds of these learned men seem to have been in the same enervated and dead condition, which the body of the paralytic had been in before his cure, only the misery of their state was greater than his, the palsy of the soul being an evil much more deplorable than the palsy of the body. The people, on this occasion, behaved much better than the Pharisees and doctors. Having seen the miracle, they were struck with an high degree of surprise mixed with admiration, and expressed their sense of the honour that was done to human nature by Almighty God, who had endued men with such powers. [Matt. ix. 8.] "But when the multitude saw it they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men;" power, not only to heal diseases, but to forgive sins. For they could not but

acknowledge the authority of Christ's declaration, Thy sins be forgiven thee, when their eyes showed them the efficacy of his command, Arise, and walk.

To conclude : whether we examine the nature of this miracle as being a perfect and instantaneous cure of an obstinate universal palsy, under which a person advanced in years [Luke v. 25.] had laboured, perhaps, for a long time; a perfect cure, produced by the pronouncing of a single sentence, importing that it should be; or whether we consider the number and quality of the witnesses present, Pharisees and doctors of the law, from every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem, together with a vast concourse of people; or whether we attend to the effect which the miracle had upon the witnesses, namely, the Pharisees and doctors of the law, not able to find fault with it in any respect, though they had come with a design to confute our Lord's pretensions as a miracle worker, were astonished, and openly confessed that it was a strange thing which they had seen; the multitude glorified God, who had given such glory to men; the person upon whom the miracle was wrought, employed his tongue, the use of which he had recovered, in celebrating the praises of God. In short, view it in whatever light we please, we shall find this a most illustrious miracle, highly worthy of our attention and admiration.

The next remarkable event in the history of Jesus was the calling of a certain publican, named Levi, or Matthew. This man was sitting at the office appointed for the receipt of customs, and immediately, on receiving the divine command, forsook a lucrative employment, to become the follower of him who had not where to lay his head. It is generally supposed, as we have already intimated, that Levi was the same as Matthew, the apostle and historian of our Lord. Michaelis, however, gives the following reasons for a different opinion :

1. In the catalogue of the twelve apostles, St. Mark and St. Luke ascribe to our evangelist no other name than that of Matthew. Is it credible then, that, in describing his call to the apostleship, they should both have agreed in naming him Levi, and have thus occasioned an unnecessary confusion in the reader. The same argument operates, likewise, against the opinion that Levi is the same person as Lebbeus.

2. The sons of Alphaeus, with whom we are acquainted in the New Testament, were near relations of Jesus; for their mother, whose name was, likewise, Mary, was sister to Jesus's mother. They were James, Joses, Simon, and Judas; and they are mentioned, Matt. xiii. 55, and there called brethren of Christ. One of them, namely, James, is expressly called the son of Alphaeus, Matt. x. 3; Mark iii. 18; Luke vi. 15; and of their mother we find an account, Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40. If St. Matthew, therefore, was a son of the same Alphaeus,

he was a near relation of Jesus. But of this relationship we nowhere find the smallest trace; and, at the principal passage, where St. Matthew names the relations of Christ, he is silent in respect to himself.

But though I believe that Levi and St. Matthew were not the same person, I shall not attempt to discover which of the twelve apostles Levi really was. I see no necessity for supposing that Levi was an apostle at all; at least, the command which he received to follow Christ does not necessarily imply that he was admitted into the number of the twelve, since Christ selected seventy disciples in addition to the twelve apostles.

About this time, it is probable, our Lord performed the celebrated miracle at the pool of Bethesda, which is recorded in the fifth chapter of John. We shall give it at length in Dr. Campbell's translation; by comparing which, with that commonly received, considerable light will be cast on the subject.

[John v. 1—47.] “Afterwards there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem, nigh the sheep-gate, a bath, called, in Hebrew, Bethesda, which hath five covered walks. In these lay a great number of sick, blind, lame, and palsied people, waiting for the moving of the water. For a messenger, at times, descended into the bath, and agitated the water; and the first that stepped in after the agitation of the water, was cured of whatever disease he had.”

“Now there was one there who had been diseased eight and thirty years. Jesus, who saw him lying, and knew that he had been long ill, said to him, *Wouldst thou be healed?* The diseased man answered, *Sir, I have no man to put me into the bath, when the water is agitated; but while I am going, another getteth down before me.* Jesus said to him, *Arise, take up thy couch, and walk.* Instantly the man was healed, and took up his couch, and walked.

“Now that day was the sabbath. The Jews, therefore, said to him that was cured, *This is the sabbath, it is not lawful for thee to carry thy couch.* He answered, *He who healed me said to me, ‘Take up thy couch and walk.’ They asked him then, Who is the man that said to thee, ‘Take up thy couch and walk?’ But he that had been healed knew not who it was; for Jesus had slipped away, there being a crowd in the place.*

“Jesus afterwards finding him in the temple, said to him, *Behold, thou art cured; sin no more, lest something worse befall thee.* The man went and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had cured him. Therefore the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill him, because he had done this on the sabbath.

“But Jesus answered them, *As my Father hitherto worketh, I work.* For this reason the Jews were the more intent to kill him, because he had not only broken the sabbath, but by call-

ing God peculiarly his Father, had equalled himself with God. Then Jesus addressed them, saying, Verily, verily, I say unto you, the Son can do nothing of himself, but as he seeth the Father do; for what thing soever he doth, such doth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all that he himself doth: nay, and will show him greater works than these, works which will astonish you. For as the Father raiseth and quickeneth the dead, the Son also quickeneth whom he will; for the Father judgeth no person, having committed the power of judging entirely to the Son, that all might honour the Son, as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, who sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he who heareth my doctrine, and believeth him who sent me, hath eternal life, and shall not incur condemnation, having passed from death to life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, the time cometh, or rather is come, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and, hearing, they shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him even the judicial authority, because he is the Son of man. Wonder not at this; for the time cometh when all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and come forth. They that have done good shall arise to enjoy life; they that have done evil shall arise to suffer punishment. I can do nothing of myself; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not to please myself, but to please the Father, who sent me.

“If I (alone) testify concerning myself, my testimony is not to be regarded; there is another who testifieth concerning me; and I know that his testimony of me ought to be regarded. Ye yourselves sent to John, and he bare witness to the truth. As for me, I need no human testimony; I only urge this for your salvation. He was the lighted and shining lamp; and, for a while, ye were glad to enjoy his light.

“But I have greater testimony than John’s; for the works which the Father hath empowered me to perform, the works themselves, which I do, testify for me that the Father hath sent me.

“Nay, the Father, who sent me, hath himself attested me. Did ye never hear his voice, or see his form? Or have ye forgotten his declaration, that ye believe not him whom he hath commissioned?

“Ye search the scriptures, because ye think to obtain, by their means, eternal life. Now these, also, are witnesses for me; yet ye will not come unto me that ye may obtain life. I desire not honour from men; but I know you, that ye are strangers to the love of God. I am come in my Father’s name; and ye do not receive me; if another come in his own name, ye will receive him. How can ye believe, while ye court honour one from another, regardless of the honour which cometh from God alone? Do not think that I am he who will accuse you to the

Father. Your accuser is Moses, in whom ye confide. For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me; for he wrote concerning me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?"

The most remarkable circumstance mentioned in this chapter, is the descent of the angel, or messenger, at certain times, to trouble the waters, and give them, or excite in them, an healing quality. It is probable, that, in honour of the personal appearance of Christ upon earth, this remarkable power was conferred upon the waters, perhaps to indicate that Ezekiel's vision of the waters, issuing out of the sanctuary, was about to be fulfilled. Ezek. xlvii. of which waters it is said, verse 9, "They shall be healed, and every thing shall live whither the river cometh." That which is commonly translated the sheep-market, may be equally rendered the sheep-gate, as there is nothing in the original words which answers to either gate or market; but the word used being an adjective, requires some such addition to complete the sense. We have, beside, good evidence that one of the gates of Jerusalem was called the sheep-gate, but none, that any place there was ever denominated the sheep-market. It is remarkable, that, in the twenty-seventh verse, Christ calls himself a Son of man, and not the Son of man. The meaning of the clause seems here to be, that it suits the ends of divine wisdom, that the judge, as well as the Saviour of men, should himself be man. In the thirty-first verse, Christ does not mean to assert that it was impossible that a man should speak truth in his own favour; such a testimony was inadmissible in a court of judicature. The thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses are regarded, by many learned men, as interrogations, and are supposed to refer to the visible descent of the Holy Spirit on our Lord after his baptism. Lastly, the thirty-ninth verse may be rendered either, search the scriptures, or ye search the scriptures, on which subject learned men differ in their opinions.

Upon the first second-day sabbath, that is, the ordinary sabbath, happening in the passover week, probably the very sabbath that was honoured with the cure of the paralytic, who lay in Bethesda, Jesus and his disciples passed through the corn-fields near Jerusalem, attended by some of the Pharisees, whose curiosity prompted them to mix with the crowd on this occasion, in expectation of seeing more miracles. These, no doubt, they proposed to examine with the greatest accuracy, as well as to watch Jesus while he performed them, that they might detect whatever, as they vainly imagined, was false in them. Or, if no miracle was performed, they hoped to find him behaving, on the sabbath, in a manner inconsistent with the holy character which he assumed. Accordingly, they first found fault with his disciples; for, on seeing them pluck the ears of corn, and eat as they walked, they reprov'd them, and complained of them to their Master, not for having taken what they had no right to,

the law authorising them to do this ; [Deut. xxiii. 25 ;] but for having broken the sabbath, such as they supposed plucking and rubbing the ears to be. This accusation, though it seemed to be levelled immediately against the disciples, was really intended against Jesus himself : but he easily repelled it by putting the Pharisees in mind of David, who, though a prophet, as well as a king, in case of necessity, took the sacred show-bread, contrary to the law ; [Lev. xxiv. 9 ;] and of the priests in the temple, who killed the sacrifices on the sabbath-day ; and by desiring them to consider a passage in Hosea, where God declares that he has greater pleasure in mercy than in sacrifice ; and by explaining unto them the end of the sabbath itself, which was instituted for the benefit, and not for the detriment, of mankind.

He began with David's action in the matter of the show-bread, which the high-priest himself was accessory to, which the scriptures record with no mark of disapprobation, and which, it seems, the doctors never had condemned ; and, for that reason, was a proper vindication of the disciples in the like circumstances. [Mark. ii. 25.] " And he said unto them, have ye never read (Luke, so much as this) what David did when he had need, and was an hungered, he, and they that were with him. How he went into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the high-priest, and did eat the show-bread, which is not lawful to eat, (Matthew, which was not lawful for him to eat,) but only for the priests, (Luke, alone,) and gave also to them which were with him ?" The house of God, into which David went for the show-bread, was not the tabernacle ; for none but priests could go in thither ; but it was the house of the high-priest, situated beside the court of the tabernacle, and called the house of God on that account. Thus the apartment on which the high-priest Eli and his servant Samuel slept, is called the house of the Lord, 1 Sam. iii. 15. [Matt. xii. 5.] " Or have ye not read in the law, how that, on the sabbath-days, the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless ?" He did not mean that these words are to be found in the law, but that they might be read in the law, how that the priests were obliged, on the sabbath-days, to perform such servile work in the temple, as, considered separately from the end of it, was a profanation of the sabbath ; and yet were guiltless, because it was necessary to the public worship, on account of which the sabbath was instituted. From Numbers xxviii. 9, it appears, that, beside the continual burnt-offering, the priests were obliged, on the sabbaths, to sacrifice two lambs extraordinary, by which their servile work was that day double of what it was on the other days of the week. This, though really no profanation of the sabbath, might, according to the common notion of the Jews, be so termed, and therefore, in speaking of it, our Lord calls it so. " But I say unto you, that, in this

place, is one greater than the temple." If you reply that the priests were not culpable in those actions, because they were undertaken for the temple service, I must acknowledge it; but, at the same time, I must observe, that, if the temple, with its service, is of such importance as to merit a particular dispensation from the law of the sabbath, I and my disciples, whose business of promoting the salvation of men is a matter of more importance, may, on that account, with more reason, take the same liberty, in a case of the like necessity. According to this interpretation, the reading, a greater work, instead of a greater person, which is authorized by so many MSS. will have a peculiar elegance. There is, here, a much more noble work carrying on, than the temple service. Or the common reading may be retained thus; if the servile work, done in the temple on the sabbath, is not reckoned an offence, because it is undertaken on account of the temple worship, the rubbing of the ears, for which you blame my disciples, cannot be any, seeing they do it in order to support their life, while they are employed in the service of one who is greater than their temple. For his human nature was a much more august temple, in respect of the essential inhabitation of the divinity, than that at Jerusalem. Hence he himself called his body a temple, at the first pass-over. [John ii. 21.] "But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless." I delight in mercy more than in sacrifice, for this is the Hebrew form of comparison. Besides, it is not to be supposed that God would say to the Jews he had no pleasure in sacrifice, which was his own institution. Thus our Lord plainly proved it to be God's will that works of mercy should not be left undone, though attended with the violation of the most sacred ceremonial institutions.

[Mark ii. 27.] "And he said unto them, the sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath:" the sabbath was contrived for the benefit and relief of man, being instituted in commemoration of the creation of the world, finished in six days; and to perpetuate, unto latest ages, the knowledge of this grand truth, that the world was made by God, in opposition both to atheism and idolatry, the sins which mankind have ever been apt to run into. It was instituted, also, that men, abstaining from all sorts of labour but such as are necessary to the exercises of piety and charity, might have leisure for meditating on the works of creation, wherein the perfections of God are fairly delineated; and that, by these meditations, they might acquire not only the knowledge of God, but a relish of spiritual and divine pleasures, flowing from the contemplation of God's attributes, from the exercise of the love of God, and from obedience to his commandments. It is thus that men are prepared for entering into the heavenly rest, of which the earthly sabbath is an emblem.

To conclude; the sabbath, among the Israelites, was appointed to keep up the remembrance of their deliverance from Egypt, and for the comfort of their slaves and beasts, humanity to both being especially incumbent upon a people who had once groaned under the heaviest bondage. From all this it is evident, that to burden men, much more to hurt them, through the observation of the sabbath, which has no intrinsic excellency in itself, is, to all, quite contrary to the design of God in appointing it. [Mark ii. 28.] "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath." Since the sabbath was instituted for the man, the observation of it, in cases of necessity, may be dispensed with by any man whatsoever, but especially by me, who am lawgiver of the Jewish commonwealth, and can make what alterations in its institutions I think fit. This argument, drawn from the consideration of his own dignity, our Lord largely insisted on when he was persecuted for a pretended profanation of the sabbath, by the cure which he performed at Bethesda. [John v. 17—30.]

At this time, Jesus continued awhile at Jerusalem, teaching, not only the inhabitants of that city, and of the neighbouring villages, but the people who had come from all quarters to the feast, and who, in all probability, tarried, on this occasion, longer than usual, in order to hear the sermons, and see the miracles, of a prophet, concerning whom they had heard such astonishing reports. We may, therefore, suppose, that, during his abode in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, our Lord was constantly attended by great multitudes, and consequently, that every sermon he preached had many hearers, and every miracle he performed many witnesses. In examining the following passage of the history, these observations deserve attention. For we are told that, on another sabbath, perhaps the sabbath immediately following the first second-day sabbath mentioned above, Jesus entered into a synagogue near Jerusalem, and taught the people. Luke, who alone mentions our Lord's teaching on this occasion, has not told us what the subject of this sermon was. He only observes, that there was in the synagogue a person whose right hand was withered, and gives an account of the miracle which Jesus so kindly performed for the recovery thereof. On this occasion, there were present scribes and Pharisees, persons of the greatest character and learning, who had either mixed with the crowd that followed Jesus, or were in the synagogue before he came. These men, ever unfriendly to the Saviour, carefully attended to every thing he said or did, with an intention to find some matter of blame in him, by which they might blast his reputation with the people. Wherefore, when they saw Jesus, after he had ended his sermons, fix his eyes on the man whose right hand was withered, they made no doubt but he would essay to cure him, and resolved to charge him directly with the sin for

which they blamed the disciples the sabbath before, hoping, at least, to raise prejudices in the minds of the people against him. But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, "Rise up, and stand forth in the midst." He ordered him to show himself to the whole congregation, that the sight of his distress might move them to pity him, and that they might be the more sensibly struck with the miracle, when they observed the wasted hand restored to its former dimensions and activity in an instant. And he arose and stood forth, [Matt. xii. 10.] "And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath-days? that they might accuse him." When the Pharisees saw Jesus going to perform the cure, they put this question to him, by which they declared, in the strongest terms, their opinion of its unlawfulness. But, in so doing, they had no intention to prevent the action which they knew he was resolved upon, but to render him odious to the common people, expecting that he would openly declare such things lawful, in opposition to the designations of the doctors, who had all determined, that to perform cures on the sabbath was a violation of the holy rest. Or, if he should give no answer to their questions, as it implied an affirmation of the unlawfulness of what he was about to attempt, they thought it would render him inexcusable, and give the better colour to their accusation. [Luke vi. 9.] "Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy it? (Mark, to save life, or to kill?)" That he might expose the malice and superstition of the Pharisees, he appealed to the dictates of their own mind, whether it was not more lawful to do good on the sabbaths than to do evil, to save life than to kill. He meant, more lawful for him, on the sabbath, to save men's lives, than for them to plot his death without the least provocation. This was a severe, but just rebuke, which, in present circumstances, must have been sensibly felt. Yet the Pharisees, pretending not to understand his meaning, made him no answer. [Mark iii. 4.] "But they held their peace." Wherefore, he answered them with an argument which the dulness of stupidity could not possibly overlook, nor the peevishness of cavilling gainsay. The Jews, it seems, at that day, contrary to what was afterwards their practice, thought it proper, if a sheep fell into a pit on the sabbath-day, to lay hold of it and lift it out. He, therefore, very properly asked them whether the same regard ought not to be extended to a man as to a sheep; and, receiving no reply, he saith to the man, "Stretch forth thine hand; and he stretched it out, and his hand was restored whole as the other."

All this, however, could neither conquer the malice nor the unbelief of the Pharisees; for they immediately went forth, and took counsel with the Herodians to destroy him. Christ,

as his hour of suffering was not yet come, and it was not his business to make any resistance to their power, withdrew with his disciples to the sea; and was followed by a vast multitude of hearers, who were collected, not only from different parts of the Jewish land, but also from the heathen countries of Iudæa, Phœnicia, and Syria. "And he spake to his disciples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him. For he had healed many, insomuch that they pressed upon him to touch him, as many as had plagues. And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God. And he straightway charged them that they should not make him known." By this mild and submissive conduct of the Son of God, was fulfilled the following passage in the forty-third chapter of Isaiah. "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul is well-pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets: A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust."

The calumnies with which the Pharisees persecuted Jesus, though most malicious, did not irritate him, nor make him leave off those good offices to men which they interpreted so basely. On the contrary, he, the more earnestly, endeavoured to promote the prosperity and salvation of all. For he immediately left Capernaum, and travelled through the country in quest of opportunities of doing good. [Mat. ix. 35.] "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people." Probably, our Lord was now going up to some of the festivals; for it is thus the evangelists describe his journies to Jerusalem.

In returning home, Jesus was attended with great multitudes of people, who began to have a more than ordinary relish of his doctrine. And, as they were utterly neglected by the scribes and Pharisees, the appointed public teachers, who ought to have instructed them, the indefatigable zeal, with which our Lord spread the knowledge of divine things, was most seasonable and acceptable. The teachers, just now mentioned, were blind, perverse, lazy guides, who every day discovered their ignorance and wickedness more and more. They neglected the office of teaching altogether, or they filled the people's minds with high notions of ritual observances and traditions, to the utter disparagement of moral duties, which, in a manner, they trampled underfoot; so that, instead of serving God, they served their own glory, their gain, and their belly. Wherefore, an appearance of religion, which they had, was wholly feigned and hypocritical, insomuch that they rather did hurt by

it than were of real service to the interests of virtue. Besides, the common people, being distracted by the disagreeing factions of the Pharisees and Sadducees, knew not what to choose or refuse. Their case, therefore, called loudly for the compassion of Jesus, which, indeed, was never wanting to them at any time; for he always cherished the tenderest affection towards his countrymen: but it flowed particularly on this occasion, when he considered that they were in great distress for want of spiritual food. [Matt. ix. 36.] "But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd." Being either deserted or misled by their spiritual guides, they had strayed from the pastures of the law and the prophets, and were in the greatest danger of perishing. Hence they are called, the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [Matt. x. 6.] Jesus, therefore, deeply touched with a feeling of their distress, resolved to provide some remedy for it. Accordingly he directed his disciples to intercede with God, who, by his servants the prophets, had sowed the seeds of piety and virtue in the minds of the Jews, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest. "Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but labourers are few:" there are multitudes of people willing to receive instruction, but there are few able to give it. "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." Pray God to send out into the world skilful and faithful ministers, who shall convert all such as are capable of being made virtuous.

Moreover, he went up privately by himself into a mountain, and spent a whole night in prayer, to the same effect, as may be gathered from the transactions of the following day. [Luke vi. 12.] "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God." This some, "and he continued all night in a prayer-house of God;" for the Jews had many houses on mountains, and by the sides of rivers, set apart for prayer. See Dr. Benson on Acts xvi. 13. This translation does not alter the sense of the passage; for, as Jesus went up to the mountain to pray, we cannot avoid supposing that he spent the greatest part of the night in acts of devotion. "And, when it was day, he called unto him (Mark, whom he would) his disciples; and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles." Early in the morning he called such of his disciples as he thought proper, and chose twelve of them to attend him constantly. [Mark iii. 14.] "And he ordained twelve, (Luke, whom also he named apostles,) that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach. And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils." He ordained them to be with him always, that they might, from his mouth, learn the

doctrine which they were, in due time, to preach through the world, that they might see his glory, [John i. 14.] the transcendent glory of the virtues which adorned his human life, and that they might be witnesses to all the wonderful works which he should perform, [Acts x. 39—41.] and by which his mission from God was to be clearly demonstrated. The twelve were thus to be qualified for supplying the people with that spiritual food which their teachers neglected to give them, and that both before and after their Master's death. Accordingly, when they had continued with Jesus as long as was necessary for this end, he sent them two by two into Judea, on the important work of preparing the people for his reception, who was the true shepherd. Hence he named them apostles, that is, persons sent out. But their name was more peculiarly applicable to them, and their office was raised to its perfection after Christ's ascension, when he sent them out into all the world with the doctrine of the gospel, which he enabled them to preach by inspiration, giving them power, at the same time, to confirm it by the most astonishing miracles. That this was the nature of the new dignity which Jesus now conferred on the twelve disciples, is evident from John xx. 21, where we find him confirming them in the apostolical office: "As my Father hath sent me, so send I you;" I send you upon the same errand, and with the same authority; I send you to reveal the will of God for the salvation of men, and bestow on you both the gift of tongues, and the power of working miracles, that you may be able to preach the doctrine of salvation in every country, and to confirm it as divine, in opposition to all gainsayers. Perhaps, the number of twelve apostles was fixed upon rather than any other, to show that God intended to gather the scattered remnant of the twelve tribes by their ministry. After their election, the twelve accompanied Jesus; constantly lived with him on one common stock, as his family; and never departed from him, unless by his express appointment.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke, have each of them given us a catalogue of the names of the apostles; and their exactness, in this particular, is greatly to be praised. For, as the apostleship clothed the person on whom it was conferred with the high authority of directing the religious faith of mankind, it was of no small importance to the world to know who they were, to whom this dignity belonged. [Mark iii. 16.] "And Simon he surnamed Peter (Luke, Simon, whom he named Peter); And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder: And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, (Matthew, Matthew the publican,) and Thomas, and James the son of Thaddeus, and Alphæus, (Luke, and Judas the brother

of James,) (Matthew, Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus,) and Simon the Canaanite, (Luke, Simon called Zelotes,) and Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him.

In the catalogues given by Matthew and Luke, Simon and Andrew, the sons of Jonah, are named first, not because they were greater in dignity than their brethren of the apostolical college, but because they had become Christ's disciples before them. With respect to Andrew, this is plain from John i. 40, 41. And as for Peter, he may have been the second disciple, notwithstanding it was another person who accompanied Andrew when he first conversed with Jesus. That person is supposed to have been John, the son of Zebedee, and the author of the gospel; because he is there spoken of in the manner that John usually speaks of himself. But, whoever he was, Peter may have been a disciple before him; because it by no means follows from Andrew being convinced, that his companion was convinced also. The foundation of his faith may have been laid at that meeting, though he did not acknowledge Christ's mission till afterwards. Now as some one of the disciples was to have the first place in the catalogue, the earliness of Peter's faith might be a reason of conferring that honour on him. But he takes place even of his brother Andrew, who was converted before him, perhaps, because decency required it, being, as is generally believed, the elder brother. In like manner, James the son of Zebedee, being elder than John his brother, is mentioned before him, though it is probable that he was the younger disciple. Whatever was the reason of ranking the apostles in the catalogue, we are certain they are not ranged according to their dignity; for, had that been the case, the order of names would not have been different in the different evangelists; neither would the apostle Paul, in speaking of the pillars of the church, [Gal. ii. 9.] have mentioned James the Less before Peter.

Further, on supposition that the apostles are ranked in the catalogues according to their dignity, it will follow that John and Matthew, whose praise is in all the churches, on account of their writings, were inferior to apostles, who are scarce once named in the Gospel or Acts, except in the catalogues. Add to this, if Peter was the chief apostle, how came it that James, the son of Alpheus, presided in the first council at Jerusalem? [Acts xv. 19.] as is plain from his summing up the debate, and wording the decree. Or, if Peter was the greatest in point of activity and courage, how came Herod to kill James the son of Zebedee before he laid hold on Peter, whom, indeed, afterwards, he was going to have put to death? In short, if any of the apostles were greater than the rest, how came Jesus, when they disputed about their superiority, to reprove them, and to declare they were all brethren, or equals? In the catalogue, Simon the brother of Andrew, is distinguished from the other

Simon by the surname of Peter, which had been conferred on him when he first became acquainted with Jesus at Jordan. The reason of the name, however, was not assigned till long after that, viz. when Simon declared his faith in Jesus, as Messiah; [Matt. xvi. 17, 18.] for it was then that Jesus told him he was called Cephas, Peter, (which, by interpretation, is a rock,) on account of the fortitude wherewith he was to preach the gospel. Simon and Andrew were originally fishermen, and inhabitants of Bethsaida, a town situated on the north shore of the lake of Gennezareth. But, after Peter was married, he and his brother settled in Capernaum, perhaps, because his wife lived there. Before they became acquainted with Christ, they were disciples of the Baptist, who pointed him out to them as Messiah. Andrew has left no writings, for which reason we are at a loss to judge of his spirit and endowments; but Peter was the author of the two epistles which bear his name.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were also fishermen; they dwelt in Capernaum, and seem to have been rather in better circumstances than Peter and Andrew, for the gospels speak of their having hired servants to assist them in their business. John is thought to have been the youngest of all the apostles; yet he was old enough to have been the follower of the Baptist before he came to Christ. On this, or some other occasion, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, obtained the surname of Boanerges, i. e. sons of Thunder, perhaps, because of the vehemence and impetuosity of their tempers. Accordingly, their spirit showed itself in the desire which they expressed to have the Samaritans destroyed by fire from heaven, because they refused to lodge Jesus in his way to Jerusalem. It appeared, also, in their ambition to become the great officers of state in their Master's kingdom, which they supposed would be a secular one. Besides, John's writings show that he was a man of a warm and affectionate turn of mind. The warmth of his temper gave him a singular fitness for friendship, in which he was not only amiable above all the disciples, but happy, as it rendered him the object of Christ's peculiar love; a love which will do him honour to the end of the world. As for James, his being put to death by Herod is a proof that his zeal was uncommon, and that it moved him to be more active and bold than the rest in the work of the gospel. Had it been otherwise, he would not have become the object either of Herod's jealousy or resentment. Some, indeed, are of opinion, that the epithet, sons of thunder, was not expressive of the dispositions of the two brothers, but of the force and success with which they should preach the gospel. Yet, if that had been the reason of the surname, it was equally applicable to all the apostles.

Philip is said to have been a native of Bethsaida, the town of

Peter and Andrew. He was originally a disciple of the Baptist; but he left him to follow Jesus, as soon as he became acquainted with him at Jordan. [John i. 44.]

Bartholomew is supposed to have been the disciple called Nathaniel, whose conversion is related, John i. 45. And the supposition is probable, were it for no other reason but this, that all the other persons who became acquainted with Jesus at Jordan, when he was baptized, and who believed on him there, were chosen of the number of the apostles. If so, why should Nathaniel have been excluded? He was one of those who believed on Jesus then, and was a person of such probity, that he obtained from Jesus the high character of an Israelite indeed, in whom there was no guile. In every respect, therefore, he was equally worthy of the honour of the apostleship with the rest. Accordingly, when Jesus showed himself to the apostles at the sea of Tiberias, after his resurrection, Nathaniel is expressly mentioned, by John, among them.

Farther, in the catalogue of the apostles given by Matthew, where the apostles are thought to be coupled in pairs as they were sent out to preach, Philip was joined with Bartholomew, which agrees very well with the supposition that Bartholomew was the same person with Nathaniel. For, from the history of Nathaniel's conversion, it appears, that Philip was his intimate acquaintance, and the person who first introduced him to Jesus. The difference of names is no objection to the supposition which Dr. Macknight contends for. Bartholomew signifies the son of Tolmai, so may have been a patronymic, and not this disciple's proper name. Or, without having recourse to this solution, why not Bartholomew have had two names as well as Matthew, who, throughout the whole of his gospel, does not sign himself by his other name Levi? After the death of Judas Iscariot, when the apostles met to choose one in his place, Nathaniel was not proposed as a candidate for that office. This cannot be accounted for on any supposition, but that he enjoyed the dignity already. For that he was still alive, and continued to associate with the disciples, is evident from John xx. 1. To conclude: the ancients seem to have thought Bartholomew the same with Nathaniel; for, from what John tells us of the latter, that he was of Cana, [John xxi. 2.] they assign the honour of Bartholomew's nativity to the same town, and add, that he was a person skilled in the law.

Matthew was a publican of Capernaum. He was otherwise named Levi, [Mark ii. 14.] and left a gainful employment for the sake of Christ. He wrote the gospel to which his name is prefixed, and was the son of one Alpheus, [Mark ii. 14.] of whom we know nothing but the name, excepting that he was a different person from Alpheus the father of James.

There is no mention made of Thomas before his conversion. However, it is conjectured, that, like the rest, he was of mean

extraction. And because he is named among those who went a fishing, [John xxi. 2, 3.] it is supposed that he was a fisherman by occupation. He obtained the surname of Didymus, [John xi. 16.] probably, because he was a twin. This apostle made himself remarkable, by continuing longer than his brethren to doubt of Christ's resurrection.

In the college of apostles, besides James, the son of Zebedee, and brother of John, Judas Iscariot, who betrayed his master, and Simon surnamed Peter, we find James, the son of Alpheus, surnamed the Less or younger, [Mark xv. 40.] to distinguish him from the other James, the son of Zebedee, who was elder than he; also Judas, or Lebbeus, surnamed Thaddeus, the brother of James the Less, and Simon, surnamed Zelotes. James the Less, Judas Thaddeus, and Simon Zelotes, were brothers, and sons of one Alpheus, or Cleophas, [John xix. 25, compared with Matt. xxvii. 56, and Matt. xiii. 55, and Mark iii. 18.] who was, likewise, a disciple, being one of the two to whom our Lord appeared on the road to Emmaus, after his resurrection. They are called Christ's brethren, [Matt. xiii. 55.] that is, his cousins, in which sense the word is used, Lev. x. 4. It seems, their mother Mary [Matt. xxviii. 56, compared with John xix. 25.] was sister to Mary, our Lord's mother; for it was no unusual thing among the Jews to have more children than one of a family called by the same name. The three apostles, therefore, who go by the name of our Lord's brethren, were, really, his cousin-germans. James the Less, and Judas Thaddeus, wrote the epistles which bear their names. This James was a person of great authority among the apostles; for, in the council which met at Jerusalem to decide the dispute about the necessity of circumcision, we find him, as president of the meeting, summing up the debate, and wording the decree.

Simon, the cousin of our Lord, and brother of James the Less, is called, by Mark, the Canaanite. But, from the above account of his relations, it is plain that the epithet does not express his descent, otherwise his brothers, James and Judas, ought to have been Canaanites likewise. Luke calls him Simon Zelotes, which seems to be the Greek translation of the Hebrew appellation given him by Mark; for, *zelotypus* fuit, he was jealous, comes of the Chaldaic word *zelotes*, a zealot. Wherefore, the appellation of Canaanite given to Simon, by Mark, and Zelotes, the epithet which he bears in Luke, are as perfectly the same as Cephas and Petros, Tabitha and Dorcas. The zealots were a particular sect or faction among the Jews, who, in later times, under colour of zeal for God, committed all the disorders imaginable. They pretended to imitate the zeal which Phinehas, Elijah, and the Maccabees expressed, in the manner of punishing offenders; but they acted from blind fury, or from worse principles, without regard

either the laws of God, or the dictates of reason. Some are of opinion, that Simon, the apostle, had formerly been one of this pestilential faction: but as there is no mention made of it till a little before the destruction of Jerusalem, we may rather suppose that the surname of Zelotes was given him on account of his uncommon zeal in matters of true piety and religion.

Judas, the traitor, was the son of one Simon. [John vi. 71.] He had the surname of Iscariot given him, to distinguish him from Judas Thaddeus, our Lord's cousin. The literal meaning of Iscariot is, a man of Cariot, or Kerioth, which was a town in the tribe of Judah. [Josh. xv. 25.] In all probability, therefore, this surname denotes the place of the traitor's nativity. Some pretend that, among the Jews, no person was surnamed by the place of his birth, but such as were illustrious on account of their station; and so would have us believe that Judas was a person of some distinction. They think his being intrusted with the bag, or stock-purse, preferably to all the rest, is a confirmation of this. But as the other apostles were men of mean condition, these arguments are too trivial to prove that Judas was distinguished from them in that particular.

Thus were the foundations of the church laid in twelve illiterate Galileans, who, being, at first, utterly ignorant of the nature and end of their office, and destitute of the qualifications necessary to discharge the duties of it, integrity excepted, were the most unlikely persons in the world to confound the wisdom of the wise, to baffle the power of the mighty, to overturn the many false religions which then flourished every where under the protection of civil government, and, in a word, to reform the universally corrupted manners of mankind. Had human prudence been to make choice of instruments for so grand an undertaking, doubtless, such as were remarkable for deep science, strong reasoning, and prevailing eloquence, would have been pitched upon; and these endowments, probably, would have been set off with the external advantages of wealth and power. But lo! the wisdom of God, infinitely superior to that of men, acted quite differently in this matter. For the treasure of the gospel was committed to earthen vessels, that the excellency of its power might, in all countries, be seen to be of God. Accordingly, the religion which these Galileans taught through the world, without having at all applied themselves to letters, exhibited a far juster notion of the nature and perfections of God, and of the duty of man, than the Grecian and Roman philosophers were able to attain, though their lives were spent in contemplation and study. Hence, by its own intrinsic splendour, as well as by the external glory of the miracles which accompanied it, this religion showed itself to be altogether of divine original. Besides, it was attended with a success answerable to its dignity and truth. It was received every where, by the bulk of mankind, with the highest ap-

plause, as something they had hitherto been seeking in vain; while the maxims and precepts of the philosophers never spread themselves farther than the particular schools. It was, therefore, with the highest wisdom, that the foundations of the church were thus laid in the labours of a few weak, illiterate fishermen. For, with irresistible evidence, it demonstrated, that the immense fabric was, at first, raised, and is still sustained, not by the arm of flesh, but purely by the hand of Almighty God.

CHAPTER VII.

From the first to the second mission of the apostles.

Christ preaches the sermon on the plain—whether it was the same as the sermon on the mount—cures a centurion's servant in Capernaum—whether the same with the young man recorded, Matt. viii.—the apostles receive their commission and instructions—the widow's son raised at Nain—publicity of the miracle—Matthew's feast—conversation between our Lord and John's disciples—cure of the woman who had the bloody issue—the resurrection of Jairus's daughter—manner of the Jewish mourning—Christ cures two blind men, and expels a demon—the Pharisees ascribe his miracles to Beelzebub—he answers the inquiries of John's messengers, and vindicates the Baptist's character—he pronounces heavy woes upon such cities as had slighted his doctrine—he dines with Simon, the Pharisee, and has his feet anointed with fragrant ointment—pious women supply Christ's necessities—Christ's miracles again ascribed to Beelzebub—the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit—the sign from heaven—Christ greater than Jonas or Solomon—his followers dearer than his mother or brethren—the sermon of parables—the parable of the sower—of the lighted lamp—why Christ taught in parables—the parable of the tares, or darnel—of the seed that sprung up imperceptibly—of the leaven—many parables—the explanation of the parable of the tares—the parable of the treasure hid in the field—of the pearl of great price—of the net which gathered of every kind—of the householder who brings forth things new and old—Christ goes to Nazareth, but is rejected by his townsmen—the twelve apostles sent forth a second time—their commission.

THE miracles of our Lord Jesus Christ had been so numerous, public, and astonishing, that they excited very general attention, and induced many to suppose that he was a great prophet, if not the Messiah of God. It was little wonder, therefore, that the people gathered round him, from all quarters, in such vast crowds, as to tread one another down, [Luke xii. 1.] and waited for him whole nights in the fields, and followed him from place to place, even to the most remote corners of the country. He was followed, not merely by vast multitudes of the common people, but many of those who were of character and station occasionally visited him, to hear his conversation, to observe his miracles, and, in some instances, to solicit the cures of their

children and servants. Therefore, the character, as well as the multitude, of our Lord's followers, and the frequent application that was made to him for cures, by persons of all ranks and stations, in all parts of the country, show, beyond contradiction, how universal the persuasion was, that now prevailed, concerning the truth of his miracles; a persuasion which could be founded on nothing but the reality of those miracles, clearly evident to every spectator. Thus when our Lord had descended from the mountain, whither he had retired with his disciples, he found a vast concourse of people collected together, "out of all Judea, and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases, and they that were vexed with unclean spirits; and they were healed. And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went virtue out of him, and healed them all." By this benignity he put the cure in the power of the diseased themselves, and wrought many more miracles than could have been done in the way of a formal application to him for a cure.

The multitude that pressed to touch Jesus, in order to be healed, being quieted, he turned to his disciples, perhaps the twelve apostles lately chosen, and delivered a discourse, in many particulars like that which is called the sermon on the mount. In comparing these two discourses with each other, it appears, that both of them begin with nearly similar benedictions, contain the same exhortations to the love of our enemies, to the exercise of universal benevolence, and to the carefully avoiding rash judgment; and conclude, in like manner, with the remarkable similitude, in which he that only hears the word of Christ without obeying it, is compared to a man that built his house on the sand; while he who diligently practises agreeably to the instructions he has obtained, digs deep, and builds his house upon a rock, where it opposes a firm and effectual resistance to all the fury of the contending elements. The sermon at the plain has, however, nothing answerable to Matt. v. 13—37, the whole sixth chapter, nor to that part of the seventh which is included between the sixth and fifteenth verses. But that which most deserves to be remarked is, that Luke has several additions to the discourse, as recorded by Matthew. For instance, in the latter, our Lord pronounced only blessings; but here he has also added curses. "But woe unto you that are rich; for ye have received your consolation." As poverty, which is neither good nor bad in itself, does not recommend one to God, unless it is accompanied with the virtues which are suitable to an afflicted state; so riches do not make us the objects of God's hatred, unless they be accompanied with those vices which oftentimes spring from an opulent fortune, namely, pride, luxury, love of pleasure, covetousness. Rich men, infected with such vices as these, are the objects of the woe here denounced; and not they who make a proper use of their wealth,

and possess the virtues which should accompany affluence. Wherefore, though there is no restriction added to the word rich, in the malediction, as there is to the word poor, in the complete enunciation of the beatitude, [Matt. v. 3.] it is equally to be understood in both. "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Woe unto you that are rich in spirit, ye who are proud, covetous, lovers of pleasure; for ye have received your consolation." The parable of the rich man and Lazarus may be considered as an illustration both of the beatitude and the malediction.

"Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger:" you shall experience the want of every real good, and endure pains, in the other world, more than equal to those distressing sensations which arise from famine.

"Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep." A modern author hath explained this well, in the following terms: 'Our Lord's malediction is not inconsistent with the apostle's precept, which commands christians always to rejoice. Neither is the mirth, against which the woe is here denounced, to be understood of that constant cheerfulness of temper, which arises to true christians from the comfortable and cheerful doctrines with which they are enlightened by the gospel, the assurance they have of reconciliation with God, the hope they have of everlasting life, and the pleasure they enjoy in the practice of piety, and the other duties of religion. But it is to be understood of that turbulent, carnal mirth, that excessive levity and vanity of spirit, which arises, not from any solid foundation, but from immoderate sensual pleasure, or those vain amusements of life, by which the giddy and the gay contrive to make away their time; that sort of mirth which dissipates thought, leaves no time for consideration, and gives them an utter aversion to all serious reflections.' Persons who continue to indulge themselves in this sort of mirth through life, shall weep and mourn eternally, when they are excluded from the joys of heaven, and banished for ever from the presence of God, by the light of whose countenance all the blessed are enlivened, and made transcendently happy.

"Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets." Dr. Clarke has paraphrased this malediction excellently. "Woe unto you, if, by propagating such doctrine as encourages men in sin, you shall gain to yourselves the applause and flattery of the generality of men; for thus, in old times, did the false prophets and deceivers, who, accommodating their doctrines to the lusts and passions of men, were more caressed, and better hearkened to, than the true prophets of God."

Another peculiarity of this discourse is contained in the thirty-ninth and fortieth verses. "And he spake a parable unto them, Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both

fall into the ditch? The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master." This inculcates, that guides, in matters of religion, ought to be chosen with the utmost caution; since the scholar is easily tinctured with the opinions of his master, and the consequences of his embracing a false system of faith and conduct may be the utter ruin of his soul.

To those who have considered attentively the various points of similarity and dissimilarity between the two discourses which we have now been comparing, it will not appear surprising that the question has been agitated, whether they were delivered but once, and variously related by the evangelists, or whether they were preached on two different occasions.

Michaelis believed that they were two different discourses, delivered, the one in the evening, and the other on the next morning, as he endeavours to prove, in the following history of the day, in the sermon on the mount.

"On the eve of a sabbath-day, when the sabbath was just commenced, Jesus goes into a synagogue at Capernaum, delivers a discourse of the same import with that on the mount, and cures a demoniac: he then departs out of the city, and goes up into a mountain, where he passes the whole night in prayer. On the following morning he chooses his apostles, and delivers a discourse called the sermon on the mount, in which he teaches them the morality which they were to follow, a morality directly opposite to that of the Pharisees: he then enters again into Capernaum; cures a leper, the servant of a centurion, the mother-in-law of St. Peter, and, when the sun was set, and the sabbath, therefore, ended, several other sick persons, which were brought to him; and then leaves Capernaum. The reasons why I believe that all these events happened in the same day, are the following:

"1. The cure of the demoniac, [Mark i. 21—28, Luke iv. 31—37.] and of St. Peter's mother-in-law, happened on the same day, as appears from Mark i. 29, Luke iv. 38.

"2. The election of the twelve apostles took place on the morning of that day on which the sermon on the mount was delivered. See Luke, the sixth chapter, verses 12—17.

"3. That the sermon on the mount, recorded by St. Luke, is no other than that recorded by St. Matthew, appears from the events which immediately follow it. Both evangelists relate, that Jesus, after the sermon was ended, went into Capernaum, and healed the servant of a centurion; a cure attended with such remarkable circumstances, that I can hardly suppose it to have happened twice, and that too in the same city.

"4. The cure of the leper, according to St. Matthew's account, must have happened between the sermon on the mount and the cure of the centurion's servant, when Jesus was just returned into Capernaum. St. Mark and St. Luke relate this

fact on a totally different occasion, because they were unacquainted with the time; and St. Luke, even with the place, in which it happened. The whole account is too circumstantial to admit the supposition, that the same cure, with all its concomitant circumstances, took place more than once.

“5. It is evident from St. Matthew’s relation, that the cure of St. Peter’s mother-in-law happened on the same day as the two just-mentioned miracles.

“6. The circumstance mentioned by all three evangelists, that several sick persons were brought in the evening, and after sun-set, to the house where Jesus was, is a proof that the day in question was a sabbath-day. For the Jews, on account of their over-strict observance of the sabbath, would not permit any cure to be exercised on that day; but as soon as the sun was set, the sabbath was ended, and then they could bring their sick, without scruple, to the house where Jesus was, and likewise St. Peter’s mother-in-law could prepare for him a repast.

“7. That Jesus immediately afterwards left Capernaum, is evident from the accounts of all the three evangelists.”

On the other side, Dr. Macknight observes, “that the evangelist Matthew, having recorded the former sermon in its place, judged it unnecessary to give this repetition of it here. But, if the reader is of opinion that the two sermons are the same, because this, in Luke, comes immediately after the election of the twelve apostles, and is followed by the cure of the centurion’s servant in Capernaum, as that in Matthew comes after the calling of the four disciples, Simon, Andrew, James, and John, and is followed by the cure of a centurion’s son, living also in Capernaum, let him consider, in the first place, that the two miracles following these sermons, viz. the curing of the centurion’s son and slave, are, in several respects, different; and, for that reason, must have been performed on different persons and at different times. In the next place, the calling of the four disciples, which precedes the sermon in Matthew, is, without doubt, a fact entirely different from the election of the twelve apostles, preceding the sermon in Luke, and happened long before it. Besides the sermon in Luke was preached immediately after the election of the twelve; whereas, a large tour through Galilee, which may have taken up some months, intervened between the calling of the four disciples and the sermon in Matthew. And, to name no more differences, the sermon recorded by Matthew was delivered on a mountain, in a sitting posture; for he went up into a mountain, and sat down to pronounce it [Mat. v. 1.]; and, after he had finished it, came down to the plain [Mat. viii. 1.]; whereas, when he pronounced this which Luke speaks of, he was in a plain, or valley, where he could not sit because of the multitude which surrounded him, but stood with his disciples. [Luke vi. 17.]

But though there was not such evident disagreement in the fact preceding and following these two sermons, the reader may easily have allowed that they were pronounced at different times; because he will find other instances of things really different, notwithstanding, in their nature, they be alike, and were preceded and followed by like events. For instance, the commission and instructions given to the seventy, were, in substance, the same with the commission and instructions given to the twelve, [Mat. xii.] and were introduced after the same manner. "The harvest is plenteous, &c." [Mat. ix. 37.] Yet, from Luke himself, it appears they were different, that evangelist having related the mission of the twelve as a distinct fact. [chap. ix. 1.] So, likewise, the man in Samaria, who offered to follow Jesus whithersoever he should go, was evidently a different person from the scribe, who offered the same thing at the sea of Galilee, notwithstanding the answer returned to both was precisely the same. "The foxes have holes," &c. ; and, notwithstanding, immediately after both occurrences, we find a disciple excusing himself from following Christ, on pretence of burying his father, to whom our Lord returned the same answer, "let the dead bury their dead." And, to give no more examples, the two miraculous dinners were not only like each other in their natures, but in their circumstances also; for they were introduced by the same discourse, and followed by like events, particularly at the conclusion of both, Jesus passed over the sea of Galilee. Nevertheless, both being found in the same evangelist, no reader can possibly think them the same."

Immediately after the concluding of this discourse, Luke introduces a miracle, in many respects similar to one which has been already related. [Luke vii. 1—10.] "Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum. And a certain centurion's servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die. And, when he had heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant. And, when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this: For he loveth our nation, and hath built us a synagogue. Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof: Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no,

not in Israel. And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick." That this miracle is not the same with that recorded in the eighth chapter of Matthew, appears probable from the following considerations. 1. The word which is made use of by Matthew does not affirm that the subject of that miracle was not one that necessarily signifies a servant, but only a young man; whereas, the expression made use of by Luke, can be no otherwise rendered than servant, or slave. 2. Matthew's centurion came in person, being, perhaps, to ask the favour of Jesus for his son; whereas, Luke's centurion, considering with himself that he was to petition Jesus in behalf of a slave, first prevailed with the elders of the town to present his petition; afterwards, on second thoughts, he deputed some intimate friends to hinder Jesus from coming. 3. There is not the smallest hint given in Matthew, that the centurion of whom he speaks was a proselyte. On the contrary, there is an insinuation that he was not, in the declaration which our Lord was pleased to make on this occasion, viz. that "many should come from the east and west," i. e. from all countries, "and sit down in the kingdom of God; while the children of the kingdom," who looked on themselves as having the only natural right to it, should be excluded for ever; whereas, the centurion Luke speaks of, was a lover of the Jewish nation, and had built them a synagogue, perhaps in Italy, or some other heathen country; and so was, in all probability, a proselyte of the gate, as they were called; for which cause the principal people in the town cheerfully undertook to solicit Jesus in his behalf.

As the twelve apostles were placed in the most important post that was ever occupied by men, their divine Master was careful to give them all the necessary instructions. Having, therefore, called them to him, he first furnished them with miraculous powers over diseases and evil spirits, and then gave them their commission to go forth and proclaim the gospel.

Go not, said he, unto the way of the Gentiles, i. e. their country; for the way of the sea [Mat. iv. 15.] signifies the country round the sea. "And into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not." In travelling through Palestine, the apostles would often have occasion to go into Samaria; but they were not to enter the cities thereof with a design to preach. It is true, in the beginning of his ministry, our Lord himself preached to the Samaritans with great success [John iv. 41, 42.]; and therefore, had he sent his apostles among them, numbers would, in all probability, have been induced to believe. But the inveterate enmity which the Jews bore to the Samaritans made the conversion of the latter improper at this time. [Mat. x. 6.] "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" he called the Jews lost sheep, because, as he had told his disciples, [Mat. ix. 36.] they fainted, and were scattered abroad,

as sheep having no shepherd, and so were in danger of perishing. [See Isaiah xlix. 10.] “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand: publish every where the glad tidings of the approach of the Messiah’s kingdom, promised by the prophets. Properly speaking, the kingdom of heaven, or gospel dispensation, did not begin till the Jewish economy was abolished; and, therefore, the apostles in our Lord’s time, and even our Lord himself, preached the approach only, and not the actual existence of that kingdom. But though the apostles were directed to preach the approach of the kingdom of heaven, they did not yet fully understand its nature, that it was not to be a temporal, but a spiritual kingdom, consisting in the dominion of righteousness and truth within men.

“Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely ye have received, freely give.” Perform all these miraculous cures in confirmation of your mission, without receiving any hire or reward for them of any kind. [Matt. x. 9.] “Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses.” Though I forbid you to take any reward for the miraculous cures which you shall perform, I do not mean that you should before-hand lay up money for your support during your journey. You are not even to provide the clothes and shoes which you may have occasion for while you are abroad, because you shall be supplied with whatever you need by those to whom you preach the gospel, and you have a right to be thus supplied by them. “Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat.” Our Lord forbade his disciples to provide before-hand such things as might be necessary during their journey, because they would be troublesome to them in travelling; and ordered them to go out thus unfurnished, partly that they might be inured, in his own life-time, to bear the hardships they would be exposed to afterwards, when discharging the apostolical function; and partly, that their faith in the providence of God might be confirmed. For it must have afforded them great comfort ever after, to reflect on the singular care that was taken of them while out on their first mission, wholly unprepared to execute such an undertaking. Accordingly, this is the use which Christ himself directed them to make of it. [Luke xxii. 35. Matt. x. 11.] “And whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy, and there abide till ye go thence.” When ye enter a city, endeavour to find out those who are most remarkable for their piety, probity, and hospitality, who are expecting the Messiah’s kingdom, who will receive the news of it with pleasure, and who, in all probability, will assist you in publishing it; and, when ye have found such persons, abide with them till ye leave that city, or village. We have this more fully expressed in the instructions to the seventy. [Luke x. 7.] “In the same house

remain, eating and drinking such things as they have: go not from house to house." Doubtless, the disciples, on some occasions, might change their quarters with decency; but our Lord absolutely forbade them to do it for the sake of better entertainment, that they might not give mankind the least handle of imagining they served their bellies. [Matt. x. 12.] "And when ye come into an house, salute it;" or, as it is in the instructions given to the seventy, Luke x. 5, "Say, Peace be to this house:" for, in eastern countries, the form of salutation used among friends was, "Peace be to you, or to this house." Hence our Lord adds, "And if this house be worthy;" be of a hospitable disposition, and receive you; "let your peace come upon it;" let your salutation be made effectual, by its enjoying great temporal and spiritual prosperity; so do I command who have the government of the world. "But if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you;" your benediction shall return to yourselves; for ye shall be sure to find the more kindness elsewhere, that you have been ill used by these inhospitable people. "And whosoever shall not receive you," that is, entertain you kindly, "nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." The Jews fancied that the very dust of heathen countries polluted them; for which reason, when they returned to their own land, they used to stop at the borders of it, and wipe their feet, that the holy inheritance might not be defiled. If our Lord had this custom in his eye, his meaning was, Look upon those who refuse you the offices of humanity, and will not hearken to your instructions, as no better than heathens. Accordingly, the direction is thus expressed, [Mark vi. 11.] "Shake off the dust under your feet, for a testimony against them: declare, in the plainest manner, that, for the future, you will not have the least intercourse with such an obstinate and impious race. [Matt. x. 15.] "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for that city." Persons, the matter of whose crimes far exceed theirs, are less guilty than they, because they have not despised such advantages; so that they shall be more lightly punished.

Considering the nature of the tidings which the apostles were now sent out to publish, namely, that "the kingdom of heaven was at hand:" considering, also, the number and variety of the miraculous cures which they were enabled to perform in confirmation of their doctrine, together with the greatness of the benefits they were empowered to confer upon the families who should entertain them kindly, it is reasonable to think, that they were flattering themselves with the hopes of great honour and acceptance wherever they came. In the mean time, the event was, by no means, to be answerable to their expectations; for they were to be delivered up into the hands of public justice, and punished as evil doers. Our Lord, therefore, thought fit

to forewarn them of these things, made them large promises of the divine aid, and gave them directions with respect to their conduct in every circumstance. [Matt. x. 16.] "Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves:" I now send you forth, weak and defenceless, among a cruel and wicked people: "be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves:" on the one hand, be so prudent as not to irritate the wicked, and those who shall oppose you, either by your behaviour or your doctrine, unnecessarily [Matt. vii. 6.]; on the other hand, let not your prudence degenerate into craft, lest it lead you to betray the truth, or to encourage men in their evil practices. Join prudence and innocence together, rendering yourselves remarkable for integrity, amidst the greatest temptations, and for meekness, under the greatest provocations. "But beware of men:" though I order you to be meek and patient under injuries, I do not mean that you should not be on your guard, and, if possible, avoid them: No: the more circumspect you are in the whole of your conversation with the men of this world, whom I before compared to wolves, it is so much the better; for, after all, you will meet with many indignities, and often be in danger of death, even from the hand of public justice: "for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in the synagogues as apostates. And ye shall be brought before governors and kings, as malefactors, for my sake." These things did not happen while the apostles were out on their first mission. They came to pass after Christ's ascension, when Peter and John were called before the Sanhedrim, [Acts iv. 6, 7.] and beaten. [Acts v. 40.] Also, when James and Peter were brought before Herod. [Acts xii. 3.] Paul, before king Agrippa, and his wife, and the Roman governors, Gallio, Felix, Festus; and, last of all, before the emperor Nero, and his prefect, Helius Cæsarianus. "For a testimony against them and the Gentiles." All these things are ordered to befall you, that your innocence may appear, and that the truth of the gospel may be demonstrated. Accordingly, the patience which the apostles showed under continual persecutions, and the courage wherewith they went to death in confirmation of their doctrine, became strong proofs of their innocence, and of the truth of the gospel. Moreover, if the apostles had never been brought before the supreme powers, nor defended their cause in the presence of kings and governors, it might have been said, that because Christianity could not bear a strict examination from able judges, it was preached to none but men of vulgar understandings, who were not capable of detecting it. But when persons of the highest distinction, for birth, fortune, capacity, and learning, had the gospel laid before them, in the defences which the apostles were obliged to make at the public tribunals of every country, its standing such a trial was, certainly, a great confirmation of its truth, to persons of inferior note.

Wherefore, as Jesus had foretold the persecutions which the apostles suffered, and their being brought before kings, this became a testimony of their innocence, and of the truth of the gospel; and, consequently, an undeniable proof of the guilt both of the Jews and Gentiles, who rejected it. "But when they deliver you up, take no thought how, or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak: for it is not ye that speak, but the spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." This direction was repeated on several occasions afterwards, particularly Luke xii. 11, Mark xiii. 11. The apostles being illiterate men, and wholly unacquainted with the laws of the different countries whither they were to go, and with the forms of their courts, their Master foresaw that they would be in great perplexity when they appeared, as criminals, before persons of the first distinction. He foresaw, likewise, that this circumstance would occur to themselves, and render them anxious to meditate before-hand by what apology they might best defend so noble a cause. More than once, then, he expressly forbade them to be in the least solicitous about the defence they were to make, or so much as to premeditate any part of them; promising to afford them, on all occasions, the aid of their Father's spirit, who would inspire them to speak in a manner becoming the cause they were to defend.

"And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child; and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death;" such is the nature of the men among whom ye are going, and such the obstinacy with which they shall oppose the gospel, that were it their father, their brother, or their son, who preaches it, they would make no scruple of being active in putting those nearest relations to death. You may, therefore, expect the hottest persecution. But, as you are to have great assistances, you need not be dismayed. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake," i. e. ye shall be hated by the generality of men. The apostles and first christians set themselves in opposition both to the Jewish and Pagan religions, declaring the nullity of the former, and urging the renunciation of the latter, in all its forms, as matter of indispensable necessity. On the most tremendous penalties, they required every man, without exception, to believe in Christ, and submit implicitly to his authority; a demand most galling to the pride of princes, priests, and philosophers. Moreover, having a lively sense of the importance of the things which they preached, they urged them, not in a cold and indifferent manner, but with the utmost fervency. Need it be matter of wonder then, that, in every country, such a furious storm of persecution arose against them, and the religion they taught; and that they were treated as the filth and off-scourings of the earth? "But he that endureth

to the end shall be saved." This encouragement Jesus likewise gave to his disciples, when he spake to them of the sufferings they were to meet with about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. [Matt. xxiv. 13.] We may, therefore, believe that he had those sufferings now in his view. "But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another; for verily I say unto you, ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Let not the persecutions ye are to meet with, in any period of your ministry, discourage you; but when ye are sore pressed in one city, flee into another, where ye will meet with an asylum; for I assure you, in spite of all opposition, your labours shall be attended with such success, that "ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come." Before ye have carried the glad tidings of the gospel to the several cities of Israel, my kingdom shall be established in many places; so that, in the midst of the hottest persecution, ye may always expect to find some who will befriend you. By the coming of the Son of man, here mentioned, Lightfoot understands his resurrection from the dead; others, the destruction of Jerusalem, called the coming of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven [Matt. xxiv. 30.]; others, the miraculous effusion of the Spirit, named by our Lord himself, his coming [John xiv. 18.]; but the last is the more simple and natural explication. "The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord; if they call the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?" That you may bear all with a becoming fortitude, consider that they have calumniated, traduced, and persecuted me, your Master; for which cause, you, my disciples, cannot think it hard if they shall calumniate and persecute you. [Matt. x. 26.] "Fear them not, therefore, for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known." Be not afraid of their calumnies, however false or malicious; for neither shall their wickedness or your innocence be always concealed; both shall be manifested, at least, in the day of judgment. Wherefore, the doctrines of the gospel, which I have delivered to you in private, you ought to preach plainly and publicly without the fear of men. "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, (in private,) that preach ye upon the house-tops. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell." The utmost malice of your enemies cannot reach your better part, your soul, it can only hurt your body; for which reason, you ought to fear them less than God, who, if you offend him, can destroy (torment, so the word sometimes signifies,) both soul and body in hell. Besides, you should consider that your

enemies cannot touch even your bodies without your Father's permission. For the meanest of his creatures are under the protection of his providence, insomuch that nothing befalleth them without its direction. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father." The regard which the great Father of the universe has for all his creatures, small and great, is strongly represented in the book of Jonah, where God makes his compassion to brute beasts one of the reasons why he would not destroy Nineveh: "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left, and also much cattle?" "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." Men number whatever things of value are in their possession, lest any of them should be lost through the carelessness, or knavery, of those who have them in charge. The numbering, therefore, of the disciples' hairs, shows how precious his servants are in God's sight, and what a strict account he takes of every thing that concerns them. "Fear ye not, therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." Since the least of God's creatures are so much the object of his care, ye, who are honoured with so important an employment as that of preaching the gospel, need not be afraid.

"Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father, which is in heaven." [See 2 Tim. ii. 12; Rev. iii. 5; Rom. x. 9—11.] Whosoever shall make profession of my religion in time of persecution, and, by an inviolable attachment to its precepts, shall acknowledge me for his master, I will own him as my disciple, in presence of my Father, at the judgment, and will claim for him the rewards which my Father has promised to such: whereas, whosoever does not thus confess me before men, I also will not confess him before my Father. There is an unspeakable majesty in this article of our Lord's discourse. Although he was now in the lowest state of humility, he declared that his confessing us before God is the greatest happiness, and his denying us the greatest misery, that can possibly befall us.

"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Because the prophets have spoken glorious things of the peace and happiness of the world under the reign of Messiah, [Isa. xi. 6.] whom they have named, for that reason, the Prince of peace, [Isa. ix. 6.] you may imagine that I am come to put the world into that happy state forthwith. But it is not so. For though

the nature of my government be such as might produce abundant felicity, and though my religion breathes nothing but love, men will not, at first, lay aside their animosity; nor will they exercise a mutual friendship among themselves, as soon as the gospel is preached to them. No; such is their wickedness, that they shall make the gospel itself an occasion of bitter dissensions, insomuch that it will look as if I had come on purpose to sow discord. For, as I told you before, the nearest relations shall quarrel among themselves, on account of the doctrines of the gospel, and prosecute their quarrels with surprising virulence. The reader will be pleased to observe, that thus to apply our Lord's words to christians, is the most unfavourable sense that can be put upon them, seeing they may as properly be interpreted of the unbelieving Jews and heathens, who persecuted their nearest relations to death, on account of the gospel. In neither sense, however, can it be thought, that they declare the end for which the Son of God came into the world. They only foretell what the effect of his coming would be. The glorious state of things predicted by the prophets was not instantly to begin; but christianity was, for a season, to be the innocent occasion of much mischief. However, as these bad consequences are, by no means, peculiar to christianity, they must not be imputed to it; but to the wickedness of men.

“He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me.” He that preferreth the friendship of his nearest relations, though the sweetest of all earthly satisfactions, to my religion, renouncing it, that he may enjoy their good-will, does not deserve to be called a christian. He told them this, very properly, after having declared that their bitterest foes should be the members of their own families. “And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.” Whosoever does not resolve to suffer the greatest hardships, rather than renounce my religion, is not worthy to bear my name. There is here an allusion to the custom of the Romans, who obliged criminals to bear the crosses, on which they were to suffer, to the place of execution. The figure, therefore, expresses this sentiment with great energy, that no man can be a true christian, unless he is willing to endure all sorts of persecutions, together with the most shameful and painful deaths, for Christ's sake, when called to it. So that the case, in short, comes to this: he that makes shipwreck of faith, and a good conscience, to save his life, shall lose that which is really so, his everlasting happiness: whereas, he that maintaineth integrity at the expense of life and all its enjoyments, shall find, what is infinitely better, a blessed immortality. “He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life, for my sake, shall find it. He that receiveth you, receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.” Whoso ac-

knowledgeth you as my apostles, and hearkeneth to you as such, acknowledges and obeys me; and he who does so, really acknowledges and obeys God, who has commissioned me to reveal his will to men, even as I now send you on the same errand. "He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." He who obeys a prophet as a person commissioned by God to reveal future events, and to teach men their duty; who reverences him as God's messenger, and who assists him in the execution of his office, shall receive a reward of the same kind with that which is promised to prophets, on account of their having turned many to righteousness. And he who respects a righteous man, shall receive the reward due to righteousness, of which this is an excellent instance—"And whosoever shall give to drink, unto one of these little ones, a cup of cold water only," water, in its natural state, without any preparation, (which, certainly, is the least favour imaginable,) "in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward." He who doth any good office whatever to the meanest of my disciples, because he is my disciple, though it should be but the small service of handing a cup of cold water to them, shall not go unrewarded.

The day after, according to the common reading, or, as other copies have it, some time after that Christ had given these injunctions to his apostles, he travelled with them, and many others of his disciples, as far as the entrance of the city of Nain, a town situated a mile or two south of Tabor. Here they met with a funeral procession, and were soon informed that the corpse, which was now carrying to the grave, was that of the only son of a widow, whom this loss had rendered disconsolate. As Christ was full of compassion, he affectionately addressed himself to this woman, desiring her to refrain from weeping, laid hold of the bier, and commanded the youth to arise. As this mandate was instantly obeyed, Christ immediately presented the young man to his mother, who must now have been equally agitated with astonishment and joy. As this cure was performed hard by the city gate, which, anciently, in those countries, was the place of public resort, the youth must have been raised from the dead in presence of many witnesses, particularly the multitude which came with Jesus, the people who accompanied the corpse, and all who, on business, happened to be, at that instant, in the gate. Wherefore, being so publicly performed, this great miracle became, also, a noble confirmation of our Lord's mission. "And there came a fear upon all; and they glorified God, saying, that a great prophet is risen up among us; and that God hath visited his people." As this is the expression which Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, ap-

plied to the coming of the Messiah, we have reason to suppose the meaning of the inhabitants of Nain to be, that God had visited his people, by raising up, amongst them, the great prophet promised to Moses in the law. This miracle appears to have been so conspicuous, that the fame of it spread through all the neighbouring country, and tended greatly to establish the reputation of Jesus.

We have already noticed the call of Matthew, and given some slight view of his character, in the enumeration of the twelve apostles. We have now to observe, that this converted publican took an early opportunity to make a splendid entertainment for his Master, who did not refuse to partake of it. On this occasion, he invited as many of his brother publicans as he could, hoping that Christ's conversation might bring them to repent. In this feast, therefore, Matthew showed both gratitude and charity; gratitude to Christ, who had now called him; and charity to his acquaintance, in labouring to bring about their conversion. This was quite different to the conduct of the Pharisees, who had such an high idea of their own purity, as to refuse to eat with any other Jews, even though both of them might be subject to a legal defilement. Therefore, such of them as dwelt in Capernaum, and knew both Matthew's occupation, and the character of his guests, were highly offended that Jesus, who pretended to be a prophet, should have deigned to go into the company of such; so offended, that they could not forbear condemning his conduct openly, by asking his disciples, with an air of insolence, in the hearing of the whole company, why he sat with publicans and sinners. The Pharisees, indeed, had not directed their discourse to Jesus; but, having spoken so loud as to let all the guests hear their censure, he could not avoid meekly putting them in mind, that it is sick people only who have need of a physician; to intimate, that since the Pharisees thought themselves righteous persons, they had no need of his company; whereas, the publicans, whom they called sinners, being sick, had the best title to it. And that, as nobody ever blamed a physician for going into the company of the patients whose cure he had undertaken, so they could not blame him for conversing with sinners, since he did it, not as their companion, but as their physician, and, therefore, with a view to reclaim them. "But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice;" as if he had said, In bringing sinners to repentance, I certainly please God; because it is the highest exercise of benevolence, a virtue which he has expressly declared to be more acceptable to him than sacrifice, the greatest of the ceremonial duties so unreasonably magnified by the men of your sect, who observe them, on many occasions, at the expense of charity. "For I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." I am not come to convert those who are already converted, or

to preach repentance unto those who have already repented unto life; but to enlarge the borders of the kingdom of God, by inviting those to embrace his blessed salvation, who were, before that, practising every abomination.

While Jesus was in Levi's house, some of John Baptist's followers came and asked him why his disciples wholly neglected to fast; a duty which they and the Pharisees frequently performed. [Mat. ix. 14.] "Then came to him the disciples of John, (Mark, and of the Pharisees,) saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft; (Luke, and make prayers,) but thy disciples fast not? (Luke, but thine eat and drink?)" In the law, we find only one fast day enjoined, namely, the tenth of the seventh month, on which the national atonement was made. But the Jews, of their own accord, observed many other days of fasting. [See Isa. lviii. 3.] In our Lord's time, days of this kind were more frequent than ever, especially among the Pharisees; who, according to the practice of their sect, fasted, probably, twice a week [Luke xviii. 12.]; and, therefore, as Jesus did not pretend to teach his disciples a more lax kind of doctrine than John and the Pharisees, the disciples of the latter were surprised to find them overlooking so essential a duty. [Mat. ix. 15.] "And Jesus said unto them, Can (Luke, ye make) the children of the bride-chamber mourn, (Mark, Luke, fast,) as long as the bridegroom is with them?" There was a great propriety in this allusion of our Lord; because the Pharisees themselves admitted, that the bridegroom and his attendants were exempted from the duty of fasting, and that all fasts should cease in the days of the Messiah, when there should be only good days, and days of joy and rejoicing. "No man, saith he, putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old; if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was taken out of the rent agreeth not with the old. And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish. But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved. No man, also, having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new; for he saith, the old is better. To understand these comparisons, let it be observed, that the bottles here referred to were leathern bottles, such as are now used in the East; that the new cloth was such as was rough, and had not passed through the hands of the fuller; and that new wine is not considered as having arrived at that mellowness of flavour which distinguishes the old. The general import, therefore, of these passages appears to be, that the gospel dispensation was of a kind, perfectly different from the traditions of the Pharisees, or even the ceremonial institutions of Moses; and that, therefore, they could not, with propriety, be blended together.

While Jesus, at Matthew's entertainment, was reasoning in defence of his disciples, Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, pro-

bably, that was in Capernaum, came in the utmost perplexity, fell down upon the ground before him, in the presence of all the company, and humbly entreated that he would go with him and cure his only daughter, a child of twelve years of age, who lay at the point of death. Generally speaking, the rulers were Christ's bitterest enemies; yet there were some of them of a different character. [John xii. 42.] In particular, this ruler must have had a very favourable opinion of Jesus, and an high notion of his power; else he would not have applied to him for help in the present extremity; and, by publicly acknowledging his power, have done him so much honour. His faith may have been built on the miracles which he knew Jesus had performed; for our Lord had, by this time, resided in Capernaum several months. No sooner had Jairus made this supplication, than Jesus, ever ready to assist the afflicted, rose from the table, and went along with him. But, as he passed through the street, surrounded with his disciples, and a crowd that went along with him, in hopes of seeing the miracle, a woman, who had been afflicted with a flux of blood for twelve years, and had applied to many physicians without success, came behind him, laid hold of the hem of his garment, and was cured. This incidental miracle appears very grand, when the relation it bears to the principal one is considered. Jesus is going to give a specimen of that almighty power, by which the resurrection of all men to immortality shall be effected at the last day, and, behold, virtue, little inferior to that which is capable of raising the dead to life, issues from him, through his garment, and heals a very obstinate disease; which, having baffled the powers of medicine for twelve years, had remained absolutely incurable, till the presence of Jesus, who is the resurrection and the life, chased it away. The cure, though complete, was performed in an instant, and the woman knew it, by the immediate ease which she felt, by the return of her strength, by the cheerfulness of her spirits, and by all the other agreeable sensations which accompany sudden changes from painful diseases to perfect health.

In the mean time, a messenger came and acquainted the ruler that his daughter was dead. This was afflicting news to the tender-hearted parent, and, no doubt, moved him greatly. But Jesus, pitying his grief, bade him take comfort, and promised that his daughter should be made whole. He did not say she should be raised from the dead; for, as he was infinitely above praise, he never courted it. On the contrary, he oftentimes refused those honours which, as it were, obtruded themselves upon him, particularly in the present case, where he adapted his words rather to the request of the ruler than to the reality of the thing. "She shall be made whole;" as if she had not been dead, but only sick. Moreover, though he came to the house, where a great many friends and others ac-

accompanied him, he suffered none of them to go in with him, except his three disciples, Peter, James, and John, with the father and mother of the maiden: and even these he admitted for no other reason but that the miracle might have proper witnesses, who should publish it, in due time, for the benefit of the world. It seems, the mother of the damsel, on hearing that Jesus was nigh, had gone out to the street to conduct him in, or waited for him in the porch of her house to receive him. With these attendants, Jesus went up stairs where the damsel was lying; for they used to lay their dead in upper rooms. [See Acts ix. 37.] Here he found a number of people, in an outer apartment, making lamentation for her, according to the custom of the Jews, with music. "And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth." The company at the ruler's house, when Jesus came in, being employed in making such lamentation for the damsel as they used to make for the dead, it is evident they all believed she was actually departed. Wherefore, when Jesus told them she was not dead, he did not mean that her soul was not separated from her body, but that it was not to continue so, which was the idea the mourners affixed to the word death. Her state he expressed by saying, that she slept, using the word in a sense somewhat analogous to that which the Jews put upon it; when, in speaking of a person's death, they called it sleep, to intimate their belief of his existence and happiness in the other world, together with their hope of his future resurrection to a new life. On this occasion, the phrase was made use of with singular propriety, to insinuate that, notwithstanding the maid was really dead, she should not long continue so. After clearing the anti-chamber, he entered where the corpse was lying, accompanied by none but the three disciples above mentioned, and the father and mother of the damsel, they being, of all persons, the most proper witnesses of the miracle, which, in reality, suffered nothing by the absence of the rest. For, as they were all sensible that the child was dead, they could not but be certain of the miracle when they saw her alive again, though they might not know to whom the honour of her resurrection was due. It seems, Jesus was not solicitous of appropriating it to himself. Probably, also, he went in thus slenderly attended, that the witnesses might have opportunity to examine the whole transaction narrowly, and so be able to report it afterwards upon the fullest assurance, and with every circumstance of credibility. All things, therefore, being properly disposed, he went up to the bed, and took the damsel by the hand, as if he had been going to awake her out of sleep, and, with a gentle voice, but such as the persons in the chamber could easily hear, bade her arise. In an instant, she revived and sat up, just like a person who, being called, awakes out of a soft sleep. Luke

says, [chap. viii. 55.] "her spirit came again;" an expression which implies that she was really dead, and that the soul exists separately after the body dies, a truth very necessary to be asserted in those days, when it was denied by many. Withal, her flesh, her colour, and her strength, returning in the twinkling of an eye, she was not in the weak and languishing condition of one who, being worn out with a disease, had given up the ghost; for she walked through the room with vigour. She was not even in the languishing condition of those who come to life after having fainted away, but was in a state of confirmed good health, being hungry. This circumstance effectually showing the greatness and perfection of the miracle, Jesus brought it to pass on purpose, in her resurrection. To make the witnesses sensible of it likewise, he ordered some meat to be given her, which she took, probably, in the presence of the company. "And her parents were astonished; and he charged them that they should tell no man what was done." It was well known to all the people in the house that the maid was dead. The women who were hired to make lamentation for her, according to the custom of the country, knew it. Even the multitude had reason to believe it, after the ruler's servant came and told him publicly in the street, that his daughter was dead. Moreover, that she was restored to life again could not be hid from the domestics, nor from the relations of the family, nor from any having communication with them. Wherefore, our Lord's injunction to tell no man what was done, could not mean that the parents were to keep the miracle a secret: that was impossible to be done. But they were not officiously to blaze it abroad, nor even to indulge the inclination which they might feel to speak of a matter so astonishing. The reason was, the miracle spake sufficiently for itself. Accordingly, Matthew tells us, it made a great noise, chap. ix. 26. "And the fame thereof went abroad into all the land." As Jesus' miracles were done in public, they could not fail to be much spoken of. Wherefore, when the fame of any of them in particular is mentioned, it implies, that the reports concerning it spread far abroad, that the truth of it was inquired into by many, and that, upon inquiry, the reality of the miracle was universally acknowledged. This being the proper meaning of the observation, the evangelists, by thus openly and frequently appealing to the notoriety of the facts, have given us all the assurance possible of the reality of the miracles which they have recorded.

"The assembling together of multitudes," Mr. Harmer observes, "at the place where persons have lately expired, and bewailing them in a noisy manner, is a custom still retained in the East, and seems to be considered as an honour done to the deceased.

"The most distinct account of the Eastern lamentations that

Sir J. Chardin has given, is in the sixth volume of his MS. ; by which we learn, that their emotions of joy as well as of sorrow are expressed by loud cries. The passage is extremely curious, and the purport of it is as follows: [Gen. xlv. 2.] " And he wept aloud, and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard." This is exactly the genius of the people of Asia, especially of the women. Their sentiments of joy or of grief are, properly, transports; and their transports are uncontrolled, excessive, and truly outrageous. When any one returns from a long journey, or dies, his family burst into cries that may be heard twenty doors off; and this is renewed at different times, and continues many days, according to the vigour of the passion. Especially are these cries long in the case of death, and frightful; for their mourning is right down despair, and an image of hell. I was lodged, in the year 1676, at Ispahan, near the Royal Square: the mistress of the next house to mine died at that time. The moment she expired, all the family, to the number of twenty-five or thirty people, set up such a furious cry, that I was quite startled, and was above two hours before I could recover myself. These cries continue a long time, then cease all at once: they begin again, as suddenly, at day-break, and in concert. It is this suddenness which is so terrifying, together with a greater shrillness and loudness than one would easily imagine. This enraged kind of mourning, if I may call it so, continued forty days; not equally violent, but with diminution from day to day. The longest and most violent acts were when they washed the body, when they perfumed it, when they carried it out to be interred, at making the inventory, and when they divided the effects. You are not to suppose that those who were ready to split their throats with crying out, wept as much; the greatest part of them did not shed a single tear through the whole tragedy."

Immediately after that Jesus had left the ruler's house, he gave sight to two blind men, that had been induced to believe on him from the accounts they had heard of his numerous and astonishing miracles; and, not yet wearied with well-doing, soon after his arrival at his house, he recovered a dumb demonaic to the use of his speech; and thus exposed himself to the malice of the Pharisees, who said that he cast out devils by means of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

All this time John Baptist was in prison, Herod having confined him for the freedom which he took in reproving his adulterous commerce with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. But his confinement was not of the closest kind; for his disciples had access to see him frequently. In one of those visits they gave him an account of the election of the twelve apostles to preach the gospel, and of Christ's miracles, particularly that he had lately raised from the dead Jairus's daughter, and the widow of Nain's son; as is plain from Luke, who brings in

the history of John's message immediately after these miracles, in the following manner; [Luke vii. 18.] "And the disciples of John showed him all these things." [Matt. xi. 2.] "Now when John had heard, in prison, the works of Christ, he sent, &c. [Luke vii. 19.] And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them unto Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come," the appellation given to the Messiah, Hab. ii. 3, "or look we for another?" Various reasons have been assigned for this conduct of John; but the most probable are, either that this message was sent to confirm the faith of his disciples, or in consequence of his discontent from his long imprisonment, and to intimate to Christ, that, if he were the Messiah, he ought surely to display his power in the deliverance of his faithful forerunner. "When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight." It happened that, at the time the Baptist's disciples came to Jesus, a vast number of diseased, blind, and possessed people, were waiting on him in order to be cured. Wherefore, Jesus embraced the opportunity, and in presence of the Baptist's messengers, instantly cured them all. "Then Jesus answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John (Matt. again) what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised," plainly claiming the powers ascribed, by Isaiah, to Messiah. For that prophet, [chap. xxxv.] had expressly foretold, that, at the coming of God to save his people, verse 5, "Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing." Wherefore, by his miracles, Jesus clearly proved himself to be Messiah, only he left it to the Baptist and his disciples to draw the conclusion themselves:—"to the poor the gospel is preached." (Matthew, "and the poor have the gospel preached to them.") This passage may either be designed to display the disinterested condescension of our Lord, in devoting so much of his attention to the poor, or, if translated actively, (as the words may easily be thus taken,) "the poor preach the gospel," points out the character of those who were the most distinguished instruments in propagating our holy religion. "And, as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind?" that is, a man of an unstable disposition, and cowardly behaviour? In this question, which implies a strong negation, the invincible courage and constancy of the Baptist is applauded. "But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft cloth-

ing (Luke, "they which are gorgeously appavelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts,") are in kings' houses." In this question, the austere and mortified life of the Baptist is praised, and the spiritual nature of Messiah's kingdom insinuated. His forerunner did not resemble any of the officers who attend the courts of earthly princes, and, consequently, he himself was in no respect to be like an earthly prince. "But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more (Luke, much more) than a prophet." John Baptist justly merited to be called a prophet, because he excelled in every thing peculiar to a prophet. He was commissioned by God, and had an immediate communication with him. [John i. 33.] He foretold that the kingdom of heaven, spoken of by Daniel, was at hand. He pointed out the Messiah by revelation. He declared the terrible judgments that were to befall the people on account of their impenitence, their disbelief, and their rejecting the Messiah. [Luke iii. 17.]

To conclude: he was more than a prophet, inasmuch as he was Messiah's harbinger, sent to prepare the way before him, an office which clothed him with a dignity superior to that of a simple prophet, not to mention that he had the honour of baptizing Messiah himself. "For this is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." In this and the foregoing verse, Jesus signified to the people, that as they had gone out to John, under the character of a prophet, and had believed him on the best grounds, it was their duty to retain his doctrine in their minds, and to put it in practice during the whole course of their lives. "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of women, there hath not risen a greater (Luke, prophet) than John the Baptist; notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." The least inspired teacher, under the gospel dispensation, is a greater prophet than John. "And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." The meaning of the whole passage is this: Gentiles, tax-gatherers, soldiers, harlots, and others of the same stamp, persons of the most abandoned characters, whom ye look upon as having no right to become members of the Messiah's kingdom, enter into it. And this ye think a violence done to the kingdom of heaven, but, in reality, it is not so; because the law and the prophets, the dispensation which makes a distinction between men, was virtually set aside at the coming of John, in whose ministry the gospel began, the dispensation which admits all persons equally upon their faith and repentance. It is probable, also that the violence here alluded to may refer to the zeal with which they embraced the gospel, a fervour equal to

that with which they had engaged in the service of sin. "But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced, we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." The allusion is to Jewish children, who, having seen their parents and friends at their festivals and weddings, some playing upon the pipe, and others dancing to them, mimicked the same in their diversions; and, also, having observed at funerals the mourning women making their doleful ditties, and others answering to them, acted the part of these persons, expecting their fellows would make the responses, but did not: hence the complaint, "we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." The different characters of John and Christ are set forth by his piping and mourning. The character and ministry of Christ and his disciples by piping, by which is meant the clear, comfortable, and joyful ministry of the gospel, which is delightful music to an awakened sinner, whom it animates, allures, and charms. The character and ministry of John is signified by mourning; his life was very austere; he and his disciples fasted often; he appeared in a very coarse habit; his speech was rough; his voice thundering; his doctrine was the doctrine of repentance; and he used very severe threatenings in case of impenitence. On the other hand, by the fellows to whom they piped or ministered, in their different ministrations, are meant the scribes and Pharisees, who were not affected with either of them. As for John, he was too austere for them; they did not like his garb, nor his diet, nor did his doctrine nor baptism please them, nor were they wrought upon, nor brought to repentance, by his ministry; they did not lament or shed one tear, but sat unmoved like stocks and stones, under those awful and striking discourses, on mournful subjects, delivered by him. Nor were they pleased with the free conduct and pleasant conversation of Christ; nor did they dance or rejoice at the glad tidings of salvation which were brought by him: of such froward spirits they were, that neither John nor Christ could please them: they were a true picture and emblem of many persons who like neither law nor gospel, but are morose, sullen, and quarrelsome, let them hear what they will; as Solomon says, "If a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, there is no rest." [Prov. xxix. 9.]

After reproving the Pharisees, Jesus denounced heavy judgments against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, cities which he had often blessed with his presence. For, though they had heard him preach many awakening sermons, and seen him perform many astonishing miracles, such as would have converted Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom, heathen cities infamous for their impiety, contempt of religion, pride, luxury, and debauchery.

[see Isa. xxiii. Ezek. xxvi. xxvii. and xxviii. chapters.] yet so great was their obstinacy, that they persisted in their wickedness, notwithstanding all he had done to reclaim them. He therefore intimates, that the punishment of the inhabitants of the cities we have just enumerated, would be more tolerable than theirs, thus giving us to understand that divine justice has established a distinction in its distributions of recompense to the workers of iniquity.

Thus Jesus reproved his countrymen, who would not believe on him. It seems, they were but a few, and those, generally, the lower sort of people, who embraced his doctrine, and assisted him in erecting his kingdom; nor was his religion soon to meet with a better reception in the other countries where it was to be preached, circumstances which, in the eyes of common wisdom, were melancholy and mortifying. But our Lord foresaw that, by the direction of God, these very circumstances would become the noblest demonstrations of his personal dignity, the clearest proofs of the excellency of his religion, and the most stupendous instances of his power, who, by such weak instruments, established his religion in every part of the habitable world, against the policy, the power, and the malice, of devils and men, combined to oppose it. Besides, had the great rulers and learned scribes, the nobles, the wits, and geniuses, been converted, it must have been prejudicial to the gospel in several respects, as such converts and teachers might, probably, have made the Gentiles look upon it as a trick of state; perhaps, also, they would have mixed it with things foreign to its nature. Our Lord, therefore, wisely made the rejection of the gospel by the great men of the nation, and the reception of it by persons in lower stations, the matter of especial thanksgiving, both now, and afterwards in Judea. [Luke x. 21; Matt. xi. 25.] "At that time, Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things," the doctrine of the gospel, which he had called "the counsel of God, [Luke vii. 30.] from the wise and prudent," the chief priests, scribes, and rulers, "and hast revealed them unto babes, [Matt. xi. 26.] Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Having given such an eminent proof of his divine wisdom, he reflected on the treasures thereof, which were lodged within himself, and rejoiced in the consciousness of his possessing them. "All things are delivered unto me of my Father:" every thing relating to the salvation of the world is committed to my care by God: "and no man knoweth the Son, (Luke, who the Son is,) but the Father;" no man knoweth his character and dignity; no man knoweth what he hath done, and what he is yet to do for the salvation of the world: "neither knoweth any man the Father, (Luke x. 22, who the Father is,) save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him:" none but the Son and his disciples

fully know the perfections and counsels of the Father. Then, warmed with the most ardent love to men, he graciously invited all that were weary of the slavery of sin, and desired to be in a state of reconciliation with God, to come to him, or believe on him; not because he expected any advantage from them, but because he both knew how to give them relief, and was willing to do it upon no other motive, however, but merely to satisfy the immense desire he had to do them good. "Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, believe on me, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me:" I impose nothing upon men but what I myself practise; so that you may learn all my precepts by observing my life and conversation: particularly, you may learn of me to be patient, and humble, and ready to forgive injuries:—"for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." In my judgment, I condemn the pride of your teachers, who will not vouchsafe to instruct either the poor or the profane; and, in my practice, I recommend both meekness and humility, by condescending to the meanest good offices to the meanest men. Besides, "my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." My doctrine and precepts (for so the word yoke is used, even by the philosophers, as Elsner has showed) are few, necessary, and pleasant; in which respect, they are distinguished from the Mosaical ceremonies, [Acts xv. 8, 9.] and also from the traditionary precepts of your doctors, who bind up heavy loads of duty, and lay them on men's shoulders. That Christ's yoke is easy, and his burden light, must be acknowledged, because all his affirmative precepts are as necessary to the souls of men as food is to their bodies; and, for his negative injunctions, abstinence from drink is not more expedient to persons swelled with the dropsy, than they are to all who would preserve the health and vigour of their souls. The obedience, therefore, which he requires, is such a reasonable obedience as every well-informed mind must rejoice in; and the pleasures which he promises, are the pleasures of goodness, the most extensive, satisfying, and durable, of all pleasures, being to the mind a delicious and continual feast.

When Jesus had finished these discourses, he was invited to the house of a certain Pharisee, whose name was Simon, where a woman of the city, whose character had been before abandoned, placed herself behind the feet of Jesus, and, after washing them with her tears, and wiping them with the hairs of her head, broke up an alabaster box of ointment which she had brought with her, and poured forth its contents so abundantly upon him, that the room was filled with the odour, and the attention of the guests excited by the transaction. In order to understand this account, it is requisite to depart from the common translation, and adopt one which is more agreeable to the manners of the East. We shall, therefore, insert in this place a

note of Dr. Campbell's, with no other alteration than the translation or omission of his Greek.

But, to show that even such errors in translating, however trivial they may appear, are sometimes highly injurious to the sense, and render a plain story, not only incredible, but absurd, I must entreat the reader's attention to the following passage, as it runs in the common version. "One of the Pharisees desired Jesus that he would eat with him; and he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him, weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with ointment." Now a reader of any judgment will need to reflect but a moment to discover that what is here told is impossible. If Jesus and others were, in our manner, sitting together at meat, the woman could not be behind them when doing what is here recorded. She must, in that case, on the contrary, have been under the table. The chairs on which the guests were seated, would have effectually precluded access from behind. It is said, also, that she stood while she bathed his feet with tears, wiped them with the hairs of her head, anointed and kissed them. Another manifest absurdity. On the supposition of their sitting, she must have been, at least, kneeling, if not lying, on the floor. These inconsistencies instantly disappear when the evangelist is allowed to speak for himself; who, instead of saying that Jesus sat down, says, expressly, that he lay down. And to prevent, if possible, a circumstance being mistaken or overlooked, on which the practicability of the thing depended, he repeats, by a synonymous term, in the very next verse, "when she knew that Jesus lay at table." The knowledge of their manner at meals makes every thing in this history level to an ordinary capacity.

At their feasts, matters were commonly ordered thus: three couches were set so as to inclose three sides of a quadrangle: the table was placed in the middle, the lower end whereof was left open to give access to the servants, for setting and removing the dishes and serving the guests. The other three sides were inclosed by the couches, whence it got the name of triclinium. The middle couch, which lay along the upper end of the table, and was therefore accounted the most honourable place, and that which the Pharisees are said particularly to have affected, was distinguished by the name of the first couch. The person entrusted with the direction of the entertainment was called the ruler of the couches. The guests lay with their feet backwards, obliquely across the couches, which were covered, for the better accommodation, with such sort of cloth, or tapestry, as suited the quality of the entertainer. As it was

necessary for the conveniency of eating that the couches should be somewhat higher than the table, the guests might have, probably, been raised by them three feet and upwards from the floor. When these particulars are taken into consideration, every circumstance of the story becomes perfectly consistent and intelligible. This, also, removes the difficulty there is in the account given by John of the paschal supper, where Jesus, being set, as our translators render it, at table, one of his disciples is said, in one verse, to have been leaning on his bosom; and, in another, to have been lying on his breast. Though these attitudes are hardly compatible with our mode of sitting at meals, they were naturally consequent upon theirs. As they lay forwards, in a direction somewhat oblique, feeding themselves with their right hand, and leaning on their left arm; they no sooner intermitted and reclined, than the head of each came close to the breast of him who was next on the left. Now a circumstance, however frivolous in itself, cannot be deemed of no consequence, which serves to throw light upon the sacred pages, and solve difficulties otherwise intricable.

The supposition that this woman was Mary Magdalene, and that Mary Magdalene was, therefore, an harlot, appears to be utterly without foundation. Mary Magdalene appears to have been a lady of the first rank in Judea, out of whom Christ had ejected seven evil spirits, and who, on that account, thought herself bound in gratitude to contribute liberally towards his support. She is mentioned as having united for this beneficent purpose, with Joanna, Susanna, and many other women, who had experienced similar benefits from Christ's miraculous power.

Our Lord, about this time, healed a demoniac who was both blind and dumb. So extraordinary a miracle, in which the noblest sense, and, likewise, the most useful faculty of the human body, were restored together, astonished the multitude beyond measure; and, therefore, highly extolling the author of the miracle, they called him the Son of David, that is, the Messiah. But the Pharisees, who had come down from Jerusalem, impudently and maliciously affirmed, in the several companies of the spectators who were talking of the miracle, that he performed it purely by the assistance of Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

Beelzebub was the great idol of the Ekronites. [2 Kings i. 2.] From his name, which signifies the "lord or master of flies," it would appear, the Ekronites considered him as having the command of the various insects wherewith, in those warm climates, they were infested, and which oftentimes gathered into such swarms, as proved both a noisome and deadly plague. The Ekronites being near neighbours to the Jews, the great veneration which they had for this idol, made him the object both of the horror and detestation of the devout worshippers

of the true God. Accordingly, to express in what detestation they held him, they appropriated his name to the most hateful being in the universe, calling the devil, or the prince of the evil angels, Beelzebub.

Our Lord, in reply, advances two arguments in vindication of his miracles. The first was derived from an expression proverbial among the Jews, that a divided family or kingdom was speedily brought to ruin. He, therefore, says, "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand? If evil spirits assist me in working miracles for the confirmation of my doctrine, they do what they can to promote the spiritual worship and ardent love of the true God: and, as effectually as possible, excite men to the practice of universal justice, benevolence, temperance, and self-government, all these virtues being powerfully recommended by my doctrine. But thus to make the evil spirits fight against themselves, is evidently to make them ruin their own interest; unless it can be thought that the strength and welfare of a society is advanced by jarring discord and destructive civil wars. Your judgment, therefore, of my conduct, is palpably malicious and absurd. His second argument is taken from the conduct of their children, who professed to cast out devils. Whether these men were imitators of the miracles of Christ, or had carried on this practice before the commencement of his ministry, is not now easy to be determined. We know, however, that many of them were addicted to exorcising, and made use, for that purpose, of the following form: "By the authority of the glorious and fearful name, I adjure thee, Asmodeus, king of the devils, and all thy company, &c. that ye hurt not, nor put in fear, nor trouble, such an one, the son of such an one; but that ye help him, and sustain him (or deliver him) out of every distress and anguish, and from every evil thing, and from all diseases," &c. Having thus successfully vindicated his character and that of his miracles, he proceeds to point out the awful extent of their guilt, who wilfully and maliciously, in opposition to strong convictions of the truth, ascribed those miracles to Satan, which were wrought by the Spirit of God. [Matt. xii. 31, 32.] "Wherefore, I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come." As it is generally admitted by the inhabitants of every christian country, that it is appointed unto all men once to die, and, after death, to appear at the tribunal of God; and as every one is conscious of having broken the commands of his Maker; it has always been considered as a very interesting inquiry, what is this crime which shall never find forgiveness?

both that we may be able to assure ourselves that it has not yet entered into the number of our transgressions; and that we may take the most effectual care, at no future time, to render ourselves obnoxious to its dreadful penalties. As we have met with nothing which tends more to elucidate the subject than Dr. Campbell's remarks on the meaning of the word "blasphemy, we shall give them at full length, only, as in a former instance, either translating or omitting his Greek.

"Blasphemy properly denotes calumny, detraction, reproachful or abusive language, against whomsoever it be vented."

"First, to recur to analogy, and the reason of the thing: I believe there are few who have not sometimes had occasion to hear a man warmly, and, with the very best intentions, commend another for an action which, in reality, merit not praise, but blame. Yet no man would call the person who through simplicity, acted this part, a slanderer, whether the fact he related of his friend were true or false, since he seriously meant to raise esteem of him; for an intention to depreciate is essential to the idea of slander. To praise injudiciously is one thing, to slander is another. The former, perhaps, will do as much hurt to the character, which is the subject of it, as the latter; but the merit of human actions depends entirely on the motive. There is a maliciousness in the calumniator which no person, who reflects, is in danger of confounding with the unconscious slandering of a man, whose praise detracts from the person whom he means to honour. The blasphemer is no other than the calumniator of Almighty God. To constitute the crime, it is as necessary that this species of calumny be intentional as that the other be. He must be one, therefore, who, by his impious talk, endeavours to inspire others with the same irreverence towards the Deity, or, perhaps, abhorrence of him, which he indulges in himself. And, though for the honour of human nature, it is to be hoped that very few arrive at this enormous guilt: it ought not to be dissembled, that the habitual profanation of the name and attributes of God by common swearing, is but two manifest an approach towards it. There is not an entire coincidence. The latter of these vices may be considered as resulting solely from the defect of what is good in principle and disposition; the former, from the acquisition of what is evil in the extreme; but there is a close connection between them, and an insensible gradation from the one to the other. To accustom one's self to treat the sovereign of the universe with irreverent familiarity, is the first step; malignly to arraign his attributes, and revile his providence, is the last.

"Before I finish this topic, it will naturally occur to inquire, what that is in particular which our Lord denotes "blasphemy against the Holy Spirit?" It is foreign from my present purpose to enter minutely into the discussion of this difficult question. Let it suffice here to observe, that this blasphemy is cer-

tainly not of the constructive kind, but direct, manifest, and malignant. First, it is mentioned as comprehended under the same genus with abuse against man, and contradistinguished only by the object. Secondly, it is further explained by being called speaking against in both cases. The expressions are the same in effect in all the evangelists who mention it, and imply such an opposition as is both intentional and malevolent. This cannot have been the case of all who disbelieved the mission of Jesus, and even derided his miracles, many of whom, we have reason to think, were afterwards converted by the apostles. But it is not impossible that it may have been the wretched case of some, who, instigated by worldly ambition and avarice, have slandered what they knew to be the cause of God, and, against conviction, reviled his work as the operation of evil spirits."

That not every act of ascribing to the agency of Satan the miracles of our blessed Redeemer involves in it the awful guilt of this unpardonable crime, is, we think, sufficiently apparent from the number of unbelieving Jews and profane idolaters, who were, in the first ages of the christian religion, made partakers of the faith of the gospel. It is impossible that these, in the days of their ignorance, could have considered the miracles in question as the operations of the Spirit of God; but must have either denied the facts, or else attributed them to fraud or magic. The first of these opinions does not appear to have been at all generally embraced: the second few would have recourse to, as it supposes certain effects to result from human policy, of which every cool and impartial reasoner must believe it to be incapable. The third, therefore, of these theories, appeared, to the unbelievers of that day, the most rational of the three; and was, we find, accordingly, the most commonly resorted to by such as wished to cavil against the christian religion. Since, then, it is probable, almost to certainty, that not only some, but vast numbers, who had thus ascribed Christ's miracles to infernal agency, were afterwards enrolled among his most zealous disciples, we must conclude that this crime, when committed in ignorance or unbelief, is not the unpardonable blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

Again: if we read some other passages of scripture, this opinion will derive additional strength. John says, in the fifth chapter of his first epistle, the sixteenth and seventeenth verses, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin; and there is a sin not unto death." [Heb. vi. 4—6.] "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost: and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world

to come : if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." [Heb. x. 26—29.] "For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins ; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and of fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses's law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses : of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under-foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace." The first of these passages implies that there is only one sin, from the perpetrators of which the hope of pardon is absolutely excluded, and, therefore, to whom the gospel does not belong ; and the other two passages connect this unpardonable sin with the guilt of a deliberate and wilful apostasy from that which is known and believed to be the truth of God. Collecting all these considerations together, we are induced to conclude, that the unpardonable sin consists in the opposing and blaspheming the religion of Jesus Christ, at the same time knowing and firmly believing that it was attested by miracles wrought by the Holy Spirit.

The scribes and Pharisees requesting a sign from heaven, Christ informed them that they had to expect no other than that of the prophet Jonah. "For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The miraculous preservation of Jonah for three days in the belly of a fish, was, to the Ninevites, a certain proof of his mission from God ; being credibly attested to them, either by the mariners who threw him overboard at a great distance from land, or by some other persons who, happening to see the fish vomit him alive upon the shore, might inquire his story of him ; and who, in the course of their business, met him afterwards at Nineveh, where they confirmed his preaching by relating what they had seen. In like manner, Christ's resurrection from the dead, after having been three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, being credibly attested to the Jews, should clearly demonstrate that he came from God. Farther : Jesus told his hearers, that the Ninevites being judged at the same time with the men of that generation, and their behaviour being compared with theirs, should make their guilt appear in its true colour, and condemn them : for, though they were idolaters, they repented at the preaching of Jonah, a stranger, a poor person, and one that continued among them only three days, and did no miracle to make them believe him. But the men of that generation, though worshippers of the true God by profession, could, every day, hear, unmoved, the much more powerful preaching

of a prophet infinitely greater than Jonah, even the preaching of the eternal Son of God, who confirmed his doctrine by the most astonishing miracles. Likewise, he told them, that the queen of the south being judged with them, would condemn them, she having taken a long journey to hear the wisdom of Solomon: whereas, they would not hear one much wiser than Solomon, though he was come to their very doors. Or, if they condescended to hear his wisdom, they would not embrace it. He concluded his whole discourse with the following comparison, [Matt. xii. 43—45.] “When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house, from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.” The probable meaning of these verses is, that when a man, after having received such strong convictions of sin as began to make an alteration in his conduct, finds means to stifle these convictions, and returns again to his evil practices, he becomes more totally depraved than before, and is prepared for a more awful portion of divine indignation.

In the heat of this debate, Christ's mother and his brethren came to seek him, on which occasion, “he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” This short speech, related by the evangelists with great simplicity, is, without their seeming to have designed it, one of the finest encomiums imaginable. Could the most elaborate panegyric have done Jesus Christ and his religion half the honour which this divine sentiment hath done them? I regard obedience to God so highly, that I prefer the relation it constitutes, and the union which it begets, to the strongest ties of blood. They who do the will of my Father have a much greater share of my esteem than my kinsmen; as such, I love them with an affection tender and steady, like that which subsists between the nearest relations; nay, I reckon them, and them only, my brethren, my sisters, and my mother. An high commendation this, and not a reflection upon our Lord's mother, who, without doubt, was among the chief of those who did the will of God. What veneration should live in the hearts of men for Jesus and his religion, which exhibits an idea of such perfection in goodness!

It seems, the calumnies of the Pharisees had not the effect intended; for the crowd was now become so great, that neither the house nor the court before it could contain the people that came. Jesus, therefore, carried them out to the sea-side, and taught them. And, because there were many still going and

coming, he judged it necessary to enter into a boat, for the conveniency of being heard and seen by all, which he might easily be, if the shore thereabouts was somewhat circular and declining, after the manner of an amphitheatre. Thus commodiously seated in the vessel, he delivered many doctrines of the highest importance, wisely making choice of such for the subject of his sermons, when he had the greatest number of hearers; because, on those occasions, there was a probability of doing the most good by them. [Mark iv. 2.] "And he taught them many things by parables." He began with the parable of the sower, who cast his seed on different soils, which, according to their natures, brought forth either plentifully, or sparingly, or none at all. By this similitude, he represented the different kinds of hearers, with the different effects which the doctrines of religion have upon them, according to their different dispositions. In some, these doctrines are suppressed altogether; in others, they produce the fruits of righteousness, more or less, according to the goodness which is implanted in their hearts. A parable of this kind was highly seasonable, now the multitude showed such an itching desire of hearing Christ's sermons, while, perhaps, they neglected the end for which they ought to have heard them.

The disciples of Christ having embraced the earliest opportunity to request an interpretation of this parable, and to be informed of the reasons why he adopted that mode of teaching, he explained himself in the following words: "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand: and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: for this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." It is generally understood, that Christ here intimates that the Jews were delivered over to a judicial hardness and impenitence, and that the very design of their being taught in parables was to put an obstacle in their way to divine knowledge: but Dr. Macknight inclines to a different opinion, which is, at least, a very serious consideration.

He says, that because the state of their minds was thus hardened, Christ wrapped up his doctrine in parables, with an intention that they might see as much of it as they were able to receive, but not perceive the offensive particulars which would have made them reject both him, and his doctrine; and that they might hear as much of it as they were able to hear, but not understand any thing to irritate them against him, and all with a design to promote their conversion and salvation.

Thus Jesus assured his apostles, that the only reason why he taught the people by parables was their wickedness, which had rendered them incapable of receiving his doctrine any other way. Whereas, he could safely unfold it to his apostles in the plainest terms, the honesty and teachableness of their disposition fitting them for such a favour, in which respect he told them they were peculiarly happy. And, to enhance this privilege the more, he told them, that many patriarchs and prophets of old had earnestly desired to see and hear the things which they saw and heard; but they were denied that favour, God having, till then, showed them to his most eminent saints in shadows only, and afar in the womb of futurity.

In Christ's interpretation of the parable of the sower, the devil is said to come and catch away the word from the hearers by the way side; not because he has power to rob men of their knowledge or religious impressions by any immediate act, but because they expose themselves, through carelessness, to the whole force of the temptations which he lays in their way; and particularly to those which arise, whether from their commerce with men, a circumstance observed by Luke, who tells us that the seed was trodden down, or from their own headstrong lusts, which, like so many hungry fowls, fly, to quickly eat up the word out of their mind. The perturbation occasioned by the passions of this kind of hearers, and by the temptations which they are exposed to, renders them altogether inattentive in hearing; or, if they attend, it hardens them against the impressions of the word, and effaces the remembrance of it in an instant; insomuch, that the pernicious influence of evil passions and bad company cannot truly be represented by any lower figure than that of the word, as taken away by the devil, whose agent such persons and lusts most certainly are. The rocky ground represents those hearers, who so far receive the word into their hearts that it springs up in good resolutions, which, perhaps, are accompanied with a partial reformation of some sins, and the temporary practice of some virtues. Nevertheless, they are not thoroughly affected with the word; it does not sink deep enough to remain in their minds; and, therefore, when persecution arises for the sake of the gospel, and such hearers are exposed to fines, imprisonments, corporal punishments, banishments, and death, or even to any great temptation of an ordinary kind, which requires firmness to repel it, those good reso-

lutions which the warmth of their passions had raised so quickly in hearing do as quickly wither ; because they are not rooted in just apprehensions of the reasons that should induce men to lead such lives : just as vegetables, which, because they have not depth of soil sufficient to nourish them, are soon burnt up by the scorching heat of the mid-day sun. The ground full of thorns, that sprang up with the seed and choked it, represents all those who receive the word into hearts full of worldly cares, which, sooner or later, destroy whatever convictions or good resolutions are raised by the word. Worldly cares are compared to thorns ; not only because of their pernicious efficacy in choking the word, but because it is with great pain and difficulty that they are eradicated. Those who received the word to effect, and are represented by seed falling on the good ground, are particularly said to have brought forth fruit with patience, in opposition both to the stony and thorny grounds, which nourished the seed which was cast into them only for a while ; the former till the sun arose, the latter till the thorns sprang up.

When Jesus had ended his interpretation of the parable of the sower, he did not direct his discourse to the people, but continued speaking to the apostles, showing them, by the similitude of the lighted lamp, the use they were to make of this, and of all the instructions he should give them. As lamps are kindled to give light unto those who are in a house, so the understandings of the apostles were illuminated, that they might fill the world with the delightful light of truth.

In the next parable, that of the tares or darnel, which was sown in the field, we are taught, that through the craft of the devil, incorrigible sinners will intrude themselves into the visible church ; that though good men may judge it for the interest of religion that providence should extirpate such by violent methods, God does not allow it, because they are oft-times so connected with the righteous, that if they be touched, the righteous will suffer withal ; and that God has reserved the full exercise of justice upon wicked men to the last day, when he will unerringly distinguish between the good and the bad. According to this view of the parable, we may consider it as a vindication of the wisdom of God, both in permitting the wickedness of men professing christianity, and in suffering it to go unpunished during this life.

The parable of the seed which sprang up imperceptibly, is intended to teach us, that as the husbandman does not, by any efficacy of his own, cause the seed sown to grow, but leaves it to be nourished by the soil and sun ; so Jesus and his apostles, having taught men the doctrines of true religion, were not, by any miraculous force, to constrain their wills ; far less were they, by the terrors of fire and sword, to interpose visibly for the furthering thereof ; but would suffer it to spread, by the secret influence of the Spirit, till, at length it should obtain its

full effect. Moreover, as the husbandman cannot, by the most diligent observation, perceive the corn in his field extending its dimensions as it grows, so the ministers of Christ cannot see the operation of the gospel upon the minds of men. The effects, however, of its operation, when these are produced, they can discern, just as the husbandman can discern when his corn is fully grown and fit for reaping. In the mean time, the design of the parable is not to lead the ministers of Christ to imagine that religion will flourish without due pains taken about it: it was formed to teach the Jews, in particular, that neither the Messiah nor his servants would subdue men by the force of arms, as they supposed he would have done; and also to prevent the apostles from being dispirited when they did not see immediate success following their labours.

Under the similitude of a grain of mustard-seed, our Lord showed his hearers, that, notwithstanding the gospel appeared, at first, contemptible, by reason of the ignominy arising from the crucifixion of its author, the difficulty of its precepts, the weakness of the persons by whom it was preached, and the small number and mean condition of those who received it; yet, having in itself the strength of truth, it would grow exceedingly, and extend itself into all countries; and, by that means, afford spiritual sustenance to persons of all nations, who should be admitted into it, not in the quality of slaves, as the Jews imagined, but as free-born subjects of the Messiah's kingdom, enjoying therein equal privileges with the Jews.

The meaning of the parable of the leaven is commonly thought to be the same with that of the preceding. Yet there seems to be this difference between the two; the parable of the grain of mustard-seed represents the smallness of the gospel in its beginnings, together with its subsequent greatness: whereas, the parable of the leaven, which, being hid in a quantity of meal, fermented the whole, expresses, in a very lively manner, both the nature and strength of the operation of truth upon the mind. For, though the doctrines of the gospel, when first proposed, seemed to be lost in that enormous mass of passions and worldly thoughts, with which men's minds were filled; yet did they then most eminently exert their influence, converting men's thoughts, and desires, and cares, into a conformity to truth. The precise difference, therefore, between this and the preceding parable is, that the former represents the extensive propagation of the gospel from the smallest beginnings; but this, the nature of the influence of its doctrines upon the minds of particular persons.

The multitude having now been long together, it is probable that the evening drew on; Jesus, therefore, dismissed them, and returned home with his disciples, who, when they were come into the house, begged him to explain the parable of the tares. In this parable, he showed them, was represented how

saints and sinners dwell together in this world, but will be awfully and eternally separated in that which is to come. Then, being freed from all the humbling circumstances which attend mortality, cleansed also from sin, and the pollutions of sin, wherewith they are now disfigured, the righteous shall shine like the sun in the firmament for brightness and beauty, and shall find no diminution of their splendour by age. But while they are thus enjoying the perfection of blessedness, the wicked shall be banished from their delightful abodes, and condemned to spend a long eternity in unutterable anguish and woe.

In the two next parables, that of the treasure hid in the field, and that of a merchant seeking goodly pearls, the transcendent excellency of the gospel is very clearly pointed out. But, in the former instance, it is discovered, as it were, by accident; and, in the latter, after the most diligent research. The parable of the net cast into the sea, which inclosed many fish of every kind, intimates that, by the preaching of the gospel, a visible church should be gathered on earth, consisting both of good and bad men, mingled in such a manner, that it would be difficult to make a proper distinction between them; but that, at the end of the world, the bad shall be separated from the good, and cast into hell, which the parable represents under the image of casting them into a furnace of fire; because that was the most terrible punishment known in the Eastern countries.

Soon after this, Christ went to Nazareth; and, during his stay in that place, preached in the synagogue, especially on the sabbath-day, and performed some miracles. But though his sermons contained great treasures of spiritual knowledge, and were delivered with the most captivating eloquence, the Nazarenes were not disposed, by them, to believe on him. They were wonderfully struck, indeed, with what they heard and saw, knowing that he was meanly descended, and had not the advantage of a liberal education. But these circumstances, which heightened their wonder, so much prevented the effect which his doctrines and miracles ought to have had upon them, fancying that, when Messiah came, no man should know from whence he was, they could not acknowledge as Messiah one of their own townsmen, whose father, and mother, and brethren, and sisters, they were so well acquainted with. Besides, the meanness of these his relations, and of their occupations, scandalized them. Wherefore, when they talked among themselves, after hearing him preach, at the same time that they gave his knowledge, eloquence, and miracles, their due praise, they could not forbear expressing their contempt of him, on account of the meanness of his family. It is said, that he wrought but few mighty works there, on account of their unbelief. Probably, their unbelief hindered them from bringing their sick to him, not to mention that it rendered his miracles altogether improper; because, had he performed ever so many, their prejudices

would certainly have prevented any good effect they might otherwise have had.

We have already seen the abundant pains which our Lord had taken to furnish the minds of his apostles with every useful instruction. They had twice heard the sermon which was first delivered on the mount; had received the most explicit directions respecting their conduct in carrying on their ministry; and had beside, by the parables which we have just been endeavouring to explain, been taught a variety of particulars concerning the kingdom of God. As this knowledge was given them partly for the sake of others, they were now sent out by pairs to preach the gospel in the surrounding country. They were not sent forth singly, lest they should faint under the difficulties by the way: nor in large numbers, that the word of truth might be more extensively disseminated. Thus we may discover, as in the whole conduct of Jesus, so, in particular, in his transactions with the apostles, the wisdom and perfection of a God, united with all the amiable meekness of the most lowly and humble of the sons of men.

CHAPTER VIII.

From the sending out of the Apostles by pairs, to the Transfiguration.

Herod's opinion of Christ—death of John the Baptist—his disciples come to Christ—Christ feeds the five thousand—walks on the sea—stills the storm—miracles in Gennesareth—Christ's discourse at Capernaum—his conversation with the Pharisees concerning traditions—he heals the daughter of the Canaanitish woman—cures great multitudes—four thousand fed—Christ discourses concerning the signs of the times—leaven of the Pharisees—Peter's confession—exhortation to carry the cross—transfiguration—subsequent discourses with his disciples.

THE twelve apostles preaching in the towns of Galilee, and confirming their doctrine by many mighty miracles, raised the attention and expectation of all men more than ever. For the inhabitants of Galilee could not but regard Jesus now with uncommon admiration, as he was evidently superior to all prophets in this respect; that, besides working miracles himself, he could impart the power to whomsoever he pleased; a thing never heard of in the world before. It seems, this last-mentioned circumstance aggrandized our Lord so much, that his fame reached the court of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee,

and occasioned many speculations. Among other opinions which were entertained, that of Herod was the most remarkable, who supposed that he was John the Baptist, who was risen from the dead. We have already mentioned, in a former chapter, the imprisonment of that holy man, in consequence of his freedom in reproving the vices of Herod.

At first, Herod was restrained from offering violence to the Baptist, by the secret respect he had for him on account of his piety; and though, afterwards, he was so wrought upon by the repeated solicitations of Herodias, that he overcame the scruples of his conscience, he was kept from doing him harm, fearing it might have occasioned a tumult. Herodias, therefore, finding she could not prevail against the Baptist in the way of direct solicitation, watched for an opportunity to destroy him by craft. At length, one offered itself. Herod, on his birth-day, made a sumptuous entertainment for the great lords, generals, judges, and other principal persons of his kingdom. Wherefore, as it was the custom in those countries for princes to bestow favours at their feasts, sometimes of their own accord, sometimes in consequence of petitions that were then presented, Herodias thought the birth-day a fit opportunity to get the Baptist destroyed. With this view, she proposed to Salome, her daughter by Philip, who was now of age, and had followed her fortunes, to dance before the company at the birth-day; pretending, no doubt, that it would turn out greatly to her advantage; because the king, in the excess of his good humour, would bid her name what she pleased to have as the reward of her complaisance. Or, if he should not, she might, consistently enough with good manners, beg him to grant her the boon she was most desirous to obtain; only, before she named any particular favour, it would be proper to come out and consult with her mother. The thing proposed, it is true, was uncommon; yet the young lady might think it expedient in the present circumstances, or she might comply from a forwardness peculiar to youth. Whatever was her inducement, she danced, and acquitted herself to the admiration of all the guests. The king, in particular, was perfectly charmed with her fine air and graceful motion. But because, according to the manners of the East, it was disgraceful for women of rank to appear in public, (and they never did appear, unless they were sent for, or had an important request to make, see Esther v. 2, 3.) it was immediately concluded that this extraordinary condescension proceeded from Salome's being to ask some favour of the king. Besides, the honour she was doing to the day and to the company, might be interpreted as a public acknowledgment of Herod's civility to her, and, at the same time, judged a becoming expression of her gratitude. As for the king, he considered the respect showed to his guests as terminating upon himself; and, having greatly injured the young lady by debauching her mother, he

was caught with the flattery, and grew vain. His fancy, also, being heated with wine, and music, and the applause of his guests, the sight of the young lady dancing, and the idea of her mother, whom he passionately loved, he made her the promise he imagined she was silently soliciting; a promise which, though it had the air of royal munificence, suited but ill with the gravity of wisdom.

When the plot had thus succeeded, and the young lady had obtained the king's promise, she went out to consult with her mother, who immediately disclosed her purpose, bidding her ask the Baptist's head. A counsel of this kind, no doubt, surprised Salome; for she could not see of what use the head should be to her. Besides, she might think the command improper, as their quarrel with the Baptist, and the cause of it, was universally known; not to mention, that when she consented to dance, it is natural to imagine her fancy had been running on very different objects. Probably, therefore, at first, she scrupled to comply: but Herodias, full of the fiercest resentment against the holy man, would take no denial. She peremptorily insisted that her counsel should be followed, representing to her daughter, no doubt, that he had attempted to expel and ruin them both; and that, considering the opinion which the king still entertained of him, he might, some time or other, though in irons, regain Herod's favour, and accomplish his design: for which reason, the opportunity of taking his life was not to be neglected if she regarded her own safety. These, or such like arguments, wrought up the young lady to such a pitch, that she not only consented to do as she was bidden, but became hearty in the cause; for "she came in straightway with haste unto the king." So, whilst all the guests sat mute, expecting what mighty thing would be asked, the daughter of Herodias entering, demanded John Baptist's head, as of greater value to her than half of a kingdom. Sudden horror seized every heart, the gaiety of the king vanished, he was confounded and vexed: but being unwilling to appear either rash, or fickle, or false, before a company of the first persons in his kingdom for rank and character, he commanded her request to be given her; not one of the guests being so friendly as to speak the least word to divert him from his mad purposes, though he gave them an opportunity to do it, by signifying to them that he performed his oath out of regard to the company. Perhaps they dreaded Herodias's resentment. Thus, out of a misplaced regard to his oath and his guests, king Herod committed a most unjust and cruel action, which will ever reflect dishonour upon his memory. [Matt. xiv. 10.] "And he sent (Mark, an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought, and he went) and beheaded John in the prison. And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel." The head of the prophet, whose rebukes had awed the

king in his loosest moments, and whose exhortations had often excited him to virtuous actions, was immediately brought, pale and bloody, in a charger, and given to the daughter of Herodias, in presence of the guests. The young lady gladly received the bloody present, and carried it to her mother, who enjoyed the whole pleasure of revenge, and feasted her eyes with the sight of her enemy's head, now rendered silent and harmless. But the Baptist's voice became the louder for his being murdered, filling the earth, reaching up to heaven, and publishing the woman's adultery to all ages and to all people. [Mark vi. 29.] "And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb; for it was thrown over the prison walls without burial, probably by order of Herodias.

The history of this birth-day, transmitted to posterity in the scripture, stands, as has been well observed, a perpetual beacon to warn the great, the gay, and the young, to beware of dissolute mirth. Admonished by so fatal an example, they ought to maintain ever, in the midst of their jollity, an habitual recollection of spirit; lest reason, at any time, enervated by the pleasures of sense, should slacken the rein of wisdom, or let it drop, though but for a moment; because their headstrong passions, ever impatient of the curb, may catch the opportunity, and rush with them into follies, whose consequences will be unspeakably, it may also be, perpetually bitter.

About the time that the apostles returned from their mission, and gave their master an account of the miracles which they had performed, and of the sermons which they had preached, the Baptist's disciples arrived with the news of their Master's death. Wherefore, as Matthew has introduced his history of our Lord's retiring into the desert of Bethsaida with an account of these things, he has assigned them as the reason for our Lord's retreat. It seems, the apostles were thrown into great consternation by the news which the Baptist's disciples brought of his death. Perhaps the account had reached them before, and hastened their return to their Master. Mark assigns a second cause for our Lord's retreat on this occasion, namely, the continual hurry the apostles were kept in by the multitude, which thronged about Jesus to such a degree, that they had not leisure to eat their meals. The truth is, our Lord's retiring with his apostles, on this occasion, into a desert place, was well calculated to allay that perturbation which the idea of Herod's cruelty and injustice must have raised in their breasts, whether they had heard of it before, or whether they received the news of it only upon their return.

Farther: as the fame of our Lord's miracles had brought vast crowds to Capernaum, the voyage to the desert served, likewise, to refresh the apostles after the fatigue of their journey, and to free them from the importunity of the multitude, who

solicited cures for themselves and for their relations. Perhaps, likewise, by this retreat, our Lord proposed to shun Herod, who desired to see him, and might be contriving some method of obtaining an interview with him; for Jesus had perfect knowledge, not only of the conversation which passed at the court of Galilee, but of Herod's thoughts also. Whatever might be the motives of our Lord, he thought proper, in his infinite wisdom, to retire to Bethsaida, a thriving town on the other side of the sea of Tiberias, and subject to the government of Philip. Landing in the desert near this town, he found a large multitude already collected, who, having learned or guessed his destination, collected from all parts to see the wonderful miracles which they expected he would perform; nor were they disappointed; for, according to his usual practice, he instructed them in the truth which concerned the kingdom of God, and removed their diseases by the efficacy of his almighty power. The time thus passed pleasantly away, till the multitude found that their stock of provision was exhausted, but were still unwilling to disperse, though threatened with the miseries of famine. Jesus, who, while he pitied their wants, knew himself to be possessed of the power of relieving them, inquired of the apostle Philip whence they should buy bread, that the multitude might eat. Philip replied, that two hundred Roman pennies, amounting to the value of five English pounds, were insufficient, though there had been a market near, and well supplied, to procure an adequate quantity of provision. Upon his making an inquiry into the quantity of provision of which they were already possessed, Andrew observed that there was a lad present who had "five barley loaves and two small fishes," probably insufficient to furnish more than a meal for five or six persons, and inquired, as he might reasonably have done had he known nothing of the power and character of his Master, "what are they among so many?" The evangelists do not tell us whether the fishes were salted and dried, a kind of food greatly in request among the Jews, and which needed no preparation; or whether they were fresh and already prepared. Either kind was a subject equally proper for the miracle.

When the loaves and the fishes were brought, he commanded his apostles to make the whole multitude sit down by companies, each, probably, consisting of two rows, with their faces opposite, and their backs turned to the backs of the next companies. No sooner did the disciples intimate Christ's intentions to the multitude, than they sat down on the grass, as he had appointed. For although what he proposed seemed, in the opinion of all, next to an impossibility, both the disciples and the multitude cheerfully obeyed: so great an opinion had they of Christ's wisdom and power. He ordered them to be ranged in the manner mentioned above, that they might sit compactly, that their numbers might appear, that the meat

might be divided among them with ease, and that none might be neglected in the distribution. The circumstance of the grass, on which the multitude sat down, shows that the miracle of the loaves happened in the month of February or March, when the grass is at its perfection in Syria, and to this agrees, likewise, what John tells us, vi. 4, that the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh. The multitudes, therefore, being placed, Jesus took the meat in his hands, and, looking up to heaven, returned thanks to God, the liberal giver of all good, for his infinite beneficence in furnishing food to all flesh, and for the power he had conferred on him of relieving mankind by his miracles, particularly that which he was about to work; and which, perhaps, he prayed for, to raise the curiosity and attention of the multitude, as we find him doing before the resurrection of Lazarus. It is not to be supposed that twelve persons could put, first, a piece of bread, then a piece of fish, into the hands of five thousand men, besides women and children, who were all fed with such expedition, that, notwithstanding the thing was not so much as proposed to the disciples till about three, as is conjectured from circumstances, all was over by five o'clock in the afternoon. Wherefore, it is natural to conclude, that, in distributing the meat, the disciples used the most expeditious method, putting, by their Master's direction, the bread first, and after that the fish, into the hands of those only who sat at the ends of the ranks, with orders to give it to their companions. On this supposition, the meat must have extended its dimensions, not in our Lord's hands only, but in the hands of the multitude likewise, continuing to swell till there was a greater quantity than they who held it could make use of; so that, breaking off what was sufficient for themselves, they gave the remainder to the persons next them, who, in like manner, saw the bread and fish swell in their own hands, till they, also, had enough and to spare. The meat being thus created in the hands of the multitude, and before their eyes, as long as there was a single person to be fed they did all eat and were filled, to their unspeakable astonishment. Though Jesus, as Dr. Macknight observes, was entirely free from worldly cares, and from all anxiety about futurity, he did not think it unworthy of him, on this occasion, to order his disciples to take care of the broken pieces of meat left by the multitude. The reason mentioned by him for doing so, namely, that nothing might be lost, deserves our notice; for it shows us, that he to whom the earth and the fulness thereof belongs, willeth every man to take due care of all the goods which he possesses, and that if he wastes any thing by carelessness or profusion, he is guilty of sin, namely, the sin of despising the creatures of God, which, by so admirable a contrivance as the frame of the world, God has produced for his use. Wherefore, as by feeding so many, Jesus has set us an example of liberality; so, by

taking care of the fragments, he has taught us frugality; and, by joining the two together, he has showed us that charity and frugality ought always to go hand in hand, and that there is a great difference between the truly liberal and the lavish man. In computing the number of persons fed at this meal, the evangelists mention none but the men, and of them such as were of age; and they all agree that they were about five thousand. In this they do not speak by guess; for the disposition of the multitude in ranks of a determinate number, enabled them to make the computation with certainty. If they were not five thousand precisely, one of the ranks incomplete will make them less, and an additional rank, or part of a rank, will make them more. But, besides the men, there were women also, and children, who, we may suppose, were not inferior in number to the men; and who, if they were not fed with the men, as is probable from John vi. 10, must have been set down by themselves to a separate meal, some of the disciples having been appointed to wait on them, and serve them. This vast multitude of people, feeling their hunger removed and spirits recreated, as well as their taste delighted, by the meal, were absolutely sure it was no illusion; as John expresses it very properly, vi. 14, "they had seen the miracle," so could not entertain doubts, or form objections. In this manner did he, who is the bread of life, feed upwards of ten thousand people with five loaves and two small fishes, giving a magnificent proof, not only of his goodness, but of his creating power. For, after all had eaten to satiety, the disciples took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces of meat, each disciple a basket; in which, as every one of the multitude may be supposed to have a little, there must have been much more than the quantity at first set before the Lord to divide. The stupendous miracle, therefore, without all doubt, was conspicuous, not to the disciples only, who, carrying each his basket in his hand, had an abiding sensible demonstration of its truth, but to every individual guest at this divine feast, who had all felt themselves delighted, filled, refreshed, and strengthened by the meal. Anciently, Elisha fed an hundred men with twenty barley loaves. [2 Kings iv. 42.] But the quantity of food divided was greater, and the people fed therewith incomparably fewer than at our Lord's miracle. Besides, though something was left at Elisha's meal to show that the men were filled, it was but a trifle in comparison of the quantity left by the great multitude whom our Lord fed.

This being one of the most astonishing, and, at the same time, the most extensively convincing of all the miracles Jesus performed during the course of his ministry, every one of the evangelists have recorded it; and, which is remarkable, it is the only one found in each of their histories.

The people thus fed by miracle were unspeakably astonished; for, indeed, it was wonderful to see and feel the meat extending itself among their hands. In the height of their transport, they proposed to take Jesus by force, and make him a king, that is, would constrain him to assume the title of Messiah without any further delay. Anciently, it was usual for great men, who courted the favour of the populace, to give public feasts, at which they would treat all the inhabitants of a town or city. Le Clerc, therefore, fancies, that the multitude took the miracle of the loaves for a thing of this kind, and that they expressed their gratitude to Jesus by offering to aid him in what they supposed was his purpose. Yet the reader may think it as probable, that, in this, they fulfilled their own inclinations, which led them to wish for the coming of Messiah's kingdom, wherein they all expected to enjoy great secular advantages. For, to say the truth, they might very naturally imagine, that he who, with five loaves and two fishes, could feed so many thousands, was in a condition to support armies any length of time he pleased. But Jesus, knowing both the purposes of the multitude, and the inclinations of the disciples to encourage them in those purposes, ordered the latter to get into their boat and make for Bethsaida, while he should dismiss the former. The disciples, therefore, expressed great unwillingness to depart. They would not go till he constrained them. It seems, they would gladly have detained the people with whom they fully agreed in sentiment; for it was their opinion, also, that he who could feed such a number with so little, had no reason to conceal himself: but, without running the least risk, might take the title of Messiah whenever he pleased. Besides, they certainly supposed that the favourable moment was come, the people being in such a proper temper, that if Jesus spake but the word, they would all, to a man, have enlisted under him, and formed an army immediately. [John vi. 14, 15.] "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, this is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world:" the prophet predicted by Moses, the Messiah. "When Jesus, therefore, perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." But before Jesus went into the mountain, several things happened, which the other evangelists have related: for, when the miraculous dinner was over, Jesus, perceiving the disposition of the multitude, went down from the hill where he had fed them, to the shore, and sent his disciples off in their boat to Bethsaida. The multitude, also, who had followed him down the hill, he persuaded to depart, then went up again into the mountain. To this agrees John's manner of telling the story: for, as it is he who has informed us that the miraculous dinner was

given on a mountain, vi. 3, that Jesus departed again into a mountain, he insinuates that, on some occasion or other, he had come down from it.

[Matt. xiv. 22.] "And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, (Mark, unto Bethsaida,) while he sent the multitudes away." [John xv. 16.] "And when even was now come, his disciples went down into the sea, and entered into a ship, and went over the sea towards Capernaum." Their Master's order was that they should go to Bethsaida, as Mark informs us; but the wind becoming contrary, as we shall learn immediately, they were obliged to sail towards Capernaum. John, therefore, describes the voyage, not as it was intended, but as it actually happened. The evangelists have not told us how the twelve baskets of fragments were disposed of. Probably the disciples carried them with them into the boat; so that, having before their eyes this most convincing evidence of the miracle, they, no doubt, discoursed about it among themselves as they sailed, and deliberately reflected on every circumstance which had accompanied it. The people perceiving that Jesus intended to stay, made no scruple to let the disciples go. Perhaps they imagined he was sending them away to provide such things as he had need of in order to the expedition. Neither did they refuse to disperse when he commanded them, proposing all to return next morning, as they actually did; a circumstance which proves that they did not go far away. The multitude being dispersed, Jesus went up into the mountain, where he spent the evening in contemplation and prayer.

The disciples having met with a contrary wind, could not keep their course to Bethsaida, which was situated northwards, about a league or two from the desert mountain on which the miraculous dinner was given. They rowed, therefore, against the wind, to keep as near their course as possible. But they were so tossed with the wind and the sea, that they made no way: for, in the beginning of the night, they were so near the shore, that, notwithstanding the day-light was quite gone, which is what John means by its being dark, Jesus saw them from the mountain toiling in rowing. Nay, they made so little way, that in the fourth watch of the night, i. e. after three o'clock in the morning, they had gotten only about one league from the shore. But though Jesus beheld the distress of his disciples, and was about to appear for their relief, they did not see him, neither were they expecting deliverance from him. Thus, when the stormy billows of affliction beat upon and are ready to overwhelm God's people, they are apt to think he hath forgotten them, though he is looking at them all the while, takes particular notice of every thing that befalls them, and is about to work their deliverance in a manner altogether unexpected. In such cases, he oftentimes, of a sudden, calms the

storm, makes every thing serene around them, and happily brings them safe into port. So Jesus, who had left his disciples alone at the present danger, that he might teach them to rely, in the greatest extremities, on the providence of God, went to save them, walking upon the sea. This latter circumstance made them all suppose that what they saw was a spectre, or evil spirit: they therefore shrieked for fear. Wherefore, to make them easy, he quickly drew near and discovered himself to them, reanimating them by his presence and voice, with which they were all perfectly acquainted. The apostle Peter, a man of a warm and forward temper, looking at Jesus walking upon the sea, was exceedingly struck with it, and conceived a mighty desire of being enabled to do the like. Wherefore, without weighing the matter, he immediately begged that Jesus would bid him come to him on the water. He did not doubt but his master would gratify him, as he thought he paid him a compliment; his request insinuating, that he would undertake any thing, however difficult, at Christ's command. There was no height of obedience to which Peter would not soar, though, in the issue, it appeared, that the pinions of his faith had not strength to bear him up. Accordingly, our Lord, to show him the weakness of his faith, and to bear down that high opinion he seemed to have entertained of himself, as well as to demonstrate the greatness of his own power, granted Peter his request: for, in supporting him on the water along with himself, he appeared greater than if he had walked thereon singly. Besides, it might be designed to obviate the conceit of the Marcionites, Manicheans, and other ancient heretics, who, from this passage of the history, pretended to prove that our Lord did not assume a real body, but only the appearance of one.

Peter being thus permitted to walk upon the sea, it flattered his vanity not a little, when, descending from the vessel, he found the water firm under his feet. Hence, at the first, he walked towards his Master with abundant confidence; but the wind becoming more boisterous than before, made a dreadful storm, and the sea raging at the same time, shook him in such a manner, that he was on the point of being overturned. His courage staggered. In the hurry of his thoughts, he forgot that Jesus was at hand, and fell into a panic. And now the secret power of God, which, while Peter entertained no doubt, had made the sea firm under him, began to withdraw itself. In proportion as his faith decreased the water yielded, and he sank. In this extremity, he looked round for Christ, and, on the very brink of being swallowed up, cried to Jesus for help. "Save, Lord, or I perish." Jesus dealt very mercifully with his apostle in not suffering him to drop to the bottom at once. "And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou

doubt?" Peter did not doubt that it was Jesus who walked upon the water. He must have been convinced of that before he left the vessel; nay, must have been convinced of it while he was sinking, else he would not have called to him for assistance: but he was afraid that Jesus would not, or could not, support him against the wind, which blew more fiercely than before; a doubt most unreasonable and culpable, since it was as easy to support him against the storm, as to keep him upon the water, which Jesus had virtually promised when Peter first left the vessel. The people of God, warned by this example, should beware of presumption and self-sufficiency; and, in all their actions, should take care not to be precipitate. Wherever God calls them, they are boldly to go, not terrified at the danger or difficulty of the duty, his providence being always able to support and protect them. But he who goes without a call, and proceeds further than he is called, who rushes into difficulties and temptations without any reason, may, by the unhappy issue of his conduct, be made to feel how dangerous a thing it is for one to go out of his sphere. Being convinced by the miracle of making Peter walk upon the sea that it was no spectre, but their Master, they received him into the ship with joy, in expectation, perhaps, that he would make the wind and the sea calm. Nor were their hopes frustrated: for, as soon as he came into the boat, the storm ceased so suddenly, that they were all sensible it was the effect of his power and will; an opinion which they would be confirmed in, if, as on other occasions, he now rebuked the wind and the sea.

On this occasion, Jesus seems to have wrought another miracle also; for, no sooner had he hushed the storm, than, driven by his power, they found themselves with their boat, in an instant, safe at land. John tells us, vi. 17, that "they went over the sea towards Capernaum." The country of Gennezareth, therefore, where they landed, as Matthew and Mark tell us afterwards, was not far from Capernaum. According to Josephus, *Bel. iii. 18*, the land of Gennezareth ran thirty furlongs along the shore of the lake, and was in breadth twenty. When Jesus came to the disciples, they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs: wherefore, as the lake was forty furlongs broad, the boat was miraculously driven, in an instant, at least ten furlongs. The hushing of the storm, and their instantaneous arrival at the land, astonished the disciples exceedingly, and made them wonder at the greatness of their Master's power. For, though he had so lately performed the miracle of the loaves; nay, though they had the sensible proof thereof before their eyes, in the baskets of fragments which they had taken with them into the ship, and, perhaps, had been talking of it before the storm came on, they were so stupified with their fear, that they did not reflect on that miracle. We need not, there-

fore, be surprised that they did not call to mind a similar exertion of his power, which they had beheld while they sailed to the country of the Gadarenes.

Though, on many occasions formerly, Jesus had given equal, if not greater, evidences of his power, the disciples did not till now make open professions of his dignity. It seems, when his miracles came thus to be multiplied, but especially when they followed upon one another so close, the apostles were more deeply affected with them than by seeing him perform a single miracle only. No wonder, therefore, that they were now perfectly confirmed in the opinion which they had so justly conceived of him.

The evangelists, Matthew and Mark, omitting the conversation in the synagogue of Capernaum, which happened the day after the miracle of the loaves, and, consequently, on the very day that Jesus arrived at Capernaum, give us, in a few words, the transactions of several days, perhaps weeks, that is to say, the transactions of the whole space which passed between our Lord's arrival at Capernaum after the miracle of the loaves, and his departure to the passover, which John tells us was then at hand. These passages, therefore, naturally come in after the sixth chapter of John; because the miracles described in them were performed some days after the conversation in the synagogue, recorded in that chapter. Nevertheless, as the two evangelists have narrated these miracles in connexion with our Lord's arrival at Capernaum, it will not be improper to speak of them here.

Jesus ordinarily resided in this neighbourhood; but he had been absent for some time. Wherefore, the inhabitants, being well acquainted with him, knew him, immediately on his landing, to be that great prophet who commonly resided in the neighbouring town of Capernaum, and who had done numberless miracles among them. Being, therefore, glad that he was returned, they sent messengers to all their friends and acquaintance in the country round about, who were sick, desiring them to come and be cured. This happened immediately on his landing, and before he entered Capernaum. The people, rejoicing at the opportunity, came, after a few days, in great crowds, carrying their sick in beds, and bringing them to Jesus, whether he was in Capernaum, or the neighbouring country: for he tarried here till he took his journey to the passover. The number of the sick brought to him to be cured was so great, that he could not bestow particular attention upon each of them. They and their friends, therefore, besought him to grant them the favour of touching, if it were but the extremity of his clothes, being certain of obtaining thereby a complete cure. Nor were their expectations disappointed: for as many as touched him were made perfectly whole, whatever the distemper was which they laboured under.

And now to return to the people whom Jesus had fed by miracle; notwithstanding he had ordered them to go home when he had sent his disciples away, he did not leave the desert mountain. It seems, they took notice that no boat had come thither but the one belonging to the disciples; and because Jesus did not go with them, they concluded he had no design of leaving his attendants. Wherefore, though by withdrawing into the mountain, he modestly declined the dignity they had offered him, they persuaded themselves he would be prevailed upon to accept it the next day, especially as they might fancy the disciples were despatched to prepare matters for that purpose. In this hope they remained all night about the foot of the mountain, in the clefts of the rocks, making the best shift they could to defend themselves from the storm; and, as soon as the morning was come, they went up to wait on Jesus; but they did not meet with him, though they searched for him up and down the mountain. At length, they began to think he had gone off in one of the boats belonging to Tiberias, which, during the storm, had taken shelter in some creek or other at the foot of the mountain. The most forward of the multitude, therefore, entering those boats, sailed to Capernaum, the known place of our Lord's residence, where they found him in the synagogue teaching the people, [John vi. 59.] and asked him, with an air of surprise, how and when he came thither. "Jesus answered them, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles." Ye are not come after me because ye were convinced, by my miracles, of the truth of my mission, and are now disposed to hearken unto my doctrine: "but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled:" having been once fed, you expect that I will feed you frequently by miracle; and the satisfaction you found in that meal, has made you conceive great hopes of temporal felicity under my administration. These are the views with which you are following me, but you are entirely mistaken in them; for your happiness does not consist in the meat that perisheth, neither is it that sort of meat which Messiah will give you. Wherefore, ye ought not to labour so much for the meat that perisheth, mere animal food, which nourishes and delights the body only, as for the meat that endureth to everlasting life, divine knowledge and grace, which, by invigorating all the faculties of the soul, makes it incorruptible and immortal. Neither ought you to follow the Son of man, the Messiah, with a design to obtain the meat that perisheth, but in expectation of being fed with the meat that endureth to everlasting life; for it is that meat which he will give you. "Labour not only for the meat which perisheth, but also for that meat which endureth to everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. For him hath the Father sealed:" by the miracle of the loaves, God the Father shows you that he hath enabled and authorized me,

the Son of man, to bless you with the meat enduring to everlasting life, the food of your souls. The epithet of Father is elegantly given to God in this passage, as it expresses the relation he stands in to the person who, in the precedent clause, is called the Son of man. The metaphors of meat and drink being very familiar to the Jews, and frequently used in their writings to signify wisdom, knowledge, and grace, they might easily have understood what Jesus meant by the meat enduring to everlasting life. Nevertheless, they mistook him altogether, imagining that he spake of some delicious, healthful animal food, which would make men immortal, and which was not to be had but under Messiah's government. Accordingly, being much affected with this exhortation, they asked him what they should do to work the works of God; they meant to erect the Messiah's kingdom, and obtain that excellent meat which, he said, God had authorized Messiah to give them; works which they imagined were prescribed them by God, and were most acceptable to him. The Jews, having their minds filled with the notion of the great empire which the Messiah was to erect, expected, no doubt, that Jesus would have bidden them first rise against the Romans, and vindicate their liberties; and then, by the terror of fire and sword, establish Messiah's authority in every country. Wherefore, when he told them that the whole work required of them towards erecting Messiah's kingdom, was, that they should believe on Messiah, whom he had now sent unto them, they were exceedingly offended, thinking that he could not be the Messiah promised in the law and the prophets. And some, more audacious than the rest, had the confidence to tell him, that since he pretended to be Messiah, and they pretended to believe on him as such, notwithstanding his character was entirely different from that of the great deliverer described in their sacred books, being so humble and peaceable, as to refuse the crown which of right pertained to Messiah, and which they had offered him, it would be proper that he should show greater miracles than their law-giver had performed; otherwise, they should not be to blame, if, believing Moses and the prophets, they persisted in their ancient faith concerning Messiah, and concerning the duty which they owed him. By extolling the miracle of the manna, by calling it "bread from heaven," and by insinuating that it was Moses's miracle, the Jews endeavoured to disparage both Christ's mission and his miracle of the loaves, which they affected to despise as no miracle in comparison. It was only a single meal of terrestrial food, at which nine or ten thousand had been fed. Whereas, Moses, with celestial food, fed the whole Jewish nation, in number upwards of two millions; and that not for a day, but during the space of forty years in the wilderness. Wherefore, as if Jesus had done no miracle at all, they said to him, "What sign showest thou? what dost thou work?" Jesus

replied, " Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave not that bread from heaven ;" it was not Moses who, in ancient times, gave you the manna ; neither was the manna bread from heaven, though it be so called by the Psalmist, on account of the thing which it typified ; for it dropped from the air only. " But my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven : " by the miracle of the loaves, my Father has pointed out to you the true, spiritual, heavenly bread, which he himself giveth unto you, of which the manna was only a symbolical representation, and which is sufficient to sustain, not a single nation only, but the whole world. " For the bread of God is he which (is what) cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." The manna which dropped from the air, and kept those who made use of it only for a day, cannot be called the bread of God ; but that is the bread of God which cometh down from God, and maketh the eater holy, happy, and immortal.

It is reasonable to imagine that the people who had now heard our Lord, were of different characters. Many of them, no doubt, were obstinately perverse, heard him with prejudice, and wrested all his words. But others of them might be men of honest dispositions, who listened to his doctrine with pleasure, and were ready to obey it. This latter sort, therefore, having heard him describe the properties of the celestial bread, were greatly struck with the thoughts of it, and expressed an earnest desire to be fed with it always. [John vi. 34, 35.] " Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life : I am the bread of God which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. He that cometh to me for the sustenance of his life, shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst ;" because I am the bread of life, they who believe in me shall, in due time, be raised to the enjoyment of a life free from all the painful appetites and sensations which accompany mortality, and shall be made immortal and perfectly happy. Thus he assigned one of the many reasons why he called himself the bread of life. The conclusion from this part of his discourse was so evident, that he left his hearers to draw it for themselves. It was this : since matters are so, I am evidently greater than Moses, even in respect of that for which you extol him most. He gave your fathers manna, which was a bodily food only, and nourished nothing but the natural life. But I am myself the bread of life and food of the soul, making men both immortal and happy.

He next turned his discourse to those of his hearers who did not profess the same disposition which the former had expressed. " But I said unto you, that ye also have seen me and believe not ;" ye ask me to show you a sign that ye may see and believe me. Why, truly, I must tell you that ye have seen me, seen my character and mission in the miracles which I have

performed already, that is, you have seen me perform many signs sufficient to convince you that I am the Messiah. Nevertheless, you do not believe that I am he, but reject me as an impostor. Therefore, your infidelity proceeds, not from want of evidence, as you pretend, but from the perverseness of your own disposition, which, perhaps, in time, may be overcome. For "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me," that is, shall believe on me. This was fit matter of comfort to Jesus under the present infidelity of the Jews. By this, likewise, he encouraged his disciples, who had already believed on him. In the mean time, he invited those who were disposed to believe, from the consideration that he would not reject them, however low their circumstances might be, however vile they might appear in their own eyes, or however much they might have formerly injured him, by speaking evil of him and opposing him. "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." I came not to act according to the bent of human passions, which lead men to return whatever injuries are done them; and therefore I will not instantly leave off exhorting those who at first reject me, neither will I inflict immediate punishment on them; but I will bear with them, and try all possible means to bring them to repentance, that they may be saved; for I am come to do the will of him that sent me. "And this is the Father's will, which hath sent me, that of all which he has given me I should lose nothing; but should raise it up again at the last day:" it is the will of the Father that every thing necessary to be done, both for the conversion of those who are disposed by him to believe, and for the preservation of those, in the paths of righteousness, who have already believed, that none of them whom he has given me may be lost by me; for they must all be presented before him safe at the last day. [John vi. 40.] "And this, likewise, is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son," seeth the character and mission of the Son in the miracles which he worketh, and in the other evidences wherewith his mission is attended, (as is evident from John vi. 36,) "and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." It is the fixed determination of the Father to bestow everlasting life on all who truly believe in me. Wherefore, in order to that, I will raise him up at the last day. Thus Jesus placed the character of Messiah in a light very different from that in which his hearers had been accustomed to view it; and taught them that, instead of the temporal blessings which they expected from him, they were to receive none but spiritual benefits. Hence, as the dispositions of the greatest part of them were carnal, his doctrine offended them, especially his affirming that he was the bread of life, and that he came down from heaven. "The Jews then murmured at him, because he

said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" Was he not born into the world as other men are, and are we not well acquainted with his parents, and know him to be earth-born? how then can he pretend to have come down from heaven? The Jews did not find fault with Jesus for insinuating that Messiah should come down from heaven; that was a point universally believed: but they were displeased because he said that he had come down from heaven: a thing which they could by no means believe, in regard they were well acquainted with his father and mother. "Jesus, therefore, answered, and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves: no man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Ye need not object my birth on earth, and the meanness of my relations, as things inconsistent with my heavenly extraction; for I assure you, that while you believe your teachers, who have greatly corrupted divine revelation, and entertain the prejudices wherewith they have filled your minds, and follow the sensual inclinations which have hitherto governed you, you cannot believe on me. No man can believe on me, except the Father, who hath sent me, draw him, that is, persuade him. Jesus added, Ye need not be surprised when I tell you that no man can believe on Messiah, except the Father draw him: for though you may imagine that all men will flock with great cheerfulness to him, and yield themselves his willing subjects, without any extraordinary means made use of to persuade them, the prophets insinuate the contrary, when they promise that, under the dispensation of Messiah, men shall enjoy the teaching of the Father in a far more eminent manner than under any precedent dispensation. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Before the advent of Christ, the Father spake unto the world concerning him by the prophets; and when he appeared in the human nature on earth, he demonstrated the truth of his mission by the testimony of John, and by voices from heaven, declaring him to be his beloved Son, and commanding all men to hear him. He did the same, likewise, by the doctrines which he inspired Jesus to preach, by the miracles which he gave him to perform, and by the influences of the Spirit which he empowered him to dispense. Every one, therefore, that hath heard and understood what the Father hath said concerning Messiah, whether by the prophets, or by John the Baptist, or by the voices from heaven, or by my doctrine, miracles, and spirit, and has learned thereby to form a just notion of Messiah, will believe on me as the Messiah. "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he that is of God, he

hath seen the Father:" when I speak of men's hearing and learning of God, I do not mean that they can see God personally, and be taught of him in the manner that a scholar is taught of his master. No man hath seen the Father personally, except the Son, whom the Father has sent, and whose peculiar privilege it is to have been taught immediately of the Father, the doctrine which he preaches to men. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life:" because I have been personally taught of the Father the doctrines which I preach, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life begun in him, and is as sure of being raised to the perfect enjoyment thereof as if he had it already in his possession. The reason is, by my doctrine I deliver believers from their sinful inclinations, which are the seeds of corruption; and cherish in them gracious dispositions, which are the principles of eternal life. In respect of my doctrine, therefore, I am undoubtedly that bread of life which I spake to you of before. Thus Jesus explained the nature of the dignity which he had assumed to himself in the foregoing part of his discourse, and demonstrated that it really belonged to him.

Next, he ran a comparison between himself, considered as the bread from heaven, and the manna which Moses provided for their fathers in the desert, and which they admired so greatly. He told them that the manna had not preserved their fathers either from temporal or eternal death: whereas, he was come down bread from heaven, to make men immortal. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die." But because it was a matter of infinite importance to his hearers that they should form a just notion of his ability to save them, and believe in him as the Saviour of the world, he affirmed, the third time, that he was himself the living bread which came down from heaven to make immortal, and that all who did eat of it should live for ever; because he was about to give them his flesh to eat, by making it an expiation for the sins of the world. "I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, that I will give for the life of the world." All the terms made use of by our Lord on this occasion, were such as the Jews had been accustomed to interpret figuratively; for which reason, they might easily have understood him. Nevertheless, taking them in a literal sense, they were astonished beyond measure, and fell into keen disputes about the meaning of them. "The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." To

use Dr. Clarke's words here. 'Jesus, knowing how unreasonable his hearers were, did not think fit to explain himself more particularly at this time; but, persisting in the same figurative way of expressing himself, he repeated and affirmed more earnestly what he had asserted before. Except ye be entirely united to me, by a hearty belief and practice of my doctrines, and partake of the merit of that sacrifice which I shall offer for the sins of the world, and continue in the communion of my religion, and receive spiritual nourishment by the continual participation of those means of grace which I shall purchase for you by my death, ye can never attain eternal life.' "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day:" he has the principles of eternal life implanted in him, and shall enjoy it, because I will raise him up at the last day. "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed:" my flesh and blood are the true nutriment of the soul; for they feed it, and make it grow; they give vigour to all its faculties, preserve it continually alive, and make it fit for heaven. "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him:" we are most intimately connected together in the closest friendship; and, therefore, whatever blessings I can bestow, whether by my own power, or by my interest with the Father, or by the influences of my Spirit, my friends shall enjoy them in full perfection. The expression of persons dwelling in each other occurs often in John's writings, and denotes the closest union of affections and interests. Wherefore, according to the grand figure made use of by the apostle Paul, it signifies, that he who truly believes on Christ is so united to him, as to be a member of his body, and, consequently, a partaker with him of his life and immortality, and of all the happiness which he himself enjoys, or is able to communicate. "As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me shall live by me." As it is my meat and drink to do the will of my Father, who is the author of life and happiness, as I nourish and delight my mind with the punctual execution of all the orders he gave me when he sent me into the world; so he that eateth me; he that believes my doctrine and obeys my precepts, shall find therein eternal nourishment and refreshment to his soul. Or the meaning may be, as I shall live after I am put to death, because I am sent by the Father, the author of life, and because he dwells in me, and I in him; so he that eateth me, and thereby has me dwelling in him, shall, after he dies, be raised again by me. "This is that bread which came down from heaven:" this is the bread which, in the beginning of my discourse, I told you was come down from heaven; a kind of bread infinitely superior to the manna, both in its nature and efficacy; for it is to be eaten by you, "not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead:" it is neither to be eaten the same way that your

fathers did eat the manna, nor with the same effect; "but he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum:" he spake them openly, in the hearing of all the people who attended at public worship in the synagogue.

Most of the metaphors in this discourse, and particularly that of food, to signify doctrine, and of eating and drinking to signify believing, were abundantly easy, and might have been understood, at the very first, by the Jews, being found in their scriptures, and used in their schools. Only, not being able to comprehend what he meant by his flesh, they took the whole literally: and were so offended at the thought of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, (a thing not only prohibited by the law of Moses, but repugnant to the customs of all civilized nations,) that many of them, who were his disciples, when they heard it, said it was absurd. "Many, therefore, of his disciples, when they heard this, said, This is an hard saying, who can hear it?" who can believe and obey it? "When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? what and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" Are ye offended because I said my flesh is bread, and that it came down from heaven, and that you must eat my flesh and drink my blood in order to your having eternal life? What if ye shall see me ascend up into heaven bodily, where I was before? will not that convince you of the truth of my having come down from heaven? will it not show you, likewise, that I never intended you should eat my flesh in a corporal manner. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I spake unto you, they are spirit, and they are life:" when I spake of your eating my flesh, I did not mean it in a literal sense; so used, my flesh would be of no advantage to any man. But I meant your believing the doctrines, to reveal which I was made flesh, by taking upon me human nature. So that, more properly, it is my Spirit that giveth life to men, and maketh them immortal: for the words that I speak to you, the doctrines that I preach, proceed from my spirit, and are the food of your souls; consequently, the means of your life. To some of you, however, my doctrine will be ineffectual, because you do not believe it; and, perhaps, are desirous to pervert its meaning, that you may have a pretence to forsake me. "But there are some of you that believe not: for Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." He knew the inward disposition of every particular person that heard him, and foresaw which of his disciples would be so base as to betray him. "And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given him of my Father:" because I know perfectly the

inward frame of your minds, therefore I told you that no man can believe on me, except an opportunity of knowing the evidence of my mission, a capacity to judge of it, and such a hearty love of the truth as will prompt him to use the means proper for discovering it, and, when discovered, dispose him cheerfully to receive it, are given him of my Father. These words are expressive, not only of the strong prejudices of the Jews, but of the total disinclination to receive the words of truth, which exists naturally in every heart, and is removed only by regenerating grace.

This sermon was so opposite to the dispositions of those that heard it, that many of his professed disciples, from this time, abandoned his cause. Christ, therefore, turned to the twelve, and asked them whether they also would go away. "Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom should we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe, and are sure, that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus answered him, have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" The word devil is here, probably, made use of, not as an appellation for an evil spirit, but in its original sense, as meaning an adversary. If this observation, which has been made by Dr. Campbell, may be admitted as just, it cuts off the pretence which some men may make to vindicate their rash and unguarded expressions, by alleging the example of our Lord. "He spake of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve:" he meant Judas Iscariot, though he did not, at this time, think fit to name him. By declaring that he had knowingly made choice of a traitor to be one of the twelve, who constantly attended him, he insinuated that, in his most retired hours and secret actions, he was not afraid of the eyes of his enemies. Wherefore, having initiated a person of this character into all the mysteries of his fellowship, no man can suspect that he was carrying on a plot to deceive the world; for, if he had, Judas, when he deserted him and betrayed him to the priests, would not have failed to discover the imposture.

The evangelist Mark, after having described the miracles performed by Jesus, at Capernaum, upon the sick who were brought to him, in consequence of the messages which the inhabitants of the land of Gennezareth sent, on his arrival, from the desert of Bethsaida, into all the neighbouring region, proceeds to give the history of a multitude of cures performed in other towns and villages. [Mark vi. 56.] "And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch, if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole." It seems, Jesus now made a long journey, in which he visited many different villages,

cities, and countries. This was, probably, no other than his journey to the passover, which, the evangelist John says, was nigh when the miracle of the loaves was performed. [John vi. 4.]

After Christ had returned from the passover into Galilee, certain emissaries from the scribes and Pharisees, at Jerusalem, collected themselves round him, and ventured to attack him for permitting his disciples to eat with unwashed hands. The law of Moses required external cleanness as a part of religion, not, however, for its own sake, but to signify with what carefulness God's servants should purify their minds from moral pollutions. Accordingly, these duties were prescribed by Moses in such moderation, as was fitted to promote the end of them. But, in process of time, they came to be multiplied prodigiously: for the ancient doctors, to procure the observation of those precepts that were really of divine institution, added many commandments of their own, as fences unto the former; and the people, to show their zeal, obeyed them. For example, because the law [Lev. xv. 11.] saith, "Whomsoever he toucheth that hath the issue, (and hath not rinsed his hands in water,) he shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even," the people were ordered to wash their hands carefully, and to bathe themselves immediately on their return from places of public concourse, and before they sat down to meat, lest, by touching some unclean person in the crowd, they might have defiled themselves. The Pharisees, therefore, being very zealous in these trifles, would eat at no time, "unless they washed their hands" with the greatest care; and, when they came from the market-place, they would not sit down to table till they had first bathed themselves. From this source came that endless variety of purifications, not prescribed in the law, but ordained by the elders, such as "the washing of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables," not because they were dirty, but from a principle of religion, or rather of superstition.

Instead of entering at large into a defence of the conduct of his disciples, our Lord attacked the practices of the Pharisees, charging them with making void the commandments of God through their traditions: "for God, said he, commanded, saying, Honour thy father and thy mother; and whoso curseth father and mother, let him die the death. But ye say, whosoever shall say to his father and mother, it is corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered." Two different interpretations are given of this passage; one, which is very commonly adopted, is, that they impiously taught that a man might suffer his parents to starve, if he could say to them, it is a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, that

is, it is given to the temple, which should have succoured you. Dr. Gill inclines to a different opinion. After adducing several passages from the Jewish writers in support of his interpretation, he concludes that, upon the whole, the sense of this passage is, not that a man excused himself to his parents according to this tradition, by saying that his substance, either in whole, or in part, was corban, or devoted to the service of God, and, therefore, they could expect no profit or relief from him; but that he vowed that what he had should be as corban, and that they should be never the better for it: so that a man so vowing, might give nothing to the service of God, but keep his whole substance to himself, which he might make use of for his own benefit, and for the benefit of others, but not for his father and mother, who, after such a vow made, were to receive no benefit by it, unless rescinded by a wise man, and which seems to be an explanation of it, made after the times of Christ.

After having proved to the Pharisees the vanity of their worship, while they taught "for doctrines the commandments of men," he directed his attention to the multitude, and said unto them, "Hearken unto me every one of you, and understand; There is nothing from without a man, that entering into him can defile him; but the things which come out of him, these are they that defile the man. If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." Our Lord did not at all mean to overthrow the distinction which the law had established between things clean and unclean in the matter of man's food. That distinction, like all the other emblematical institutions of Moses, was wisely appointed, being designed to teach the Israelites how carefully the familiar company and conversation of the wicked is to be avoided. He only affirmed, that, in itself, no kind of meat can defile the mind, which is the man, though by accident it may; for instance, when taken in quantity or kind, contrary to the commandment of God.

As the apostles were not yet fully acquainted with the nature of their Master's kingdom, they probably supposed that the favour of the rulers of the Jews might contribute towards its advancement. They were, therefore, concerned, that their Master disoblige the Pharisees by undervaluing their traditions and condemning their practices. When they had informed Christ of the displeasure of these haughty men, he answered, "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Though they seem to occupy a place in the garden of God, and to flourish with luxuriant verdure; yet, as their bitter and pernicious fruit proves that they are introduced there by no other than the enemy of souls, they shall be rooted up by their utter and avowed rejection of the Messiah, that they may thus be numbered no longer among the saints of the Most High. After applying to them what he had before observed in the sermon on the plain, that "if the blind

lead the blind, both of them would fall into the ditch," he entered into the house where he usually resided, to rest himself from the fatigue of addressing and disputing with the multitude. When he had thus retired, Peter, the most forward of the apostles, inquired the meaning of the expression, "that which come out of a man defileth the man." He then assigned the following reason in vindication of his assertion, that from within, "out of the heart of man proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile the man." Thus did our Lord beautifully exhibit the true nature of human actions, and load with perpetual infamy those teachers of religion, who instruct their followers in frivolous superstitions, while they neglect, or even oppose, the eternal laws of righteousness and truth.

Though our Lord did not seek the favour of the Pharisees, nor fear, on proper occasions, to provoke their resentment; yet, as their plots were levelled at his reputation and his life, and his hour of final suffering was not yet come, he thought it best to retire into the borders of Phœnicia, and there dwell for a while in a state of obscurity. His fame, however, had spread so far, that he soon met with those who personally knew him; and one of the inhabitants of the country indulged the hope that he would display his recovering mercy towards her daughter, who was under the influence of an infernal spirit. She therefore cried after him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David," for I believe that thou art he that was born King of the Jews, "my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he," willing to show the greatness of her faith, seemed as if he did not hear her, and "answered her not a word." His disciples, though they felt but little pity for a Gentile, yet appear to have been desirous that he might grant her request, and thus rid himself from her importunity. "But he answered them and said, I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," i. e. my ministry, while here on earth, is to be employed chiefly in seeking their conversion, though, after I have ascended upon high, the most beneficial consequences shall result to all the nations of the earth. "Then she fell at his feet, and besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter. But he answered, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast it to the dogs;" thus strongly making the distinction which yet continued to subsist between the Jews and the Gentiles. Offensive as this expression must have been to a Gentile, the woman, probably convinced of the excellency of the Jewish religion, or, like the woman of Samaria, firmly believing in the exalted character of Christ, and therefore readily admitting whatever he asserted, however opposite it might be to her former prejudices, still continued

her applications. "And she said, truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table;" let me, therefore, have only as much kindness as the dogs of any family enjoy. "Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And when she was come to her house, she found that" the evil spirit was ejected, "and her daughter laid upon the bed." This miracle indicated that there was mercy in store for the Gentiles, and strongly indicates the duty always to pray and never to faint.

At length, Jesus, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, returned to the sea of Galilee, through the region of Decapolis, on the east side of Jordan. Somewhere in this country they brought to him a man who was deaf, and who had an impediment in his speech. He had, therefore, either only a partial deafness, or one that was the effect of some accident or disease. His friends having interceded for him with Christ, "he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit and touched his tongue. And," that the deaf man, who could not be instructed by language, might consider the source whence all benefits proceed, "looking up to heaven, he sighed and saith unto him, ephphatha, that is, be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain. And he charged them that they should tell no man." However, neither the man nor his friends obeyed this injunction, but published every where that Christ had "done all things well, making both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak."

Jesus having tarried in Decapolis a considerable time, the fame of his being in that country reached every corner. Wherefore, to avoid the crowds, he retired into a desert mountain, beside the sea of Galilee. Here the sick, the lame, the dumb, the blind, and the maimed, were brought to him from all quarters, and laid down around him by their friends, who followed him thither. "And he healed them." The sight of so many people in distress moved the compassion of the Son of God exceedingly; for he graciously healed them all. Particularly on the dumb, who are commonly deaf also, he not only conferred the faculty of hearing and pronouncing articulate sounds, but he conveyed into their minds at once the whole language of their country, making them perfectly acquainted with all the words in it, their significations, their forms, their powers, and their uses, so as to comprehend the whole distinctly in their memories; and, at the same time, he gave them the habit of speaking it both fluently and copiously. This was a kind of miracle vastly astonishing. The change that was produced in the bodies of the men, was but the least part of it. What passed in their minds was the grand and principal thing, being an effect so extensive, that nothing inferior to infinite power could produce it. With respect to the maimed, that is, persons

who had lost their legs and arms, Jesus gave them new members in their stead. But when he thus created such parts of their bodies as were wanting without having any thing at all as a subject to work upon, the spectators could scarcely have been more surprised, had they seen him make a whole human body out of the dust of the earth. The Jewish multitude seem to have apprehended the greatness of these miracles more distinctly than the generality of christians; for we are told, [Mat. ix. 33.] when Jesus opened the mouth of a dumb man, the multitude marvelled, saying, "it was never so seen in Israel." [See also Matt. xii. 22, 23, Mark vii. 38.] On this occasion, likewise, they were not silent nor unaffected. "Inasmuch 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." This latter clause makes it probable that many heathens were now present with our Lord, beheld his miracles, and formed a just notion of them. It seems, his fame, spreading itself into the neighbouring countries, had made such an impression upon the idolatrous nations, that numbers of them came from far to hear and see the wonderful man of whom such things were reported, and, if possible, to experience his healing goodness. Wherefore, when they beheld those effects of his power, they were exceedingly struck with them, and broke forth in praises of the God, by whose assistance and authority he acted: and it may be, also, from that time forth devoted themselves to his worship.

The multitude above mentioned continued, at this time, with Jesus three days: so Mark accidentally informs us; but he speaks nothing of the transactions which happened on them. Of these, Matthew has given a general account in the passage just now explained. And now the multitude having, as on a former occasion, consumed all the provision they brought with them, Jesus would not send them away without feeding them, lest they might have fainted on the road home, many of them having come from far. The disciples, who, it seems, were not thinking now of the former miraculous dinner, imagined that Jesus proposed to feed this great multitude in the natural way, and were greatly surprised at it. They did not reflect, it seems, upon the former miraculous dinner which Jesus had given to the multitude; or, if they did, they had such imperfect conceptions of his power, that they fancied he could not feed the multitude a second time. For these wrong notions Jesus did not reprove them, but meekly asked what meat they had; and, upon their telling him that they had seven loaves and a few little fishes, he ordered them to be brought, and out of these made a second dinner for the multitude by miracle, few or none of them having, probably, been present at the former dinner. They seem to have been mostly such as followed Jesus from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and the neighbouring hea-

then country. This dinner was, in all respects, like to the first, except in the number of loaves and fishes, of which it was made; the number of persons who were present at it; and the number of baskets that were filled with the fragments that remained. The loaves made use of at this feast are seven; the fishes are said to have been little and few; the baskets of fragments that remained were seven; and the people who were fed were four thousand men, besides women and children, who, no doubt, were equal in number to, if not more than, the men. At this dinner the multitude were ordered to sit down, not on the grass, as on the former occasion, but on the ground, the grass being probably gone. Hence it has been conjectured, that the miracle was performed about the middle of the summer, the grass in Judea decaying very early, through the excessive heat of the climate. The weather, therefore, being good, and the air warm, the people could remain two or three nights successively in the fields. He gave thanks for the fishes separately, and distributed them separately. The evangelists having, in the history of the former dinner, described the manner in which the multitude was set down, thought it needless, on this occasion, to say any thing of that particular; probably, because they were ranged, as before, in companies, by hundreds, and by fifties. Matthew tells us, that, having fed the multitude, Jesus took a boat and passed over to the coasts of Magdala, in quest of more opportunities to instruct and heal mankind. Mark says, "he came into the parts of Dalmanutha." But the evangelists may easily be reconciled, by supposing that Dalmanutha was a city and territory within the district of Magdala. Reland mentions a castle, called Magdala, not far from Gamaba, which he thinks gave this region its name.

While Jesus was in Dalmanutha, or Magdala, the Pharisees, having heard of the second miraculous dinner, and fearing that the whole common people would own him for Messiah, resolved to confute his pretensions fully and publicly. For this purpose, they came forth with the Sadducees, who, though the opposites and rivals of the Pharisees in all other matters, joined them in their design of oppressing Jesus, and, along with them, demanded the sign from heaven. It seems, the Jews, understanding the prophecy, Dan. vii. 13, literally expected that the Messiah would make his first public appearance in the clouds of heaven, and take unto himself glory and a temporal kingdom. Agreeably to this, Josephus, describing the state of affairs in Judea under Felix, tells us, that the deceivers, pretending to inspiration, endeavoured to bring about changes; and so, making the people mad, led them into the wilderness, as if they had been to show them signs of liberty. Wherefore, when the Pharisees desired Jesus to show them a sign from heaven, they certainly meant that he should demonstrate

himself to be the Messiah, by coming from heaven with great pomp, and wresting the kingdom out of the hands of the Romans. These hypocrites craftily feigned an inclination to believe, if he would but give them sufficient evidence of his mission, hoping that he would fail in the proof which they required, and thus for ever destroy his own success. But as the proofs which Jesus had already afforded of the divinity of his mission were sufficiently convincing, he did not condescend to grant their request; but, having reproached them with having a better knowledge of approaching rain or sun-shine, than of the advent of his kingdom, repeated what he had before observed concerning the sign of the prophet Jonas, and "left them, and departed."

Having thus left the Pharisees, he again entered the vessel, and crossed over to the other side of the lake. By this time, the seven baskets of fragments appear to have been consumed, and the "disciples had forgotten to take bread," having only a loaf with them. In the course of their voyage, he charged them, saying, "take heed of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the Sadducees, or of Herod." And the disciples supposed that, as the doctors prohibited the use of the leaven of heathens and Samaritans, he forbade them to buy bread of either sect, lest it might be made with leaven somehow impure, and so looked on this advice for their neglecting to take bread with them. He reproved their want of faith in having so soon forgot his miraculous power of supplying them with bread; and hinted to them, that he referred, not to such leaven as is used for the fermenting of bread, but to the self-righteous pride of the Pharisees, and the speculative infidelity of their rivals, the Sadducees.

Having crossed the lake, Christ either landed at Bethsaida, or went thither very soon; for, in the next passage of the history, [Mark viii. 22—26.] we find him curing a blind man, who was brought to him there. In this miracle there are two things remarkable: 1. Our Lord led the man out of the city before he would heal him; and, when the cure was performed, he forbade him to return thither, or so much as to tell it to any one who lived in the town. The reason is supposed to be, that the inhabitants of Bethsaida, having been for a long time solicitous to have him acknowledged as a temporal Messiah, would have been excited, by this new display of his power, to take him by force, and make him a king. 2. In giving sight to this blind man, Jesus did not, as on other occasions of a like nature, impart the faculty all at once, but by degrees: for, at the first, the man saw things but obscurely; then by a second imposition of Christ's hands, he had a clear sight of every object in view. Our Lord's intention in this might be, to make it evident that, in his cures, he was not confined to one method of operation, but could dispense them in what man-

ner he pleased. In the mean time, though the cure was performed by degrees, it was accomplished in so short a space of time, as to make it evident that it was not produced by any natural efficacy of our Lord's spittle or touch, but merely by the exertion of his miraculous power. The blind man's expression after the first imposition of Christ's hands, may easily be accounted for, on supposition that he was not born blind, but lost his sight by some accident; for, if that was the case, he might have retained the idea both of men and trees: in which light, his words, "I see men as trees walking," express the indistinctness of his vision very properly.

From Bethsaida Jesus went north, into the territory of Cæsarea Philippi. Here, after having prayed with his disciples, he inquired of them what was the general opinion entertained of his character. "And they said, some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Thus most of the people took Jesus of Nazareth for a different person from what he was, because he did not appear with that external grandeur with which they supposed the Messiah was to be adorned. Wherefore, that he might know whether his disciples, who had long enjoyed the benefit of his doctrine and miracles, had formed a juster idea of his character, he asked them what they thought of him themselves. Simon, in the name of the rest, replied, that they firmly believed him to be "the Christ, the Son of the living God;" the long expected Messiah, who was a person of infinitely greater dignity than Jeremias, or Elijah, or John the Baptist, or any other mortal man. The epithet of living is here given to the true God with the greatest propriety, as it distinguishes him from the heathen idols, which were things without life, stocks and stones, the work of men's hands. He accepted the title of Messiah, congratulating Simon on the knowledge which he had of his person and function; a knowledge which had been communicated to him merely by the teaching of God. Moreover, in allusion to his surname of Peter, which signifies a rock, Jesus promised that he should have a principal hand in establishing his kingdom. The Christian church was to be erected on his labours, as on a solid foundation: so that it should never be destroyed while the world lasted. [Matt. xvi. 19.] "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven:" thou shalt open the gospel-dispensation both to Jews and Gentiles, for thou shalt be the first preacher of the gospel to both in point of time. "And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Whatsoever thou shalt preach as a precept of the gospel, or term of men's salvation, shall be ratified in heaven as such; because thou shalt have the infallible direction of the Spirit of God in this matter.

He then charged his disciples that they should keep his

character a profound secret, as he was speedily to suffer death as an impostor, and to "rise again on the third day." Perhaps his meaning was, that he did not wish it to be proclaimed that he was the Messiah, lest the multitude, who were inclined to espouse his cause, from a mistaken notion of the nature of his kingdom, should rise in arms to deliver him from the power of their rulers. Christ thought fit to foretell his own sufferings plainly, in order to depress the towering imaginations which had, no doubt, arisen in the minds of his apostles, from their misunderstanding the preceding discourses. Though their faith was now so confirmed that they might receive this information without being in danger of forsaking him, Peter, whom he had been so lately honouring with the keys of the kingdom, could not help being much displeased to hear his Master talk of dying in Jerusalem, immediately after he had been saluted Messiah, and had accepted that sacred title. [Matt. xvi. 22, 23.] "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee. But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but of those that be of men." The appellation, Satan, should here be understood merely, as in a former instance, as denoting an adversary, one who, filled with the ideas of a carnal kingdom, might, in a certain limited sense, be deemed an adversary to the pure and spiritual kingdom of Christ.

Because Peter's indecent behaviour proceeded from the love of the world and its pleasures, Christ thought proper publicly to declare that all his followers must not only deny themselves of every unlawful pleasure, but be contented to suffer many things for his name's sake. But, to encourage them to so hard a warfare, he further assured them, that he that would "save his life should lose it;" so he that should lose his life by dying for his sake, should find it in the everlasting salvation of his soul. "For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul, or what (at the last great day) shall he give in exchange for his soul? Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, whosoever shall be ashamed to avow himself my follower in the midst of persecution, "of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels."

For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works: reward him, not with the honours of a temporal kingdom, great offices, and large possessions, but with the joys of immortality. He shall come in his own glory, the glory peculiar to him as God-man; probably, the majesty and splendour of his glorified body, a visible representation of which he exhibited in the transfiguration about a week after this discourse

was delivered. He shall come, also, in the glory of the Father, augustly arrayed with the inaccessible light wherein God dwells; and which, darting through and enlightening all space with its ineffable brightness, shall make even the sun to disappear. Withal, to render his advent to judge the world the more grand, he will come with his holy angels, attended by the whole host, [Matt. xxv. 31.] a vast train ready to execute his commands. In this majesty, the Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, [1 Thes. iv. 16.] making heaven, earth, and hell to resound. The dead of all countries and times hear the tremendous call. Hark! the living, filled with joy, exult at the approach of God; or, seized with inexpressible terror, send up doleful cries, and are all changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. Behold! the dead press forth from their graves, following each other in close procession. The earth seems quick, and the sea gives up its dead. Mark the beauty, the boldness, and the gladness, of some springing up to honour; but the ghastly countenances, the trembling, and the despair of others, arising to shame and everlasting contempt! See how amazed and terrified they look! with what vehemence they wish the extinction of their being! Fain would they fly, but cannot. Impelled by a force strong as necessity, they hasten to the place of judgment. As they advance, the sight of the tribunal from afar strikes new terror; they come on in the deepest silence, and gather round the throne by thousands of thousands. In the mean time, the angels, having brought up their bands from the uttermost parts of the earth, fly round the numberless multitude, singing melodiously with loud voices, for joy that the day of general retribution is come, when vice shall be thrown down from its high usurpation; virtue exalted from its debasement to its superior station; the intricacies of providence unravell'd; the perfections of God vindicated; the church of God, purchased with his blood, cleared of them that do iniquity, and of every thing that offendeth, and established impeccable for ever. [Psalm lxxviii. 1.] "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away. As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. But let the righteous be glad, let them rejoice before God, yea, let them exceedingly rejoice." [Rev. xviii. 8.] "For strong is the Lord God who judgeth." And now the Son of man appears on the throne of his glory, and all nations, princes, warriors, nobles, the rich, the poor, all stript of their train and attendance, and every external distinction, stand naked and equal before him, silently waiting to be sentenced to their unchangeable state. And every individual is filled with an awful consciousness that he in particular is the object of the observation of Almighty God, manifest in his sight, and actually under his eye; so that there is not one single person con-

cealed in the immensity of the crowd. The Judge, who can be biassed by no bribes, softened by no subtle insinuations, imposed upon by no feigned excuses, having been himself privy to the most secret actions of each, needs no evidence, but distinguishes with an unerring certainty. He speaks! "Come from among them my people, that ye receive not of their plagues." They separate. They feel their judge within them, and hasten to their proper places: the righteous on one hand of the throne, and the wicked on the other, not so much as one of the wicked daring to join himself with the just. Here the righteous, most beautiful with the brightness of virtue, stand serene in their looks, and full of hope, at the bar of God; a glad company:—whilst the wicked, confounded at the remembrance of their lives, and terrified at the thought of what is come, hang down their heads, inwardly cursing the day of their birth, and wishing a thousand and a thousand times that the rocks would fall on them, and the mountains cover them: but in vain; for there is no escaping, nor appealing, from this tribunal. Behold, with mercy shining in his countenance, and mild majesty, the king invites the righteous to take possession of the "kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. But, with angry frowns, he drives the wicked away into punishment that shall have no end, no refreshment, no alleviation. Everlasting punishment! O the rejoicing! O the lamenting! The triumphant shouting of ascending saints caught up in the clouds to be ever with the Lord! The horror, the despair, the hideous shrieking of the damned, when they see hell gaping, hear the devils roaring, and feel the unspeakable torment of an awakened conscience. Now they bitterly cry for death; but death flies from them. Now they envy the righteous, and gladly would be such; but all too late!—Lo! the Son of God bows his head, the signal for his servants, the heavens and the earth, to depart, their work being at an end. See! with a terrible thundering noise, the "heavens pass away, the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and all the works that be therein, are burnt up!" The frame of nature dissolves! Earth, seas, skies, all vanish together, making way for the new heaven and the new earth. It appears! The happy land of promise, formed by the hand of God, large, beautiful, and pleasant, a fit habitation for his favourite people, and long expected by them as their country. Here, all the righteous, great and small, are assembled, making one vast, blessed society, even the kingdom, and "the city of God." Here God manifests himself in a peculiar manner to his servants, and wipes away all tears from off their faces, and adorns them with the beauties of immortality, glorious to behold. Here they drink fulness of joys from the crystal river proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, and eat of the tree of life. "And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any

more pain." But every one, happy in himself, imparts the blessings to his fellows; for mutual love warms every breast, love, like that which subsists between the Father and the Son; mutual conference on the sublimest subjects, refreshes every spirit with the divine repasts of wisdom; and joys, flowing from the tenderest friendships, fixed on the stable foundation of an immovable virtue, gladden every heart. All the servants of God serve him in perfect holiness, see his face, feel transports of joy, and, by the reflection of his glory, shine as the sun in the firmament for ever and ever. "And there shall be no night there, and they need no candle, neither the light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light, and they reign for ever and ever." Happy day! happy place! happy people! O blessed hope of joining that glorious society! All the servants of God shall serve him, and see his face. Serve God and see his face! what an immensity of felicity is here! Imagination faints with fatigue of stretching itself to comprehend the vast, the unmeasurable thought.

"And he said unto them, there are some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom." You need not doubt that there shall be a day of judgment; for there are some here present that shall not die, before they see a faint representation of the glory with which I shall come, and an eminent example of my power exercised on the men of the present age. Accordingly, the disciples saw their Master coming in his kingdom, when they were witnesses of his transfiguration, resurrection, and ascension; had the miraculous gifts of the spirit conferred upon them; and lived to see Jerusalem, with the Jewish state, destroyed, and the gospel propagated through the greatest part of the then known world.

About six days, if we reckon exclusively, and about eight days, if we reckon inclusively, after our Lord had accepted the title of Messiah, happening to be with his disciples and the multitude in the country of Caesarea Philippi, he left them in the plain, and went up into an exceeding high mountain, with Peter, the most zealous, James, who was probably the most active, and John, the most beloved disciple. In this solitude, while Jesus was praying with the three, he was transfigured. His face now became radiant and dazzling; for it shone like the sun in its unclouded and meridian clearness: his garment acquired a snowy whiteness, sweetly refulgent, but, in a degree, inferior to the lustre of his countenance. Thus, for a little while, during his state of humiliation, the Son of God permitted the glory of his divinity to break forth and shine through the veil of his human nature, with which it was covered. Moreover, to heighten the grandeur and solemnity of the scene, Moses, the great law-giver of the Jews, and Elijah, who had been a most zealous defender of the law, appeared, dressed in all the beauties of immortality. The disciples were asleep when

the transfiguration began, and thus lost the pleasure of hearing a part of the conversation between the blessed Redeemer and these two glorious saints. In general, however, they heard enough to give them to understand that the subject they talked of was the atoning death of Jesus, by which he was about to redeem lost sinners to himself; a subject that had given great offence to the disciples, and, above all, to Peter, a few days before. Probably, the streams of light which issued from the body, and especially from the countenance of Christ, and the voices of Moses and Elias talking with him, made such an impression on the senses of the disciples, as awakened them from their sleep. Opening their eyes, they beheld, with unutterable amazement, their Master in the majesty of his transfigured state, and his illustrious attendants, whom they might know to be Moses and Elias, either by revelation, by what they said, or by the appellations which Jesus gave them when speaking to them. Peter, particularly, being both afraid and glad at the sight, was in the utmost confusion. Nevertheless, the forwardness of his disposition prompted him to say something, and he requested permission to build three tabernacles, one for our Lord, and one for each of these holy men; for he said it was good to remain there. Perhaps he now thought that the glorious reign of Messiah was at this instant begun, and intended to call up the multitude to behold the glory of his Lord. "While he yet spake, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud," their hopes being blasted by the disappearing of the two messengers from heaven, "and behold a voice came out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him." The voice, as Dr. Macknight well remarks, uttering these words just as Moses and Elias disappeared, intimated that men were no longer to hearken unto them, speaking in the law; but, for the future, were to obey Jesus, because Moses and Elias, though both eminent in their stations, were only servants; whereas, this was God's beloved Son. Besides, the thing uttered by the voice, "hear ye him," plainly alluding to Deut. xviii. 15, signified, that Jesus was the prophet of whom Moses spake in that passage, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken." When the three disciples heard the voice coming from the clouds, loud as thunder, and full of divine majesty, such as mortal ears were unaccustomed to hear, they fell flat to the ground, on their faces, being in a great panic; an effect which visions of this kind commonly had on the prophets and holy men that were favoured with them. In this condit on the disciples continued, till Jesus came to them, raised them up, and dispelled their fears.

Jesus and his disciples having been in the mountain all night, the transfiguration may be supposed to have happened either in

the day-time or in the night. That it was night, is probable from the disciples falling asleep while Jesus prayed, a circumstance which could not well happen by day to all three at once, and in the open air. Next morning, as they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged the apostles to conceal what they had seen. He had good reasons for this conduct. He knew that the world, and even his own disciples, were not yet capable of comprehending the design of his transfiguration, nor of the appearing of Moses and Elias; and that, if this transaction had been published before his resurrection, it might have appeared incredible, because hitherto nothing but afflictions and persecutions had attended him. The disciples obeyed the injunction, though they were at a loss to understand what the rising from the dead should mean, and questioned much among themselves respecting this matter. Being also surprised at the sudden disappearance of Elijah, they inquired of their Master why the scribes asserted "that Elias must first come." Our Lord did not deny the necessity of Elijah's coming before Messiah, according to Malachi's prediction, but assured his disciples that he was already come, and described the treatment he had met with from the nation in such a manner, as to make them understand that he was speaking of John the Baptist. At the same time, he told them, that though the Baptist's ministry was excellently calculated for producing all the effects which were ascribed to it by the prophets, they needed not be surprised to find that it had not had all the success which might have been expected from it, and that the Baptist had met with much opposition and persecution; for that the person preaching of the Messiah should meet with the same treatment. By considering attentively these particulars, they understood that he meant John the Baptist.

As Jesus came down to the plain with his disciples, he saw the nine surrounded by a great multitude, and the scribes disputing with them. Probably, the multitude had remained there all night, waiting till Jesus should return. When the people looked on him as he was coming, they were greatly amazed; and, running to him, they saluted him with particular reverence. It seems, that as Moses's face shone several hours after he had been with God on the mount, so something of the glory of the transfiguration remaining in our Lord's countenance, and on his raiment, might astonish the multitude, and attract their veneration. When the salutations of the multitude were over, Jesus asked the scribes what was the subject of their debate with his disciples. [Mark ix. 17, 18.] "And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit. And wheresoever he taketh him he teareth him, and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and he pincheth away; and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not." For the man's giv-

ing this narrative in answer to what Jesus said to the scribes, "what question ye with them?" it appears, that the scribes had been disputing with the disciples about the cure of this youth, which they unsuccessfully attempted. Perhaps their want of success had given the scribes occasion to boast, that a devil was found, which neither the disciples nor their Master was able to cast out. But the disciples affirming that this devil, however obstinate, was not able to withstand their Master, the debate was drawn out to some length. And Jesus had already given so many unquestionable demonstrations of his power, that the behaviour of the scribes in this, as in every other instance, discovered the most criminal infidelity, and fully justified the epithets which he gave them when he said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Then, turning to the father of the youth, he said, Bring thy son hither." Immediately on his being brought, the evil spirit, by whom he was possessed, cast him to the ground, and filled him with the most violent agitation. This was permitted, no doubt, to try the faith of the father, and demonstrate the greatness of Christ's power. The poor man, beholding the wretched condition of his son, simply related the story of his sufferings, and begged of Christ that, if he were able, he would afford him relief. "Jesus said unto him, in allusion to the expressions of diffidence which he uttered, "if thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." The father hearing this, cried out, with tears, that he believed, and besought Jesus to supply, by his goodness and pity, whatever deficiency he might find in his faith. But the vehemence with which he spake, occasioned by the greatness of his grief, bringing the crowd about them, Jesus, to prevent farther disturbance, immediately ordered the unclean spirit to depart from the youth, and never trouble him more. This command was instantly obeyed; for the devil came out of the youth, making a hideous howling, and convulsing him to such a degree, that he lay senseless and without motion, as one dead, till Jesus took him by the hand, instantly brought him to life, and then delivered him to his father perfectly restored.

It is remarkable, that, on this occasion, the nine disciples remained quite silent before the multitude. They were ashamed, perhaps, and vexed, lest, through some fault of their own, they had lost the power of miracles, formerly conferred on them. But when they came with Jesus to their lodging, they asked the reason why they could not cast out that particular demon. "And Jesus said unto them, because of your unbelief." Knowing that you doubted whether I was able to make you cast out this devil, I ordered it so that he would not go out at your command, for a reproof of the weakness of your faith. It seems, the disciples had attempted to cast him out. In the mean time, to encourage them, Jesus described the efficacy of the faith of

miracles. "For verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible unto you." Ye shall, by that faith, be able to accomplish the most difficult things in all cases, where the glory of God and the good of his church are concerned. "Howbeit, this kind (of demon) goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," these exercises contributing to increase the degree of faith.

CHAPTER IX.

From the Transfiguration, to the Feast of Dedication.

Christ teaches his disciples humility by the example of a little child—conversation respecting one that casts out devils in his name—how many pas-overs there were in the ministry of Christ—he goes to the feast of tabernacles—dismisses the woman taken in adultery, and cures the man who was born blind—is refused lodging in Samaria—some offer to follow him—seventy disciples are sent forth, perform their office, and return rejoicing in their success—the good Samaritan—Christ's visit to Bethany—goes to the feast of dedication—finds the man that had been born blind—is the good Shepherd—discourses with the Jews in Solomon's porch—retires beyond Jordan.

SOON after this conversation had been held, our Lord journeyed with his disciples from Cæsarea Philippi to Galilee; and, as they were travelling, again informed them concerning his death and resurrection, a prediction which filled them with dismay. Having arrived, Peter, at whose house he lodged, was called upon to pay the tribute of a half shekel, or fifteen pence of our money, which was levied either for the service of the temple, or, as Beza thinks, for that of the Romans. They demanded the tribute for Jesus from Peter, either because the house in which Jesus lived was his, or because they observed him to be of a more forward disposition than the rest, or because none of them were with him at that time but Peter. Peter told the collectors that his master would pay the tribute, and consequently made a sort of promise to procure it for them. Yet, when he considered the matter more maturely, he was afraid to speak to the Messiah concerning his paying taxes on any pretence whatsoever. In the mean time, Jesus, knowing both what had happened and what Peter was thinking, saved him the pain of introducing the discourse, "saying, what thinkest thou Simon, of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, of

strangers. Jesus saith unto him, then are the children free ;” insinuating, that because he was himself the Son of the great King, to whom heaven, earth, and sea, with all things in them, belong, he was not obliged to pay tribute, as holding any thing by a derived right from any king whatever. Or if, as is more probable, the contribution was made for the service and reparation of the temple, his meaning was, that, being the Son of him to whom the tribute was paid, he could justly have excused himself. Nevertheless, that he might not give offence, he sent Peter to the lake with a line and a hook, telling him, that in the mouth of the first fish that came up he should find a Grecian piece of money, called a stater, equal in value to four drachmas, or one shekel of Jewish money, the sum required for them two.

The grief which our Lord’s followers felt in consequence of the intimations he had given of his sufferings had now so far subsided, that a day or two after, as they were travelling to Capernaum, some of them, forming a separate company, fell into a violent dispute respecting the chief posts in their Master’s kingdom. This debate Jesus overheard ; and though he said nothing to them at the time, yet, after the receivers of the didrachmas were gone, he did not fail to ask them what it was they had been contending about on the road. “ But they held their peace. And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, if any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.” The disposition which he shall indulge in wishing for distinction in my kingdom, will render it necessary that he should occupy only the lowest situations in it, as it respects offices ; and will prevent him from being distinguished by any abundant share of the influences of my spirit. Further to check these foolish emulations, he placed “ a little child in the midst of his disciples, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven :” so far shall ye be from becoming the greatest in my kingdom, that ye shall not so much as enter into it at all, unless ye be like little children, free from pride, covetousness, and ambition ; and resemble them in humility, sincerity, and docility, and in disengagement of affection from the things of the present life, which fire the ambition of grown men. But he inculcated humility more especially by this argument, that it leads one directly to that greatness which the disciples were ignorantly aspiring after. [Matt. xviii. 4.] “ Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven :” whosoever rests satisfied with the province which God has assigned him, whatever it may be ; and meekly receives all the divine instructions, though contrary to his own inclinations, and prefers others ; in honour, such a person is really the greatest in my kingdom. Next, to show how

acceptable a grace humility is, he took the child up in his arms, and declared that kindness to such as humbled themselves like little children is, in reality, kindness showed to him, especially if it be done out of obedience to his command. [Luke ix. 48.] "And he said unto them, whosoever shall receive this child in my name:" whosoever showeth kindness even to the least of my disciples; whosoever encourages and assists such because he belongs to me; "receiveth me. And whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me; for he that is least among you all," in respect of humbling himself to do good offices, "the same shall be great." In this manner did Jesus recommend to his followers a perpetual spiritual infancy, consisting in an holy simplicity, meek docility, and unfeigned humility.

John now informed his Master, that having seen some one casting out devils in his name, he had forbidden him. Without inquiring whether this might be one of the Baptist's disciples, or a Jewish exorcist, "Jesus said, forbid him not; for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me:" be the person who he will, he must have a high notion of my power, since he sees the devils go out at mentioning my name. Besides, "he that is not against us is on our part:" you should consider that, in the present circumstances, every one who does not oppose and persecute is a friend; and that the ejection of demons in my name will advance my reputation and promote my interest, although those who cast them out should have no intention to do either: nay, though the devils which are cast out should intend the contrary. Farther, to show the apostles that they had been in the wrong to discourage this person, who must have entertained a great veneration for their Master, and was in a fair way to become his follower, he told them, that the lowest degree of respect which any one showed him, though it was but the giving a cup of cold water to his thirsty disciple, is acceptable to him, and shall not lose its reward. "And whosoever shall offend," or, as Dr. Campbell more correctly translates it, shall ensnare "one of these little ones that believe in me;" whosoever shall make one of these little ones to stumble, so the Greek word properly signifies; whosoever shall tempt them to sin, "it is better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea." Hence he inferred, that it is better to deny one's self the greatest earthly satisfactions, and to part with every thing most precious, represented by the figures of a hand, a foot, an eye, than by these things to cause the weakest of his friends to stumble, as some of the disciples had lately done. The amputation of our hands and feet, and the digging out of our eyes when they cause us to offend, import, also, that we should deny ourselves such use of our senses and members as may lead us to sin. Thus the hand and the eye are to be turned away from those alluring objects which raise

in us lust and ambition. The foot must be restrained from carrying us into evil company, unlawful diversions, and forbidden pleasures. Nor can we complain of these injunctions as severe, since by tempting others to sin, as well as by sinning ourselves, we are exposed to the eternal punishments of hell. "For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good; but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves." The argument stands thus: that ye, my apostles, do purify yourselves, is absolutely necessary, not only on account of your own future well-being, but for the sake of mankind, who are to be salted by you; for the fire that is seasoned with piety and virtue, by your doctrine and example, and so put in a fit condition for being offered unto God, in opposition to the condition of the wicked, who, being an abhorring unto all flesh, must be consumed by the worm that never dies, and the fire that is not quenched. The necessity of men's being thus seasoned with grace in order to their becoming acceptable sacrifices unto God, you may learn from its being typically represented under the law, by the priests salting the sacrifices for the fire of the altar with salt. Having, therefore, this high honour of salting mankind for the altar of heaven conferred on you, it is fit that ye contain in yourselves the spiritual salt of all the graces, and particularly the holy salt of love and peace, in order that you may be, as much as possible, free from the rottenness of ambition, and pride, and contention, and every evil work. [Mark. ix. 50.] "Have ye salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven." Some suppose that our Lord here means that every particular saint has a guardian angel assigned him; others, that he refers only in general to that care which is exercised by the "ministering spirits that are sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation." He concluded by telling them, that the Son of man was come to seek and to save that which is lost; and, by delivering the parable of the lost sheep, which its owner found after much painful searching, he eminently displayed the immense care which the Almighty has taken with respect to the preservation of the least of his people.

Having thus spoken to the persons offending, he addressed his discourse to the persons offended, showing them in what manner they ought to behave towards an offending brother: first of all, his fault is to be represented to him privately, in order that he may be thus brought to a sense of his sins, and so saved from the guilt of unrepented transgression. But if this gentle method has not the desired effect, two or more grave persons shall concur in the rebuke, that he may be convinced

he is in the wrong. If he still remains obstinate, his offence is to be told to the church, or the particular congregation of the faithful to which he belongs; whose sentence being declared, will show him that, in the judgment of all good men, the other has done his duty, and that he is to blame. Lastly, if this does not make an impression upon him, he is to be considered as an incorrigible sinner, whose company and conversation, being contagious, ought to be shunned by all who have any love of goodness: "but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." Next Jesus conferred on his disciples in general the power of binding and loosing, which he had formerly honoured Peter with singly. In the former grant, the power of binding and loosing had respect to nothing but doctrine. Whatever Peter declared lawful and unlawful, should be held so by heaven; whereas here, it relates, not to doctrine only, but to discipline also. If, by their admonition, whether public or private, the apostles brought their brethren to repentance, they loosed the guilt of their sins, the fetters by which divine justice detains men its prisoners; or, as it is expressed in the preceding verse, 'they gained their brethren,' i. e. saved them from perishing. On the other hand, if the offending brother continued impenitent after the methods prescribed were all tried, they bound his guilt the faster upon him; because, according to the laws of heaven, the method of salvation which they were to preach by inspiration, none but penitents shall obtain pardon.

Farther, to encourage good men to be very earnest in their endeavours to bring sinners to repentance, he assured them, that if they prayed to God for it, he would hear them, provided it was agreeable to the wise ends of his providence. "Then came Peter to him and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith, I say not unto thee till seven times, but until seventy times seven." This excellent morality he illustrated by the parable of the two servants, debtors to one Lord; in which is shown the necessity of forgiving the greatest injuries in every case, where the offending party is sensible of his fault, and promises amendment, a necessity of the strongest kind arising from this law of the divine government, that it is the condition upon which God forgives our offences against him. "Therefore the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants:" because I order you to forgive all who repent of the injuries they have done you, therefore the method in which you are to be treated by me at the last day, if you refuse forgiveness, may be represented by the behaviour of a certain king towards his servants, when he took account of them. "And when he had began to reckon," or inspect their accounts, "one was brought unto him," probably his steward or treasurer, who, having had the management of his revenue,

“owed him no less than ten thousand talents,” that is, upwards of one million eight hundred and seventy thousand pounds sterling; and who, upon inquiry, was found to have nothing. Wherefore, as it plainly appeared, by his having run through such vast sums, that he had been both negligent and extravagant, his lord ordered the law to be executed against him. “But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.” Not that the value of him and his family, and effects, was any way equal to the debt, but as a punishment of his wickedness; for, on any other supposition, it is hard to conceive how his lord, whose humanity and goodness was so great, came to take such a rigorous measure; especially as the advantage thence accruing to himself must have been but a trifle in comparison of his loss. The steward thus being put in mind of his debt, and threatened with the execution of the law, durst neither deny it nor make light of it, as many do who are admonished with respect to their sins: for the accounts were at hand, and the officers had laid hold of him to bind him. In great perplexity, therefore, he fell down on the ground, and besought his lord, with many tears, to have patience, promising to pay the whole debt. The confusion he was in made him say this without consideration; for the debt which he owed was a sum by far too great for one advanced in years, as he was, and who had nothing, ever to think of acquiring. However, his lord, being of an exceeding generous and merciful disposition, was touched with his distress, and had compassion on him, and ordered him to be loosed. “Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt,” that is, did not insist on present payment; for he afterwards exacted the debt. “But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him an hundred pence; and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.” The Roman penny, or denarius, which is here spoken of, being in value about seven-pence halfpenny of our money, the whole sum that was due to him did not much exceed three pounds sterling. Therefore, his craving this trifle in so rough a manner immediately on coming out of the palace where so much lenity had been showed to him, in a matter of far greater importance, manifested the very basest disposition in the man. Though this poor man’s creditor was a fellow-servant, and consequently no more than his equal in rank, he humbly fell down at his feet, and, with the same earnestness, entreated him, as he had done his lord, making him a promise of payment; which there was not only a possibility, but a probability of his performing. Nevertheless, the other forgetting the much greater mercy that had been so lately shown to himself in the like circumstances, by their common master, was insolent and inexor-

able, and would not wait a moment, but went immediately and cast the man into prison. Such inhumanity so much afflicted his fellow-servants, that they came and informed their lord of the transaction. Then his lord, after he called him, said unto him, "O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, (the vast sums thou owedst,) because thou desiredst me; should not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee." And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors for the punishment of his unpardonable cruelty, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

As our Lord said, concerning the love of God and our neighbour, that on it depended both the law and the prophets; so it may be observed, that this parable contains the substance of the evangelical and apostolical doctrines. Here we discover the enormity of human guilt, the sovereignty and freedom of God's method of pardoning, and the awful punishment which is designed for such as, while they claim the divine pardon for themselves, refuse to bestow their mercy on the children of men.

After delivering the parable of the servants' debtors, our Lord went into Judea, travelling through that country which is on the other side Jordan; and he was followed by great multitudes, who experienced the benefits of his teaching, and the efficacy of his miracles. It is supposed by some, that he was now gone up to the passover, and that this was the fourth which was celebrated during his ministry. The first passover, agreeable to this hypothesis, was that in which our Lord purged the temple, as recorded in the second chapter of John. He is supposed to have been at Jerusalem on occasion of the second, when he cured the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda. The third took place after he had passed through the cities and villages [Mark vi. 56.]; and before he had that controversy with the scribes and Pharisees concerning eating with unwashed hands. The fourth we have just now mentioned; and the fifth was that at which he himself was offered up as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

From this time, to the feast of tabernacles, no events are recorded; a festival which the law ordained to begin at the fifteenth day of the seventh month, answering to our September and October; so that it happened at the end of the former, or in the beginning of the latter. During the continuance of the solemnity, the males of the Jewish nation, that were fit to travel, dwelt at Jerusalem in tents, or tabernacles, made of the boughs of trees, in commemoration of their fathers having dwelt in tabernacles of this kind for the space of forty years in the wilderness. A little while before the feast, Jesus being in Galilee, whither he had returned from the fourth passover, some of his kinsmen, who had not as yet believed on him, desired him to go up to the approaching solemnity, and show himself.

As they did not believe on him, they condemned him in their own minds, and said that he acted altogether absurdly in passing so much of his time in Galilee, and the other remote corners of the country, while he pretended to so public a character as that of Messiah: that it would be much more for his interest to make disciples in Jerusalem and Judea, the seat of power; and that he ought to work his miracles there, as publicly as possible, before the great and learned men of the nation, whose decision in his favour would have great influence to induce others to believe on him. But Jesus, knowing the malice of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, did not incline to be among them longer than was absolutely necessary, lest they might have taken away his life prematurely. He therefore told them, his time of going up to the feast was not yet come; but that they, as being in perfect friendship with the world, might go whenever they pleased. However, when the bulk of the people had gone up, he went up, as it were, privately, that is, probably, neither preaching nor performing miracles by the way.

As he did not appear openly on his arrival at Jerusalem, his enemies charged him with being a deceiver, who neglected the commandments of Moses; and his friends did not dare to defend him openly, for fear of exposing themselves to the persecution of the Jews. At length, about the middle of the feast, Jesus came into the temple, and preached many important doctrines of true religion, with such strength of reason, clearness of method, and elegance of expression, that his enemies themselves were astonished, knowing that he had not the advantage of a liberal education. But he informed them, that the doctrine which he taught was not derived from any human instruction, but from the immediate inspiration of God. [John vii. 17.] "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." Good men can easily judge of any teacher whether he and his doctrine come from God; not only because the divine wisdom and goodness are interested to secure such from capital errors, but because they themselves have no predominant evil inclinations to prejudice them against the truth when it appears; and because they can discern how far any doctrine is conformable to the principles of virtue which they possess. Hence, if one teaches what makes for the advancement of his own worldly interest, or for the gratification of his pride, or any other evil passion, the doers of the will of God will immediately know that such a teacher is an impostor. "He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory;" whereas, if a prophet proposes doctrines which have a tendency to reform men, and to advance the glory of God, without regard to the opinion of the world, or to his own interest, he must certainly be sent of God, and should not, by any means, be suspected of imposture: "but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no

unrighteousness is in him :” no falsehood, no design to deceive the world. “ Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? why go ye about to kill me?” There is a remarkable beauty in the sudden turn of the sentiment. Some of the Jews called Jesus a false prophet, because, on the sabbath, he had healed the paralytic who lay in one of the porticos of Bethesda, pretending that it was a gross violation of the law of Moses, which no good man, far less a prophet, would be guilty of. In answer to these surmises, he told them plainly, that however much they pretended to reverence the authority of Moses in his law, they made no scruple to violate the most sacred of his precepts; they had entered into the resolution of murdering him, directly contrary to every law of God and man; and, for the same end, were laying secret plots against his life. This reproof came in with singular propriety and force, immediately after Jesus had, by the most convincing arguments, proved his mission from God. [John vii. 20.] “ The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil;” either thou art mad, or thou art actuated by the malice of the devil; “ who goeth about to kill thee? Jesus answered, and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel:” I have done a miracle of an extraordinary kind on the sabbath, which ye think inconsistent with the character of a good man, and therefore ye wonder how I have performed it; but I can easily vindicate my character by an argument which it is not in your power to gainsay. “ Moses, therefore, gave unto you circumcision,” (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers,) “ and ye on the sabbath circumsise a man.” The sentence should be constructed thus: “ and on the sabbath-day ye circumsise a man, not because it is a precept of Moses only, but of the fathers,” Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. “ If a man, on the sabbath-day, receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry with me because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath-day;” because I have made a whole man, or the whole of a man sound on the sabbath-day? Since ye think yourselves bound to dispense with the strict observation of the sabbath, for the sake of another precept which is only of a ceremonial nature; how can ye be angry with me, because in pursuance of the great end of all of the divine laws, I have cured a man who was infirm in all his members; and that with far less bodily labour than you perform the ceremony of circumcision, and cure the wound that is made by it? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.” Consider the nature of the things, and judge impartially, without regard to your own prejudices, or to the superstition of your teachers.

“ Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the

very Christ?" The inhabitants of Jerusalem, always Christ's bitter enemies, asked, with surprise and irony, if our Lord's boldness, and the silence of the rulers, proceeded from their having acknowledged him as the Messiah. At the same time, in derision of his pretensions, they added, [John vii. 27.] "Howbeit we know this man whence he is:" i. e. we know his parents and relations; "but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is," alluding to the obvious popular sense of Isa. liii. 8, 'who shall declare his generation?'

"Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and whence I am; and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not." Though you pretend to know me, and whence I am, it does not follow that I am destitute of the prophetic characters of Messiah, and an impostor come to you of my own accord. I am really sent to you by God, who is true in all the prophecies he uttered by his servants concerning Messiah, for they are all fulfilled in me; but you are wholly ignorant of his blessed perfections and gracious counsels, and have no inclination to obey his will. "But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me." Were you acquainted with what the prophets have said concerning Messiah, as you pretend to be, you would know this to be one of his principal characters, that he is to understand the perfections and will of God more fully, and to explain them unto men more clearly than any messenger from God ever did before. Withal, by considering the nature of my doctrine, you would see this character remarkably fulfilled in me, and thereby would be sensible that I am from God, and that he hath sent me.

This defence did not pacify his enemies; for some of them would gladly have apprehended him; however, none of them had the courage to lay hands on him, being restrained by providence, because the season of his sufferings was not yet come. In the mean time, the miracle which he had lately performed on the infirm man was so great and so well known, and his defence, by which he justified himself, so clear and so convincing, that many of the people believed on him, publicly affirming that he was Messiah. The attachment of the common people to Jesus greatly incensed the chief priests and Pharisees, with all their adherents; and therefore, on the last and great day of the feast, being met in council, they sent their officers to apprehend him, and bring him before them, thinking to confute his pretensions and punish him.

While these things were doing in the council, Jesus was preaching to the people concerning the improvement which it became them to make of his ministry among them. "Then Jesus saith unto them, yet a little while I am with you, and then I go unto him that sent me." My ministry among you is drawing towards a conclusion, you ought, therefore, while it lasts, to

make the best possible improvement of it, particularly you should listen to my sermons with great attention; for after that I am gone, you shall earnestly desire my presence, but shall not obtain it. "Ye shall seek me and shall not find me." This expectation of the Messiah was general throughout the nation, during the calamities of Judea, occasioned by Titus and his armies, and has continued among the Jews ever since, but to no purpose; for though many deceivers have arisen, the only true Messiah has performed his work, and entered into his glory. This ascent to the celestial world is intimated by the following passage, "and where I am ye cannot come," ye cannot arrive at heaven in your present state of impenitence and unbelief. Not entering into his meaning, they said among themselves, Whither will he go that we shall not find him? Will he go to our dispersed brethren, to teach them and the Gentiles among whom they reside? Yet, as we could even then find the place of his retirement, this saying, let us take it however we may, is unintelligible and absurd.

It is commonly supposed, that while Jesus was thus discoursing in the temple on the last and great day of the feast, the water from Siloam was brought into the women's court with the usual solemnities, according to the directions of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, if we may believe the Jewish writers. Part of this water they drank with loud acclamations, in commemoration of the mercy showed to their fathers, who were relieved by the miracle of a great stream of water made to gush out of a rock, when the nation was ready to die with thirst in a sandy desert, where was neither river nor spring; a part of it they poured out as a drink-offering, which they accompanied with prayers to Almighty God for a plentiful rain to fall at the following seed-time; the people, in the mean time, singing the passage, [Isa. xii. 3.] "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Jesus, whose custom it was to raise moral instructions from sensible occurrences, took this opportunity of inviting, in the most solemn and affectionate manner, all who were in pursuit, whether of knowledge or happiness, to come unto him and drink, in allusion to the rite they were then employed about. By coming to him and drinking, he meant believing on him; and to encourage them, he promised them the gifts of his Spirit, which he represented under the image of a river flowing from their belly, to express the efficacy and perpetuity of these gifts, together with the divine pleasure which they produce by quenching the desires of those who possess them, and fructifying others who come within their influence. The flowing of rivers of water out of the believer's belly, is an idea taken from receptacles round springs, out of which great quantities of water flow by pipes. This figure, therefore, represented the plenitude of spiritual gifts to be possessed by believers, and the happy effects which

they should produce in the world. The faculty of speaking all the different languages on earth fluently, which was the first gift of the Spirit, qualifying them to preach such doctrines as the Spirit revealed to them, they were both watered themselves, and in a condition to water the Gentiles, not with small streams, but with large rivers of divine knowledge; and so the land which, till then, had been barren, was, from that time forth, to be exceeding fruitful in righteousness to God. Accordingly the evangelist adds, by way of explication, "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." The gifts of illumination and utterance were not yet communicated to believers, being what they received on the day of Pentecost, to fit them for converting the world. Nevertheless, if the universality of the invitation and promise inclines the reader to think that, on this occasion, our Lord had the ordinary influences of the Spirit also in his eye, the evangelists remark, that "the Holy Ghost was not yet given," will not exclude them; because, even these might, at that time, be said not to have been given, as they had been given but sparingly, in comparison of the plentiful distribution which was to be made of them to all believers after Christ's ascension. Accordingly, the ordinary influences of the Spirit are often, in scripture, represented as the consequences and reward of faith. [Gal. iii. 14; Eph. i. 12.]

While Jesus was discoursing on this subject, the officers, who had been sent by the council, came to apprehend him; but, being struck with the topic on which he was discoursing, and the energy with which he delivered his ideas, they thought proper to hear him awhile, before they proceeded to the execution of their office. After having listened for a while, they were either so overawed by his majesty, or so filled with love for the benevolence of his character, that they desisted from their purpose; and, returning to their employers, instead of presenting them with a prisoner, gave it as their decided opinion, that "never man spake like this man. Then answered the Pharisees, Are ye," who have the advantage of a liberal education, and whom we always supposed to be men of sound understanding, "also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people," these foolish and ignorant followers of Jesus, "who know not the law, are accursed." On this occasion, Nicodemus, who had visited Jesus by night, and who still retained a veneration for his character, attempted his defence by asking his brethren, whether their law authorized them to condemn a man before his guilt is proved. The only answer they returned, was to ask him whether he was one of this wretched Galilean faction, and to request him to "search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet." By this, they either meant no Messiah, or else were carried away by the heat

of their passion, so as to forget that with which they must have been acquainted ; for Jonah was of Gath-hopher, a town of Galilee. But be this as it will, such blind judges were these masters of law and learning, that an argument which had no force against Jesus, who was actually born in Bethlehem, weighed a great deal more with them than all the solid proofs by which he so fully established his mission. To conclude : the council separated ; and Jesus, having perfect knowledge of their designs, went to lodge in the mount of Olives, that he might be out of their reach.

Early next morning Jesus returned to the temple ; and, as usual, taught in the temple. But while he was thus employed, the scribes and pharisees set a woman before him that had been taken in the act of adultery ; and, standing round him, desired his opinion in the affair. The evangelist says, the Pharisees desired our Lord's opinion in this matter with an insidious intention. [John viii. 6.] " This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him." Probably, the Romans had modelled the laws of Judea according to the jurisprudence of Rome ; and, in particular, had mitigated the severity of the punishment of the adulteress. Wherefore, if Jesus should say that the law of Moses ought to be executed on this adulteress, the Pharisees hoped the people would stone her immediately, which would afford them an opportunity of accusing him before the governor as a mover of sedition ; but if he determined that the innovations practised by the Romans should take place, they resolved to represent him to the people as one who made void the law out of complaisance to their heathen masters. This, their craft and wickedness, Jesus fully knew, and regulated his conduct towards these depraved hypocrites accordingly ; for he made them no answer. Perhaps there were in this woman some circumstances tending to alleviate her guilt, which might be known to Jesus, as well as the wickedness of her accusers' characters. However, he thought it proper on this, as on all other occasions, to decline the office of a civil magistrate ; and therefore proposed to her prosecutors, that he that was without sin among them should cast the first stone. " And they who heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last. When Jesus lift up himself and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers ? hath no man condemned thee, and begun thy punishment by casting the first stone ? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more."

He then addressed himself to the multitude, saying, " I am the light of the world," the spiritual sun that dispels the darkness of ignorance and sin. " He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life ;" that clear

knowledge of God, which shall guide him to eternal felicity. The Pharisees, therefore, said unto him, "Thou bearest record of thyself, thy record is not true;" alluding, perhaps, to what he had said, John vii. 18. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself my record is true; for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but ye cannot tell me whence I came and whither I go:" though I call myself the light of the world, ye are not to imagine that I do it from a spirit of pride and falsehood. I gave myself the title for no other reason but because it truly belongs to me; and that it does so, yourselves would acknowledge, if you knew as well as I do by what authority I act, for what end I am come, and to whom I must return after I have executed my commission. But these things you are entirely ignorant of; nor can it be otherwise, in regard that "ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man:" ye judge of me according to outward appearances, and condemn me for this, among other things, that "I judge no man." You think that I cannot be the Messiah, because I do not destroy those who oppose me, as you imagine the Messiah will do; but in this you are altogether mistaken; for the design of the Messiah's coming is not to destroy, but to save mankind. "And yet if I judge, my judgment is true," i. e. just, equitable: "for I am not alone," but my heavenly Father has constantly accompanied me with his presence and assistance. Herein I act in perfect conformity with what is written in your law; for it is there said, that the "testimony of two men is true. For I am one that bear witness of myself," not by words only, but by all the actions of my life, which accord fully with the character of the Messiah; "and the Father beareth witness of me" by the miracles which he has enabled me to perform. "Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me nor my Father; for if ye had known me" to be the true Messiah, "ye should have known," that "my Father," whom I have mentioned, is no other than the eternal God.

"These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple;" and though that place was much crowded, "no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come. Then said Jesus unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins. Whither I go ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from below; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world." Such a vile insinuation evidently shows what sort of persons ye are, and from whence ye have derived your original. Being from the earth, ye are obnoxious to all the evil passions wherewith human nature is infested; and, from what you feel in yourselves, you fancy that I am capable of murdering myself. But your thought is foolish, as is evident from this, that, being actuated by no evil passion, I cannot have the least temp-

tation to commit so gross an act of wickedness. My extraction is heavenly, and my mind pure; and therefore I cannot be guilty of self-murder, or of any other sin whatever. "I said, therefore, unto you, that ye shall die in your sins;" because ye are from below, and are full of evil inclinations, they will hinder you from believing, and consequently expose you to perdition; "for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Then said they unto him, Who art thou? Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. I have many things to say and to judge of you; but he that sent me is true, and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him." I have many reproofs to give you, and a severe sentence of condemnation to pass upon you; but I shall waive them all for the present, and tell you only this one thing, that he who sent me is true, and that I speak to the world nothing but what I have received from him, however disagreeable these things may be to persons of your wicked disposition. They were, however, so stupid, that they understood not that he spake to them of the Father. "Then said Jesus unto them, when ye have lift up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." When ye have crucified me, ye shall both know who I am, and who my Father is. The miracles accompanying my death, my resurrection, the effusion of the Spirit on my disciples, and the destruction of your nation, shall demonstrate that I am the light of the world, and that I do nothing by my own authority, but by my Father's direction; speaking such doctrines only as he has commissioned me to teach. "And he that hath sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please him. As he spake these words many believed on him;" believed him to be the Messiah. It would seem that, by the lifting of him up, which he said would convince them that he was Messiah, they did not understand his crucifixion, but his exaltation to the throne and kingdom of David. Hearing him, therefore, speak of a temporal kingdom, as they supposed, they began now to think he entertained sentiments worthy of Messiah, and, on that account, acknowledged him as such, believing the doctrine he had delivered concerning his mission.

Jesus knowing that the thoughts and views of those who now believed on him were, for the most part, carnal, judged it proper to undeceive them. "Then said Jesus to those Jews who believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," not only from the slavery and consequences of sin, but also from the ceremonial performances enjoined by Moses. It may here be remarked, that a sense of just and regular civil liberty has been more widely diffused by the propagation of the Christian religion than by any other cause;

and it has ever been found, that those who are the most devoted to the doctrines and precepts of genuine christianity, have been the warmest well-wishers to the temporal happiness of mankind. "They answered, We are Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man." They could not mean temporal bondage, as they were now in subjection to the Romans; but a freedom from spiritual bondage from the idolatry of the surrounding nations, was what they here asserted. They were, they said, the descendants of a noble and illustrious stock, that, during the worst times, had preserved sentiments in religion and government worthy of the posterity of Abraham; and had not, by the hottest persecution of the Syrian kings, been compelled to embrace heathenism. In respect of truth, "we were never in bondage to any man; how sayest thou then, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin:" there are no greater slaves than those who give themselves up to a vicious course of life, and to the gratification of their sinful appetites. "And the servant abideth not in the house for ever; but the Son abideth for ever." As a slave may be at any time turned out of the family when his master shall think fit, so my Father can, when he pleases, turn you out of his family, and deprive you of the outward economy of religion, in which you glory; because, by your sins, and especially your unbelief, you have made yourselves bondsmen to his justice: whereas, if by believing in his son, you are made partakers of liberty, you will be sure of ever remaining in the family, being the heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ. "I know that ye are Abraham's seed" by natural descent; but ye seek to kill me, and thus evidently prove that ye are not his children in a spiritual sense, "because my word hath no place in you." If ye were the spiritual progeny of Abraham, ye would resemble that great and good man in his righteousness; and therefore, instead of seeking to take the life of one who is come to you from God, with a revelation of his will, ye would believe on him in imitation of Abraham, who, for his faith in all the divine revelations, and his obedience to all the divine commands, however hard they were to flesh and blood, was ennobled with the grand titles of the father of the faithful, and the friend of God. "Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they unto him, We are not born of fornication;" they have not broken the marriage covenant between the Jewish nation and the Almighty by idolatry; "we have one father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot," from the obstinacy of your prejudices, "hear my word" with any intention to obey it. Ye inherit the nature of your father the devil, and therefore ye will gratify the lusts which

ye have derived from him : he was the enemy and murderer of mankind from the beginning ; and, ever since, has endeavoured to work their ruin, sometimes by seducing them into sin with his lies, and sometimes by instigating them to kill those whom God sends to reclaim them. Withal, having early departed from holiness and truth, a habit of lying is become perfectly natural to him. Wherefore, being a liar, and the father of it, i. e. the first and greatest liar, when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh what is proper to himself. And ye, his children, disbelieve me ; because, instead of soothing you in your sins, and flattering you with lies, I tell you the truth, which, like your father, you are utterly averse to. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. Is there any of you able to show that I have not received my commission from God, or that I have done any thing to render me unworthy of belief ? If you cannot, but must acknowledge that my doctrine and life are such as become a messenger of God, what is the reason that you do not believe me ? " He that is of God heareth God's words," and obeys them with pleasure. " Ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not the children of God."

" Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Said we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil ?" alluding to what they said, John vii, 20. Thou, who callest the children of Abraham the children of the devil, art a most profligate wretch, and either raving mad, or thou must be instigated by some evil spirit to speak as thou dost. " Jesus answered, I have not a devil ; but I honour my Father, and ye dishonour me. And I seek not mine own glory : there is one that seeketh and judgeth." I am neither mad, nor actuated by a devil ; but I honour my Father by speaking the words of truth, which he has sent me to deliver, and therefore ye defame me. " Verily, verily, I say unto you, if any man keep my sayings he shall never see death," i. e. experience that everlasting punishment which is called the second death. " Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets ; and thou sayest, If a man keep my sayings he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who is dead, and the prophets are dead ; whom makest thou thyself ? Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing." If I should speak in praise of myself, you would call it vain and foolish, and say to me, as the Pharisees did lately, " thou bearest record of thyself, thy record is not true." Wherefore, instead of giving a full description of my dignity, I shall only tell you that it is my Father that speaketh honourably of me, by the miracles which he enables me to perform, by the descent of his Spirit upon me at my baptism, and by his voice uttered from heaven, declaring me to be his beloved Son. This, I think, may be sufficient to convince you that I am able to do for my disciples what I said,

especially when I tell you farther, that my Father is he whom this nation pretends to worship as its God. "It is my Father that honoureth me, of whom ye say that he is your God. Yet ye have not known him; but I know him; and if I should say I know him not, I should be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. Your father Abraham rejoiced, or, (as it may be translated, earnestly desired,) to see my day; and," by the particular favour of a divine revelation, "he saw it, and was glad. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?" Understanding what he said in a natural sense, they thought he affirmed that he lived in the days of Abraham, which they took to be ridiculous nonsense, as he was not arrived at the age of fifty; for they had no conception of his divinity, notwithstanding he had told them several times that he was the Son of God. Jesus, therefore, finding them thus stupid and perverse, asserted his own dignity yet more plainly. "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am. Then they took up stones to cast at him, as a blasphemer; but he rendered himself invisible, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by unhurt."

As Jesus and his disciples were fleeing from the Jews, they found a blind beggar in one of the streets of the city, who, to move people's compassion, told them he was born in that miserable condition. The disciples, on hearing this, asked their Master whether it was the man's own sin, or the sin of his parents, which had occasioned his blindness from the womb. It seems, the Jews, having derived from the Egyptians the doctrines of the pre-existence and transmigration of souls, supposed that men were punished in this world for the sins they had committed in their pre-existent state. Jesus informed them, that this man had entered the world in this distressed condition, not in consequence of his own sins, or of those of his parents, but that the perfections of God might be displayed in him, particularly referring to his recovery, which he was now going to effect. He also intimated, that, as he had but little time more to spend in this world, it was necessary that he should fill it up with diligence, preparing their minds, by this hint, for his performing on the sabbath-day what might appear a servile work, and, as such, be deemed unlawful. And because he was going to confer sight on a man that was born blind, he took occasion from thence to speak of himself as one appointed to give sight likewise unto the darkened minds of men. "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Perhaps our Lord, by calling himself the light of the world, insinuated also to his disciples that they might safely have believed the lawfulness of the action, though they had no other evidence of it but that it was done by him. "When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the

spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay, and said unto him, Go wash in the pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, sent). He went his way, therefore, and washed, and came seeing. From verse eleventh it appears, that this beggar knew that it was Jesus who spake to him; probably he distinguished him by his voice, having formerly heard him preach, or he might know him by the information of the disciples. Hence he cheerfully submitted to the operation, although, in itself, a very improper means of obtaining sight, and obeyed without scruple when Jesus bade him go and wash his eyes in the waters of Siloam, entertaining no doubt of his miraculous power. Those who lived in this beggar's neighbourhood, and those who had frequently passed by where he used to beg, being well acquainted with his form and visage, were astonished at the alteration which they observed in his countenance by reason of the new faculty that was bestowed upon him. Wherefore, they expressed their surprise, by asking one another if this was not the blind man to whom they used to give alms.

The cure performed upon the man that was born blind, being much talked of in Jerusalem, and the man himself being brought by his neighbours before the council, as the proper judges of this affair, who best were able to discover any cheat that might be in it, they set about examining the matter, with a firm resolution, if possible, to blast the credit of the miracle. Nevertheless, on the strictest scrutiny, they were not able to find the least fault with it; their own eyes convinced them that the man really saw; and all his neighbours and acquaintance testified with one voice that he had been blind from his birth. They fell to work, therefore, another way; they asked the beggar by what means he had been made to see. They hoped to find something in the manner of the cure which would show it to be no miracle, or, at least, which would prove Jesus to be a bad man. The man honestly and plainly told them the whole matter; that he had made clay, put it upon his eyes, and ordered him to go and wash in Siloam. On hearing this account of the miracle, the Pharisees declared that the author of it was certainly an impostor, because he had violated the sabbath in performing it. Nevertheless, others of them, more candid in their way of thinking, gave it as their opinion, that no deceiver could possibly do a miracle of that kind; because it was too great and beneficial for any evil being to have either the inclination or the power to perform. "And there was a division among them." The court being thus divided in their opinion with respect to the character of Jesus, they asked the man himself what he thought of the author of his cure. "He said, He is a prophet." But the Jews, hoping to make the whole turn out a cheat, would not believe that the beggar was born blind, though all his neighbours had testified the truth of it; pretend-

ing, no doubt, that it was a common trick of beggars to feign themselves blind, and that this one, in particular, was in a combination with Jesus to advance his reputation, a circumstance which they urged from the favourable opinion he had expressed of him. Wherefore, they called his parents and inquired of them, first, if he was their son; next, if he had been born blind; and then, by what means he had obtained sight. They answered, that most certainly he was their son, and had been born blind; but with respect to the manner in which he had received sight, and the person who had conferred it upon him, they could give no information; but their son, being of age, would answer for himself. As the man who had been blind knew who had opened his eyes, without doubt he had given his parents an account, both of the name of his benefactor, and of the manner in which he had conferred the great blessing upon him: besides, having repeated these particulars frequently to his neighbours and acquaintance, who were all curious to hear him relate the miracle, we can conceive no reason why he should conceal them from his parents. The truth is, they lied grossly, and were ungrateful to Jesus in concealing his name on this occasion; but they were afraid to utter the least word which might seem to favour him; because, by an act of the court, it was resolved, that whosoever acknowledged Jesus to be the Christ should be excommunicated. The court finding that nothing was to be learned from the man's parents, by which the miracle could be disproved, called the man himself a second time, and tried, by fair words, to extort from him a confession to the disparagement of Jesus. "Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise, we know that this man is a sinner. He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no I know not; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

In this answer of the beggar, there is a strong and beautiful irony founded on good sense; and therefore it must have been felt by the doctors, though they dissembled their resentment for a little time, hoping that by gentle means they might prevail with him to confess the supposed fraud of this miracle. They desired him, therefore, to tell them again how it had been performed. "Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?" They had asked this question before [John ix. 15.]; but they proposed it a second time, in order that the man, repeating his account of the servile work performed at the cure, might become sensible that Jesus had violated the sabbath thereby, and was an impostor. Thus Christ's enemies would gladly have prevailed with the subject of the miracle to join them in the judgment which they passed upon the author of it. But their resistance of the truth appeared so criminal to him, that, laying aside fear, he spoke to them with great freedom. [John ix. 27.] "He answered them,

I have told you already, and you did not hear, (i. e. believe,) wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?" In this answer, the irony was more plain and severe. Are ye so affected with the miracle, and do ye entertain so high an opinion of the author of it, that ye take pleasure in hearing the account of it repeated, desiring to be more and more confirmed in your veneration for him? These words provoked the rulers to the highest pitch. "Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple," as is plain from the partiality thou discoveredst towards him, "but we are Moses's disciples;" and with great reason; for Moses clearly demonstrated his mission from God: whereas, this fellow, who contradicts Moses, and breaks his laws by his pretended cures performed on the sabbath, giving no proof of his mission, must be an impostor, and therefore deserves no credit. "We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not whence he is." The beggar replied, It is exceedingly strange that you should not acknowledge the divine mission of a teacher who performs such astonishing miracles; for common sense declares that God never assists impostors in working miracles. Accordingly, since the world began, no example can be given of any such persons opening the eyes of one born blind. My opinion, therefore, since ye will have it, is, that if this man was not sent by God, he could do no miracle at all. "Since the world began was it not heard that any man," that is not a worshipper of God, and a doer of his will, i. e. any sinner, any impostor, "opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God," were not sent of God; if he were not a prophet, and a messenger of God, "he could do nothing." Thus the beggar, though illiterate, answered that great body of learned men with such strength of reason that they had not a word to reply. However, the evidence of his arguments had no other effect but to put them into a passion, insomuch that they railed at him and excommunicated him. "They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us?" Thou wicked, illiterate, impudent fellow, whose understanding continues still as blind as thy body was, and who was born under the heaviest punishments of sin, dost thou pretend to instruct us in a matter of this kind, us, who are the guides of the people, and eminent for our skill in the law? "And they cast him out," i. e. they passed the sentence of excommunication upon him, which was the highest punishment in their power to inflict.

From this passage of the history we learn, that a plain man, void of the advantages of learning and education, but who has lonest dispositions, is in a fairer way to understand truth, than a whole council of learned doctors who are under the power of prejudice.

About this time the feast of dedication approached, a solemn-

nity, not appointed by the law of Moses, but by that heroic reformer, Judas Maccabeus, in commemoration of his having cleansed the temple, and restored its worship, after both had been profaned by Antiochus Epiphanes. But although this feast was of human institution, and Jesus foresaw that further attempts would be made upon his life in Jerusalem, he did not shun it, but went thither with great resolution. Luke explains the reason of this boldness: he had now continued on earth very near the whole period determined, and was soon to be taken up to heaven, from whence he had come down. He therefore resolved from this time forth to appear as openly as possible, and to embrace every opportunity of fulfilling the duties of his ministry. [Luke ix. 51.] "And it came to pass, that when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem. He did not travel thither privately, as he had often done before, but he declared his intention, and entered on the journey with great courage. The road to Jerusalem, from Galilee, lay through Samaria; wherefore, as the inhabitants of this country bore the greatest ill-will to all who worshipped in Jerusalem, Jesus thought it necessary to send messengers before him, with orders to find out quarters for him in one of the villages; but the inhabitants refused to receive him, because his intention in this journey was publicly known. The Samaritans could not refuse lodging to all the travellers that went to Jerusalem; for the high road lay through their country; such travellers only as went thither professedly to worship, were the objects of their indignation; "because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem," must imply, that his design of worshipping in Jerusalem was known to the Samaritans.

When the messengers returned with an account of what had passed in the village whither they had been sent, the two disciples, James and John, being exceedingly incensed at this rude treatment, proposed to call for fire from heaven, which should destroy those inhospitable wretches immediately, after the example of the prophet Elijah, who thus destroyed the men who had evil entreated him. But Jesus, whose meekness on all occasions was admirable, sharply reprimanded his disciples for entertaining so unbecoming a resentment of this offence. "But he turned and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of." Ye do not know the sinfulness of the disposition which ye have just now expressed, neither do ye consider the difference of times, persons, and dispensations. The severity which Elijah exercised on the men who came from Ahaziah to apprehend him, was a reproof of an idolatrous king, court, and nation; very proper for the times, and very agreeable to the characters, both of the prophet who gave it, and of the offenders to whom it was given; at the same time, it was not unsuitable to the nature of the dispensation they

were under. But the gospel breathes a different spirit from the law, whose punishments and rewards were all of a temporal kind, and therefore it does not admit of this sort of rigour and severity. He told them further, that to destroy men's lives was utterly inconsistent with the design of his coming into the world. "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them;" alluding to his miracles by which he restored health to the diseased bodies of men, as well as to his doctrine and death by which he gives life to their souls. Having said these things, he went with them into another village, the inhabitants of which were men of better dispositions. This was a noble instance of patience under a real and unprovoked injury; an instance of patience, which expressed infinite sweetness of disposition, and which, for that reason, should be imitated by all who call themselves Christ's disciples.

About this time, similar offers of following Christ were made to those mentioned on a former occasion, and similar answers were received, namely, that the Son of man had no certain resting place, and that the dead should bury their dead. "And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God;" fit to preach the kingdom of God.

The scene of Christ's ministry being from this time forth to lie in Judea, and the country beyond Jordan, it was expedient that his way should be prepared in every city and village of those countries whither he was to come. He therefore sent out seventy disciples on this work, mentioning, probably, the particular places he intended to visit, and in which they were to preach; whereas, the twelve had been allowed to go where they pleased, provided they confined their ministry to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. It is remarkable, that our Lord assigned the same reason for the mission of the seventy which he had assigned for the mission of the twelve disciples: the harvest was plenteous in Judea and Perea, as well as in Galilee, and the labourers there also were few.

The instructions given to the seventy on this occasion were nearly the same with those delivered to the twelve: only he ordered the seventy to spend no time in saluting such persons as they met on the road, the time assigned them for going through the cities being but short; and concluded with the most awful denunciations of divine vengeance against Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, for their neglect of the great privileges with which they had been favoured.

The seventy disciples having gone through the several parts of the country appointed them, returned and told their Master, with great joy, what they had done, particularly that they had cast out many devils. It is probable that they expressed

themselves the more strongly on this occasion, from the recollection of the defeat they had suffered about the time of their Master's transfiguration. But Christ diminished their exultation, by assuring them, that nothing had happened but what he had clearly foreseen, and reminding them, that they ought not so much to rejoice that the spirits of the deep were placed under their influence, as that their names were written in heaven, not only as the disciples, but the everlasting companions of the Son of God. Once more he thanked his Father that he had revealed the most important wisdom unto babes, and once more he admonished his disciples, that they were favoured above all the kings and prophets that were gone before them.

About this time, a doctor of the law thought he would make trial of the great wisdom which Christ had been represented to possess, by proposing to him one of the most important questions which it is possible for the human mind to examine, namely, what a man must do to inherit eternal life. Jesus, alluding to his profession, made answer by inquiring of him what the law taught on that point. "He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he, answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right; this do, and thou shalt live." Jesus approved of his answer, and allowed, that to love God as the law enjoined is the means of obtaining eternal life; because it never fails to produce obedience to all the divine revelations, and commands the belief of the gospel which he was then preaching, and which should be afterwards more fully revealed. But the lawyer, willing to justify himself, or show that he was blameless in respect of the duties which are least liable to be counterfeited, the social and relative duties, asked him what was the meaning and extent of the word *neighbour* in the law. It seems, being strongly tinctured with the prejudices of his nation, he reckoned none brethren but Israelites, or neighbours but proselytes, and expected that Jesus would confirm his opinion by approving of it. For, according to this interpretation, he thought himself innocent, although enemies had no share of his love, since the precept enjoined the love of neighbours only. But our Lord, who well knew how to convince and persuade, answered him in such a manner, as to make the feelings of his heart overcome the prejudices of his understanding. He convinced him of his mistake by a parable; an ancient, agreeable, and inoffensive method of conveying instruction, very fit to be used in teaching persons who are greatly prejudiced against the truth.

The parable which our Lord now spake, was that of the Samaritan who showed extraordinary kindness to a distressed

Jew, his bitter-enemy on account of his religion. This Jew, in travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among robbers, who, not satisfied with taking all the money that he had, stripped him of his raiment, beat him unmercifully, and left him for dead. While he was lying in this miserable condition, utterly incapable of helping himself, a certain priest, happening to come that way, saw him in great distress, but took no pity on him. In like manner a Levite, espying him, would not come near him, having no mind to be at any trouble or expense with him. Soon after this, a Samaritan happened to come that way, and seeing a fellow-creature lying on the road naked and wounded, went up to him; and though he found it was one of a different nation, who professed a religion opposite to his own, the violent hatred of all such persons that had been instilled into his mind from his earliest years, and every objection whatever that remained, were immediately silenced by the feelings of pity awakened at the sight of the man's distress; his bowels yearned towards the Jew; he hastened with great tenderness to give him assistance. It seems, this humane traveller, according to the custom of those times, carried his provisions along with him: for he was able, though in the fields, to give the wounded man some wine to recruit his spirits; moreover, he carefully bound up his wounds, soaking the bandages with a mixture of wine and oil, which he poured into them, and which is of a medicinal quality; then, setting him on his own beast, he walked by him on foot, and supported him. In this manner did the good Samaritan carry the Jew, his enemy, to the first inn he could find, where he carefully tended him all that night: and, on the morrow, when he was going away, he delivered him over to the care of the host, with a particular recommendation to be very kind to him. And, that nothing necessary for his recovery might be wanting, he gave the host what money he could spare, a sum equal to about fifteen pence with us, desiring him, at the same time, to lay out more if more was needful, and promising him to pay the whole at his return. As neither the Samaritan nor the host knew whether the man himself was in condition to defray the charges of his own recovery, he was so charitable that he became bound even for the whole. It seems, he was afraid the mercenary temper of the host might have hindered him from furnishing what was necessary, if he had no prospect of being repaid.

Having finished the parable, Jesus said to the lawyer, "Which now of these three thinkest thou was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves?" The lawyer, greatly struck with the truth and evidence of the case, replied, without doubt, "he that showed mercy unto him." Then said Jesus unto him, "Go thou, and do likewise:" show mercy and kindness to every one that standeth in need of thy assistance, whether he be an Israelite, an

heathen, or a Samaritan; and when works of charity are to be performed, reckon every man thy neighbour, not inquiring what he believes, but what he suffers.

In his way to Jerusalem, Jesus spent a night at Bethany, in the house of Martha and Mary, two religious women, the sisters of Lazarus. On this occasion, they displayed the difference of their natural dispositions; Martha taking abundant pains to provide for his accommodation, and Mary paying the strictest attention to his divine instruction. The latter received the strongest tokens of our Lord's approbation, not because God is more served in a contemplative than in an active life, but because Christ preferred an attention to his doctrine to any sensual indulgences whatever; and wished to intimate, that time ought not to be wasted in unnecessary preparations of this kind, when it might be more profitably employed in the worship of God.

It was, probably, at this time, that our Lord went up to the feast of dedication, when he met with the man that was born blind, and had been expelled from the synagogue for his refusing to acknowledge that Christ was a sinner. Jesus opened the discourse by asking the poor man whether he believed on the Son of God. To which he replied by asking the question, "Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." The beggar, being fully convinced of his mission from God, by the great miracle performed on himself, replied, "Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him." Upon this Jesus directed his discourse to the people who happened to be present with them. "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind." In these words, he alluded to the cure of the blind man; but his meaning was spiritual, representing the effect which his coming would have upon the minds of men. Those who were esteemed ignorant and foolish would receive the benefit of its light; while those who fancied themselves wise, would, in consequence of their prejudices, shut their eyes against it. The Pharisees inquiring whether he intended to extend to them the imputation of blindness, he answered, that if they had been blind in such sense as not to have had the means of discovering the truth, they would not have been so guilty as they now were, possessing, indeed, great advantages, but priding themselves upon them, and refusing to employ them to any useful purpose.

Having thus reproved the Pharisees for shutting their eyes against the evidence of his mission, he continued the reproof by describing the characters of a true and false teacher, leaving them, who had so unjustly excommunicated the beggar, to judge which of the classes they belonged to. Our Lord, being now in the outer court of the temple, near the sheep which were

there exposed to sale for sacrifice, the language of the ancient prophets came into his mind, who often compared the teachers of their own times to shepherds, and the people to sheep. Accordingly, in describing the characters of the scribes and Pharisees, he made use of the same metaphor, showing that there are two kinds of evil shepherds, pastors, or teachers; one who, instead of entering in by the door to lead the flock out, and feed it, enter in some other way, with an intention to steal, kill, and destroy: there is another kind of evil shepherds, who feed their flocks with the dispositions of hirelings; for when they see the wolf coming, or any danger approaching, they desert their flocks, because they love themselves only. Of the former character the Pharisees plainly showed themselves to be, by excommunicating the man that had been blind, because he would not act contrary to the dictates of his reason and conscience to please them. But though they cast him out of their church, Christ received him into his, which is the true church, the spiritual inclosure, where the sheep go in and out and find pasture. That this parabolical discourse was taken from the sheep which were inclosed in little folds within the outer court of the temple, whither they were brought by their own shepherds to be sold, is plain; because our Lord speaks of such folds as the shepherd himself could not enter till the porter opened to him the door, viz. of the temple. [John x. 1.] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold," that does not come in my name, and preach my gospel, "but climbeth up some other way," intruding into the church to serve his own worldly purposes, "the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door;" the teacher that believes on me, and derives his authority from me, is a true pastor, "the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth," that he may be regularly admitted to his office, "and the sheep hear his voice:" and, like the eastern shepherds, who gave names to their sheep, "he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." And, as he is attentive to confirm his preaching by his practice, "when he putteth forth his own sheep he goeth before, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice," having experienced the benefits of his instruction.

Finding that they did not understand this parable, he added by way of explanation, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me in the capacity of religious teachers, without my authority, "are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them." I am the door, by which alone mankind can be admitted into the fold of God; "by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture," receiving such instructions as shall nourish his soul unto eternal life. Whereas, "the thief (the pretended minister of God) cometh not but for to steal, and to

kill, and to destroy. I am come that they," who were before dead in sins, believing in me, "might have life, and that they" who already possessed it "might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd," the chief shepherd to whom the Father hath committed the care of his people; and as "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep," exposing himself to death in their defence, so I am going to shed my blood to accomplish the redemption of my saints. But he that is an hireling, that acteth from selfish motives, and has not, like the shepherd, an interest in preserving the sheep, seeth the wolf coming, when tribulation falls upon the church, "and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. But I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep," having a feeling for their infirmities; and am known of mine, they having a blessed experience of my saving grace. And such is my relation to the eternal God, that as the Father knoweth me by his all-searching wisdom, "so know I the Father," and it is in his cause, and by his special commission, that "I lay down my life for the sheep." And, beside the Jewish tribes, who are now the partakers of my more immediate care, there are other sheep that I have, even the Gentiles, "who are not of this fold; them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd." "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life for this very purpose, that I might take it again," and thus completely accomplish the redemption of my people; for no man, weak as I may appear, "taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again;" and in all this I fulfil the divine appointment, for "this commandment I have received of my Father."

These sayings affected the minds of the Jews differently; for some of them cried out that he was possessed and mad, and that it was folly to hear him: others, judging more impartially of him and his doctrine, declared that his discourses were not the words of a lunatic, nor his miracles the works of a devil. Moreover, they asked his enemies if they imagined any devil was able to impart the faculty of sight to one that was born blind, alluding to the astonishing cure which Jesus had lately performed.

This conversation took place at Jerusalem on the feast of dedication, in the winter before his crucifixion. And Jesus was walking in the temple, in that part of it which, to preserve the memory of the ancient edifice, was denominated Solomon's porch. The Jews at this time came round him, requiring that he would tell them plainly whether or not he were the true Messiah of God. Jesus replied that he had already told them by his works, both common and miraculous; but that they had refused to believe him, because they were not his sheep, the

people whom his Father had drawn to him. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands. My Father which gave them to me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." The Jews, finding him assert this intimate union with the Father, took up stones to stone him, in obedience, as they supposed, to the law, which was promulgated against blasphemy in Lev. xxiv. 16. "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?" In confirmation of my mission from my Father, I have worked many miracles, all of a beneficent kind, and most becoming the perfections of my Father, who sent me. I have fed the hungry, I have healed the lame, I have cured the sick, I have given sight to the blind, I have cast out devils, and I have raised the dead; for which of all these are ye going to stone me? "The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou being a man makest thyself God." We are going to punish thee with death for no good work, but for blasphemy; for though thou art a man, weak and mortal as ourselves are, thou arrogantly assumest to thyself the power and majesty of God; and, by laying claim to the incommunicable attributes of the Deity, makest thyself God. This they took to be the plain meaning of his assertion, that he and the Father were one. "Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If he called them gods to whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?" If in the scripture, the authority of which you all acknowledge, they to whom the commandment of ruling God's people was given are called gods, and the sons of God, on account of their high office and the inspiration of the Spirit, which was bestowed on them but sparingly, can ye with reason say of him whom God hath sent into the world on the grand work of saving the human race, and whom he hath set apart for that work by giving him the Spirit without measure, thou blasphemest, because I said, I am the Son of God? "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works." Though you do not believe what I say concerning my personal dignity, ye ought to believe it on account of my miracles, which are plainly of such a kind, that it is impossible for any deceiver to perform them; they are the works of God himself, and therefore ye ought to consider them as such; "believe the works that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him: may know that I neither do nor say any thing but by his authority; for the Father and I are so united,

that every thing I say and do is, in reality, said and done by him, and he approves of it accordingly.

As this defence was so far from satisfying the Jews, that it only increased their rage, and caused them to make attempts to seize his person, our Lord thought proper to retreat to the country beyond Jordan, and there employed some of the last months of his life in delivering the most valuable instructions to his disciples, and to the multitude. His ministry was well received, the people flocking round him in great numbers, and many of them receiving him as the Messiah, in consequence of their finding the testimony of John amply confirmed, and illustrated by the teaching, conduct, and miracles, of the Son of God.

CHAPTER X.

From the Feast of Dedication, to the Resurrection of Lazarus.

Christ in Perea teaches his disciples—his miracles are again ascribed to Beelzebub—he again repeats the sign of the prophet Jonas, and the parable of the lighted lamp—dines with a Pharisee—the Pharisees reprove—exhortation to the disciples to avoid anxiety—Christ refuses to decide a dispute—parable of the rich glutton—the disciples exhorted to watchfulness, and informed of approaching troubles—Christ's observations on the murder of the Galileans—parable of the barren fig-tree—cure of the woman who had been bowed down eighteen years—exhortation to enter by the strait gate—the approaching calamities of Jerusalem bemoaned—Christ visits one of the chief Pharisees, at whose house he heals a man who was afflicted with the dropsy, and delivers the parable of the great supper—the three parables of the lost sheep, lost silver, and prodigal son—parable of the unjust steward—of the rich man and Lazarus—exhortation to humility, and to avoid giving offence—Christ goes to see Lazarus—the ten lepers—the resurrection of Lazarus.

WHILE Jesus was in the country beyond Jordan, he happened to pray publicly with such fervency, that one of his disciples, exceedingly affected both with the matter and manner of his address, begged that he would teach them to pray. It seems, this disciple had not been present when our Lord, in the beginning of his ministry, gave his hearers directions concerning their devotions: or, if he were present, he had forgotten what had then been said. Wherefore, Jesus, who always rejoiced to find his hearers desirous of instruction, willingly embraced this opportunity, and repeated the discourse on prayer which he had formerly delivered in his sermon on the mount: but with this difference, that he now handled the arguments

which he had offered as motives to the duty a little more fully than before. Christ, on this occasion, repeated that brief formula which is denominated the Lord's prayer, and which he had delivered in the sermon on the mount, as well as in that on the plain; and then enforced the duty of constancy in prayer, by the example of one who gave way to the importunity of his friend, though he called upon him at midnight; and of an earthly parent, who will not refuse the reasonable requests of a child, but give him such gifts as should be really conducive to his benefit. "If ye," said Christ, "being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Ghost to them that ask him."

About this time, our Lord having cast out a devil, the Pharisees again attributed his influence to a power derived from the prince of infernal spirits; and Christ defended himself by a train of similar arguments with those which we have repeated upon a former occasion. While Jesus thus reasoned in confutation of the Pharisees, a woman of the company, ravished with his wisdom and eloquence, and, perhaps, believing him to be their long-expected Messiah, expressed her admiration of his character in a manner suitable to her sex. She broke forth in an exclamation upon the happiness of the woman who had the honour of giving him birth. But Jesus, not at all moved with her praise, gave her an answer which, at the same time that it showed his humility, did the greatest honour to virtue. The blessedness, said he, which you prize so much, and which could be enjoyed by one woman only, however great, is far inferior to a blessedness which is in every one's power, namely, that which arises from the knowledge and practice of the will of God. "But he said, yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it."

The multitude having gathered round, probably in the expectation of seeing a sign from heaven, our Lord again assured them that they should receive no other than that of the prophet Jonas, which was to be exemplified in his own death and resurrection; and again admonished them of the importance of making a proper use of that religious knowledge which had been communicated to them, and to take heed that the light which was in them was not darkness.

When he had made an end of speaking upon these subjects, one of the Pharisees invited him to his house, probably with an insidious intention of ensnaring him in his words. However this might be, Christ accepted the invitation, accompanied the Pharisee, and sat down at table, but without washing, as all the other guests had done. When the Pharisee who invited him observed this, he was greatly surprised to see so great contempt cast upon their traditions. [Luke ix. 39.] "And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter," paying the strictest regard to whatever

might defile the body, but the soul, "your inward part, is full of ravening and wickedness." Did not that God who made the body make also the soul? be, therefore, merciful, as he is merciful, "and give alms of such things as ye have. But woe unto you Pharisees; for ye tithe mint and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God," those most essential parts of true religion. These should have claimed the first share in your regard, while ye ought not to have omitted the less important matters of the law. He then denounced a judgment against the pride of the Pharisees, which was so excessive, that it displayed itself in their carriage while walking in the streets, and attending at the synagogues. As in the third woe he joined the scribes with the Pharisees, it will not be here improper to give a brief summary of their character.

The scribes were called, in the Hebrew language, *sopherim*, writers; and are often mentioned, in the sacred history, as persons of great authority in the Jewish commonwealth. They were originally secretaries, being employed in the church, the state, the army, the revenue, &c.; to which offices those were entitled who could write, because, anciently, that art was practised by few. When Ezra made the reformation in religion which has rendered him so famous among the Jewish doctors, he was assisted by the scribes in revising the canon of scripture, and ordered matters so, that from thenceforth a sufficient number of them should always be employed in multiplying the copies of it. This class of men, therefore, being much conversant in the sacred writings, acquired a singular knowledge of them; and, in process of time, expounded them to the common people, [Matt. vii. 39.] with such reputation, that, at length, they obtained the title of doctors, or teachers, [Luke ii. 46.] and were consulted upon all difficult points of faith. [Matt. ii. 4.] Hence they are said, by our Lord, to sit in Moses's chair, [Matt. xxiii. 3.] and to determine what doctrines are contained in scripture. [Matt. xii. 35.] Hence, also, an able minister of the New Testament is called a scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven. But as the Jews were divided into several religious sects, it is natural to imagine that each sect gave such interpretations of scripture as best agreed with their peculiar tenets. Wherefore, it cannot be doubted, that the doctors studied and expounded the sacred writings with a view to authorize the opinions of the party they espoused. Accordingly, [Acts xxiii. 9.] mention is made of the scribes that were of the sect of the Pharisees, which plainly implies that some of the scribes were of the other sects. It is true, the scribes are distinguished from the Pharisees in the woes which our Lord now pronounced, and in several other passages, particularly Matt. v. 20. xxiii. 2. But from the latter of these passages Dr. Mac-knight thinks it is evident, that by the scribes and Pharisees is

commonly meant the Pharisaic scribes, according to the idiom of the Hebrew language: for, as the name Pharisees denoted a sect, and not an office, it could by no means be said of the whole sect, that they sat in Moses's chair. A character of this sort was applicable only to the doctors or scribes of the sect. In other instances, where the scribes are distinguished from the Pharisees, the Sadducean doctors may be intended. The badge of a Pharisee was his placing the tradition of the elders on an equality with scripture: whereas, the Sadducees rejected all the pretended oral traditions, and adhered so close to the text, that they acknowledged nothing as a matter of faith which was not expressly contained in the sacred books. And in this they were followed by the Karaites, or Scripturists, a sect that subsists among the Jews to this day. It is generally supposed, indeed, that the Sadducees acknowledged the authority of none of the sacred books, except the writings of Moses. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that they received all these books; for had they denied the authority of any of them, our Lord, who so sharply reprov'd their other corruptions, would, probably, not have let this escape uncensured. Nay, Josephus himself, who was no friend to the Sadducees, does not, in the whole compass of his writings, charge them with rejecting any of the sacred books. He says, they rejected the traditions of the elders, so much cried up by the Pharisees, affirming that nothing ought to be held as an institution or rule but what was written. Perhaps, of the sacred writings, the Sadducees preferred the books of Moses. All the Jews did so, and do so still: but whether, in this point, the Sadducees outstripp'd the rest of the sects, it is hard to say. In the mean time, considering the veneration which the Jews had for the books of the law, it is reasonable to suppose that some of the doctors of each sect would apply themselves more especially to the study of these books in private, and to the explication of them in public; and that such as did so might obtain the appellation of lawyers. Accordingly, he is called by Matthew a Pharisee, and a lawyer, [xxii. 35.] whom Mark calls a scribe.

Farther, it is not improbable, that the Pharisean lawyers, fond of their own particular study, might exalt the law, not only above the rest of the sacred writings, but above the tradition of the elders, in which respect they were distinguished from the rest of their sect, paying only a secondary sort of regard to these traditions. It was on this account that one of them was now so displeas'd, when he heard Jesus join the whole body of scribes indiscriminately; and consequently the lawyers with the Pharisees, in the woes which he now denounc'd against them for the hypocritical shows of piety which they made by their zeal in giving tythes of mint, anise, and cummin, according to the precepts of the elders, whilst they omitted judgment and the love of God, enjoined expressly by the divine

law. It seems, he thought the rebuke undeserved on the part of the lawyers, even of the Pharisean sect, because they did not pay that superlative regard to tradition which the rest were remarkable for.

We shall now continue the conversation in the words of Dr. Campbell.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye are like concealed graves, over which people walk without knowing it.

Here one of the lawyers interposing, said, By speaking thus, Rabbi, thou reproachest us also. He answered, Woe unto you, lawyers, also, because ye lade men with intolerable burdens, which ye yourselves will not so much as touch with one of your fingers.

Woe unto you, because ye build the monuments of the prophets whom your fathers killed. Surely ye are both vouchers and accessaries to the deeds of your fathers; for they killed them, and ye build their monuments.

Wherefore, thus saith the wisdom of God, “I will send them prophets and apostles; some of them they will kill, others they will banish; insomuch that the blood of all the prophets which has been shed since the foundation of the world shall be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who fell between the altar and the house of God.” Yes, I assure you, all shall be required of this generation.

The scribes and Pharisees, finding themselves thus severely reproved, urged him with great vehemence, from the hope that he might say something prejudicial to his cause, that they might bring an accusation against him, either before the Romans or the Jews.

A vast multitude of people having collected, about this time, to hear the instructions of the Son of God, he thought proper to repeat, before this vast assembly, the same injunctions as he had before given them in private. There would thus be many witnesses, that the troubles which were to fall upon his followers were not unknown to him, and that he did not entice them to continue in his service by any flattering prospect of worldly advantage. He began by exhorting them, as he had done on a voyage cross the sea of Tiberias, to “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees,” which he explained to be hypocrisy. To enforce this admonition, he reminded them of the omniscience of God, who knew every secret thought, and of the approach of that awful day, when every thing should be made publicly manifest. The body, he said, being mortal, might suffer many things from the hands of their enemies: but there was a great and terrible God, “who was able to destroy both body and soul in hell.” And he, said Jesus, is the proper object of your fear. But let not this tremendous thought fill your minds with melancholy; for there is as much safety in his protection as there

is danger in being exposed to his wrath. He watches over every part of his creation, and not a sparrow fails to the ground without fulfilling, by its death, some part of his plan of providence. You need not, therefore, fear; for all the hairs of your head are numbered, and ye, both as men and as my disciples, are of more value than many sparrows. If you constantly and steadily persevere in my ways, unmoved by the allurements and afflictions of this world, the Son of man will acknowledge you for his favourites and friends, before his heavenly Father, and all the angels of light; while he, on the contrary, who shall desert my cause, shall be cast out as evil; and though he may have gained the world, shall have eternal reason to repent of his choice, since he shall incur the destruction of his soul. And let all men beware how they oppose your mission; for "unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall never be forgiven." Nor need you be afraid to appear before kings or rulers; for, though you are illiterate men, the Holy Spirit shall furnish you, without your previous meditation, with the most suitable defences to make against your enemies.

While Jesus was thus exhorting his disciples, a certain person in the crowd begged that he would persuade his brother to divide their inheritance, and give him his share. But because judging in civil matters was the province of the magistrate, and foreign to the end of our Lord's coming, he refused to interfere in their dispute; but knowing that quarrels of this kind arise from covetousness in one or both of the parties, he cautioned them to beware of that vice; for neither the happiness nor the security of a man's life "consisteth in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." To show them that the love of this world was foolish and dangerous, even when it did not lead to any unlawful acquisition of wealth, he related the following parable: "The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully," and thus enabled him, without oppression, rapidly to accumulate wealth. He therefore determined to provide barns of sufficient magnitude to contain his goods; and as he was not one of those mean wretches who would continually hoard and never enjoy, he said to his soul, "Thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself;" by living for this present world, and has not, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, become "rich towards God." He may obtain a little short-lived gratification, but will, at length, find that the end of these things is death.

Christ then proceeded to exhort his disciples that they should take no anxious thought for the things of this life; but, setting their affections upon a better world, commit the keeping of all their concerns into the hands of a faithful and merciful Crea-

tor. "Fear not, little flock," though you may be here despised and persecuted, "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." He now added a precept particularly calculated for those times, and for the peculiar circumstances of the apostles: "sell that ye have, and give alms: provide yourselves with bags that wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Having thus recommended disengagement of affection from the things of this world, he ordered them to be in constant readiness for the discharge of their duty. In the Eastern countries, great entertainments were usually made in the evening; so that the guests were seldom dismissed till the night was far spent. On such occasions, servants showed their fidelity by watching and keeping their lamps burning, and their loins girded, that they might be ready to open the door to the master on the first knock. He exhorted his disciples to imitate these servants, and assured them, that if they pursued a similar line of conduct, their Master would not only receive them to his company, but gird himself and come forth and serve them.

Peter inquiring to know whether this parable was addressed to the disciples or the multitude, "the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their meat in due season. Blessed is the servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing, he will make him ruler over all that he hath." But lest this watchfulness should be remitted, he instructed him further by the case of a servant, who, presuming upon his master's favour, neglected his duty, and oppressed his fellow-servants. Such an one was to be "cut in sunder, and have his portion with unbelievers," who had made no pretensions to the faith and practice of religion. Nay, his doom should be still more heavy; for, in proportion to the knowledge which the disobedient servant should possess of his Master's will, should be the stripes with which he should be chastised. Then, reassuming his prophetic character, he looked forward into futurity, and announced the persecutions which should fall upon his followers. "I am come to send fire on the earth, and what will I if it were already kindled." This passage is variously translated; but must be understood to convey a wish that his sufferings might speedily commence. "I have a dreadful baptism of blood to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." Instead of peace, which shall be ultimately the consequence of my mission, there shall be a spirit of violent dissension and animosity extensively diffused on the earth; for, on account of the introduction of the Christian religion, "there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three. The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother

against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

The land of Judea, as has been already observed, was bounded on the west by the Mediterranean sea, and on the south by the deserts of Arabia: when, therefore, the west wind blew, it indicated rain; while the blasts from the south were accompanied with extreme heat. Our Lord reproved the multitude because they could understand the succession of these natural phenomena, but could not discern the important events which were taking place, or which should speedily happen. "Ye cannot discern this time:" ye are so blinded by superstition, prejudice, and pride, that ye are unable to discover that the kingdom of God is approaching, that the true Messiah is now upon earth, and that you and your countrymen, by rejecting him, are filling up the measure of your iniquities, and bringing about the ruin of your nation. You ought, in this instance, to act with the same prudence as you would exercise towards a powerful and justly incensed adversary, who had commenced a prosecution against you, with whom you would agree quickly, "lest he should hale you to the judge, and the judge deliver you to the officer, and the officer cast you into prison."

Some that were present at this time informed Christ of the murder of certain Galileans, of whose history we are ignorant, but "whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices," secretly insinuating that these people must have been more than usually wicked, or else they would not have incurred such severe judgments. Christ, however, opposed this sentiment; assuring them, that unless they repented, they must "all likewise perish." He also made a similar observation upon the death of eighteen persons on whom the tower of Siloam, which was, probably, one of the porticos of Bethesda, had fallen. Moreover, to rouse them still more to a sense of approaching calamities, he spake the parable of the barren fig-tree, which was ordered to be cut down, and only spared for one year from the intercession of the gardener, and in the expectation that it might, the next season, bring forth fruit. This was, undoubtedly, intended to represent the Jewish nation, the advantages they had enjoyed, the sins they had committed, the long-suffering mercy of God, which was vouchsafed towards them through the mediation of the Son, and the ruin which would certainly fall upon their heads, both as individuals and a community, unless prevented by their repentance: but it also speaks loudly to the consciences of such as are living in impenitence and unbelief, though continually surrounded with divine benefits.

Jesus happening to preach in one of the synagogues of Perea on a sabbath-day, cast his eyes upon a woman in the congregation who had not been able to stand upright during the space

of eighteen years ; wherefore, pitying her affliction, he restored her body to its natural soundness. This benevolent miracle excited the gratitude of the poor woman to God, but produced a very different effect on the ruler of the synagogue. He was filled with great " indignation, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work ; in them, therefore, come and be healed, and not on the sabbath-day. The Lord then answered him and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each of you, on the sabbath, loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering ? And ought not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath-day ? And when he said these things all his adversaries were ashamed, and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him."

After the Lord had thus silenced the ruler of the synagogue, and whilst he observed the rejoicings of the people, he reflected with pleasure on the reason and truth which so effectually supported his kingdom : for he spake a second time the parables of the grain of mustard-seed and of the leaven, to show the efficacious operation of the gospel upon the minds of men, and its speedy propagation through the world in spite of all opposition.

While our Lord was passing through the cities and villages in his journey towards Jerusalem, he met with one who expressed a desire to be made acquainted with the number of the saved. Christ, not judging this a profitable question, instead of returning a direct answer, exhorted his hearers not to trust to their privileges as Jews, but to strive to enter in at the strait gate ; for that many, deferring this consideration, should strive to enter in and should not be able. When the elect of God are gathered in, and the door of heaven is shut, they shall in vain request admission, " saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us ; for he shall answer and say unto them, I know not whence you are," you are perfect strangers to me, and therefore shall not be admitted into my company. In vain shall they then allege, " We have eaten and drank in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets ;" we have not merely been Jews, and, as such, have had the advantages of the peculiar people of God, but we have also had the advantage of thine acquaintance when upon earth ; for they should be dismissed into outer darkness, as the workers of iniquity ; while many should come from the farthest parts of the earth, and sit down to the everlasting enjoyment of the kingdom of God.

The same day, some of the Pharisees intimated to Christ, that if he was desirous of seeking his safety, he ought to depart out of that country, for that Herod sought to slay him. But Christ, knowing that he had his appointed work to perform, and that no one could cut him off till his hour of suffering was come, answered, " Go ye and tell that fox," referring to the

cruelty and craft of Herod, " behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless, I must walk to-day, and to-morrow, and the day following; for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. Our Lord here, probably, referred both to the general wickedness of that city, which was notorious for its opposition to the prophets of God, and also to the malice which he well knew that the priests and rulers had conceived against him. Our Lord then took up the pathetic lamentation, " O Jersa'em, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not. Behold, your house," the temple in which you trust, " is left unto you desolate; and verily I say unto you, ye shall not see me until the time come, when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." This last expression probably refers to the general ingathering of the Jews, with the fulness of the Gentiles, which shall take place before the dissolution of all things.

About this time, a distinguished person among the Pharisees, with an insidious intention, invited our Lord to dine at his house. This was on the sabbath-day; and a man who was afflicted with the dropsy was present, being probably introduced for the purpose of seeing whether Christ would cure him. Not having received an answer to the question, whether it were lawful to heal on the sabbath-day, he laid his hand on the diseased man, and he immediately healed him and sent him away. Determining still further to press his adversaries with unanswerable questions, he asked them whether they would not, on the sabbath, rescue an ox or an ass from the pit into which it was fallen. As this was agreeable to their customs at that time, though not at the present, they were confounded with shame and amazement, and refrained from their purpose of cavilling at his proceedings.

Before dinner, the pride of the Pharisees discovered itself in the anxiety which each of them expressed to get the chief places at table. Jesus took notice of it, and showed them the folly of their behaviour by the consequences to which it tends. He mentioned this in particular, that pride exposes a man to many affronts; whereas, to cultivate humility, is the surest method to obtain respect.

As the Pharisees were equally distinguished by covetousness and pride, our Lord, addressing himself to his host, exhorted him, when he made an entertainment, to invite not only his friends and acquaintance, but to make it a matter of particular attention, to call " the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind." For that, if this was done from a proper principle, that of genuine love to God and love to man, he should be blessed; and as these guests could make him no recom-

pence, he should "be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."

One of the company remarking the felicity of those who should eat bread in the kingdom of God, Christ thought proper to pursue the simile, and described, in the following parable of a marriage feast, the success which the gospel, the invitation to the great feast of heaven, should meet with among the Jews; and that, though it was to be offered to them with every circumstance that could recommend it, they would reject it with disdain, preferring the present life to that which is to come; while the Gentiles would embrace the gospel with cheerfulness, and thereby be prepared to sit down with Abraham in the abode of the blessed. "Then said he unto him, A certain man," who was equally generous and rich, "made a great supper," and invited many of his professed friends and acquaintances. They did not at first refuse the invitation; but when every thing was fully ready, and the servants sent to press their immediate attendance, made a variety of frivolous excuses to justify their absence. "So that servant came and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servants, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, the maimed, the halt, and the blind," meaning, no doubt, the publicans and harlots, and others of the most profligate and despised of the Jews, who accepted more readily the invitations of the gospel than such of their countrymen as had stood higher in the general estimation. The supper being great, and the hall of entertainment spacious, all those whom the servant found in the streets and lanes of the city were not sufficient to fill the tables. Wherefore, knowing the beneficence of his lord's intentions, he came and informed him that there was still room. "And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." Go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles, who have hitherto been considered as having no interest in my mercy, and they shall receive it with still more readiness than the outcasts of the Jews; so that a number which no man can number, of all nations, and kindreds, and languages, and tongues, shall, at length, sit down together in the regions of immortal felicity. Dr. Macknight supposes the first of these calls to be directed to the proselytes from among the Gentiles, and the second to such of the Gentiles as were living in idolatry. "For I say unto you, that none of those men who were bidden shall taste of my supper." This is not to be understood in the strictest sense of the words, as is evident from the conversion of Saul, who was a persecuting Pharisee, and of many of the priests who became obedient to the faith; but is intended to denote the general, but not total, apostasy of the Jewish nation.

Jesus finding himself accompanied from place to place by a great multitude, who were influenced by false conceptions of the

nature of his kingdom, "turned and said unto them, if any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and sisters, yea, and his own life also," so as to be ready to give up all these things rather than desert my cause, "he cannot be my disciple." "And whosoever doth not bear his cross, submitting to pain and shame for my sake, and come after me, by the belief of my doctrines, and the imitation of my example, cannot be my disciple." Make up your minds upon this subject; "for which of you, intending to build a tower, (or any other extensive edifice,) sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, (examining well his resources,) whether he have sufficient to finish it; lest, after he hath laid the foundation, and made some little progress in the building, but is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build and was not able to finish his undertaking. Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able, (from the superior valour and discipline of his troops, though he has only ten thousand men,) to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?" Or else, if the result of his deliberations be not thus favourable, while the other is yet a great way distant from his frontiers, he sendeth an embassy and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise am I going to enter on a war so unequal in point of numbers, that whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, when duty renders it necessary, he cannot be my disciple. To conclude: Jesus told his apostles that this self-denial was peculiarly necessary for them, because it was the spiritual salt that would preserve them from apostasy, and others from corruption. "Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? it is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill, but men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

Encouraged, probably, by what little they might understand of the preceding parable, the publicans and sinners now pressed closer to Jesus, and thereby excited the indignation and contempt of the scribes and Pharisees. To silence them, to vindicate his own conduct, and to induce the despised outcasts of Israel to pay the greater attention to his instructions, the blessed Redeemer now repeated the same parable as he had delivered just after his transfiguration, concerning the shepherd, who, having lost one out of an hundred sheep, left the ninety and nine to recover that which had strayed from his fold. He now also repeated another parable of similar import, of a poor woman, who, having lost a piece of silver, of which she was possessed of only ten, lighted a candle, and swept the house, and sought diligently till she had found it; and, when she had succeeded in this, invited her neighbours together, "saying, rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost." The succeeding parable is one which excites uncommon interest, both

from the simple and affecting nature of the story, as from the importance of the consolatory truths which it is made the vehicle of communicating. We shall, therefore, consider it more largely than we have done either of the preceding parables.

The parable of the lost son, of all Christ's parables, is the most delightful, not only as it enforces a doctrine incomparably joyous, but because it abounds with the tender passions, is finely painted with the most beautiful images, and is to the mind what a charming diversified landscape is to the eye. "And he said, a certain man had two sons. And the younger of them (being impatient of the restraint he lay under at home, came and) said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living." The indulgent parent listened to his son's desire, made an estimate of his estate, and gave him his portion; perhaps, because he pretended that he was going to follow business. The younger son, therefore, having thus gotten possession of his fortune, lost no time. He gathered all together; and that he might be wholly from under the eye of his parent, who was a person of great piety, and be freed from the restraints of religion, he went into a far country, among heathens, where was neither the knowledge nor worship of God, choosing such companions as were most agreeable to his vicious inclinations. Here he wallowed in unbounded riotousness and debauchery. But the ferment produced in his body by riotous living soon clouded his understanding, and confounded any little sense he was possessed of; his mind was stimulated by mad desires, which pushed him from one extravagancy to another, till he quickly spent all. These circumstances, joined with the manner in which his father received him at his return home, are admirably contrived to show the immense goodness and incomparable indulgence of God. No crime is so great, or so highly aggravated, that he will not forgive it if the sinner repents. "And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want." Having spent all to keep himself from starving in the famine, he submitted to the most disgraceful work that a Jew could be employed in, he hired himself to feed swine: he who the other day had been so remarkable for his luxury, extravagance, and foppish delicacy. Such are the direful consequences of vice. But the wages he earned by this ignominious service were not sufficient, in a time of great scarcity, to purchase him as much food of any kind as would satisfy the cravings of his appetite. It seems, his master gave him wages without victuals. Being half-starved, therefore, he often looked on the swine with envy as they were feeding, and wished that he could have filled his belly with the husks which they devoured; a circumstance which beautifully shows the extremity of his misery. Distress so great brought him, at length, to think. For one day, as he was sitting hungry and faint among the

gluttonous animals, he reflected upon the happiness of the servants in his father's family, who had more meat than they could use, whilst he was ready to die with famine in a strange country. The consideration of these things made him willing to return home; but that he might be received again, he resolved with himself to go in all humility, and confess his crimes to his father, acknowledging that he was utterly unworthy to be owned as a son, and praying that he might be taken into the house only as a hired servant. "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee." He meant that God was injured in the person of his earthly father. And, certainly, nature itself teaches this, that whoever is insolent or disrespectful to his parents rebels against God, who, by making them the instruments of communicating life to their children, has imparted to them some of his own paternal honour. He resolved to say, likewise, "and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." Having the idea of his undutiful behaviour strongly impressed in his mind, he was sensible that he had no title to be treated at home as a son. At the same time, he knew that it never would be well with him till he was in his father's family again; so, with joy, he entertained the thought of occupying the meanest station in it. Thus, while the liberality of the great Parent of men makes them wantonly run away from his family, the misery which they involve themselves in often constrains them to return. By the natural consequences of sin, God sometimes makes sinners to feel that there is no felicity to be found any where but in himself. And now the young man, having taken the resolution of returning to his father, put it immediately in execution; he set out just as he was, bare-footed and all in rags. But when he came within sight of home, his nakedness and the consciousness of his folly made him ashamed to go in. He skulked about, therefore, keeping at a distance; till his father, happening to spy him, knew him, had compassion, ran, though old and infirm, fell on his neck, and kissed him. The perturbation which the aged parent was in with ecstacy of joy hindered him from speaking; so the poor, ragged, meagre creature, locked in his arms, began, and made his acknowledgments with a tone of voice expressive of the deepest contrition. But the father, grieved to see his son in that miserable plight, interrupted him, ordering his servants, some to bring out the best robe immediately, and a ring, and shoes, that he might be clothed in a manner becoming his son; and others to go kill the fatted calf, that they might eat and be merry. "For this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found." We looked upon him as utterly lost; but lo! he is come back again, beyond all expectation, in safety. "And they began to be merry:" they sat down to the feast, rejoicing exceedingly at the happy occasion of it.

And now, while every one in the family heartily joined in expressing their joy on account of the safe return of the second son, the elder brother, happening to come from the field, heard the noise of singing and dancing within; wherefore, calling out one of the servants, he asked what these things meant? The servant replied that his brother was unexpectedly come, and that his father, being very glad to see him, had killed the fatted calf, and was making a feast, because he had received him safe and sound. When the elder brother heard this, he fell into a violent passion, and would not go in; the servant, therefore, came and told his father of it. The father, rising up, went out; and, with incomparable goodness, entreated his son to come and partake in the general joy of the family, on account of his brother's return. But the kindness and respect which his father showed him on this occasion did not soften him in the least. He stubbornly persisted in his anger, and answered the affectionate speeches of his parent with nothing but loud and haughty accusations of his conduct. "And he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment, and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." This branch of the parable is finely contrived to express the high opinion which the Pharisees, here represented by the elder brother, entertained of their own righteousness and merit. "But as soon as this thy son"—the ungracious youth disdained to call him brother, and at the same time insolently insinuated that his father seemed to despise all his other children, and to reckon this prodigal only his son—as soon as this thy son "was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf." The father meekly replied, Son, as thou hast never been absent from me for any considerable time, I could not in this manner express the affection which I entertain for thee. Besides, thou hast not been altogether without a reward of thy service; for thou hast lived in my family, and hast had the command of my fortune as far as thine exigencies, or even thy pleasures, required. "And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." By calling him son, after the insolent speech he had made, the father insinuated that he acknowledged him likewise for his son, and that neither the undutifulness of the one or of the other of his children could extinguish the affection, or cancel the relation, subsisting between them. "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad." Both reason and natural affection justify me in calling the whole family to rejoice on the present occasion. For as thy brother is returned to us sensible of his folly, and determined to lead a better course of life, his arrival is like his revival after death, at least, it is his being found after he was really lost: for which reason, our joy ought to bear a pro-

portion to the greatness of this occasion. "For this thy brother was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found." Though he has devoured my living with harlots, he is thy brother as well as my son; wherefore, thou shouldst not be angry because he has repented, and is returned after we thought him irrecoverably lost. Thus the goodness with which the father bare the surly preevishness of his elder son, was little inferior to the mercy showed in the pardon that he granted to the younger.

Jesus having thus set before them the affectionate behaviour of an earthly parent towards his undutiful child, left every one to judge whether such weak and wicked creatures can love their offspring with more true tenderness than the great Father Almighty does his, or show them more indulgence for their benefit. In this inimitable composition, the amazing mercy of God is painted with captivating beauty; and in all the three parables, the joys occasioned among heavenly beings, by the conversion of a single sinner, are represented; joys even to God himself, than which a nobler and sweeter thought never entered into the minds of rational creatures. Thus high do men stand in the estimation of God; for which cause they should not cast themselves away in that trifling manner, wherein multitudes destroy themselves; neither should any one think the salvation of others a small matter, as some who are entrusted with their recovery seem to do. Had the Pharisees understood the parable, how criminal must they have appeared in their own eyes, when they saw themselves truly described in the character of the elder son, who was angry that his brother had repented! Withal, how bitter must their remorse have been when they found themselves not only repining at that which gave joy to God, the conversion of sinners, but excessively displeased with the methods of his procedure in this matter, and maliciously opposing them! If these parables had been omitted by Luke, as they have been by the other three historians, the world would have sustained an unspeakable loss.

About the same time, our Lord instructed his disciples by the parable of the unjust steward; a part of scripture, the interpretation of which is not considered the most easy. We shall, therefore, first give the whole in the words of Dr. Campbell, and then subjoin a few explanatory remarks.

[Luke xvi. 1—13.] "He said likewise to his disciples, A certain rich man had a steward, who was accused to him of wasting his estate." Having, therefore, called him, he said, What is this that I hear of thee? render an account of thy management, for thou shalt be steward no longer. And the steward said within himself, What shall I do? my master taketh from me the stewardship; I cannot dig, and am ashamed to beg. I am resolved what to do; that when I am discarded, there may be some who will receive me into their houses. Having, there-

fore, sent severally for all his master's debtors, he asked one, How much owest thou to my master? He answered, A hundred baths of oil. Take thy bill, said the steward, sit down directly and write one for fifty. Then he asked another, How much owest thou? He answered, A hundred homers of wheat. Take thy bill, said he, and write one for eighty. The master commended the prudence of the unjust steward; for the children of this world are more prudent in conducting their affairs than the children of light. Therefore I say unto you, with the deceitful mammon procure to yourselves friends, who, after your discharge, may receive you into the eternal mansions.

'Whoso is faithful in little, is faithful also in much; and whoso is unjust in little, is unjust also in much. If, therefore, ye have not been honest in the deceitful, who will intrust you with true riches? And if ye have been unfaithful managers for another, who will give you any thing to manage for yourselves? A servant cannot serve two masters, for either he will hate one and love the other, or, at least, will attend one and neglect the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.'

The good things of this world* are here called the deceitful mammon, because, from their transitory and unsatisfactory nature, they deceive all those that put their trust in them; and they are fitly contrasted with the true riches, the enduring inheritance of eternal felicity. These are intrusted to their possessors as a deposit, which they are bound to use for the honour of God, and the well-being of their fellow-men. They are lent only for a time, a time unknown to us, and liable to be taken from us every moment: whereas, the joys of heaven are considered by the saints as their own by right of inheritance, in consequence of their being the heirs of God, and joint-heirs of Christ, and will never be taken from them. If christians make a proper use of their riches, they will be endeavouring to promote the cause of God on the earth, and thus will be the means of increasing the joy of angels, by contributing to the salvation of sinners. Gladly, therefore, will these glorious spirits receive the departed souls of those that thus spend and are spent for God into their everlasting habitations, where they shall enjoy unspeakable delights in the presence of God and the Lamb, eat of the fruit of the tree of life, and be clothed with immortality as with a garment.

The Pharisees who heard these excellent instructions treated them as fit subjects of derision, that they might thus justify their own detestable covetousness; nor has their example been found without imitators in all ages, who have exercised a paltry and pretended wit to stifle the reproofs of their consciences, and have thus prepared themselves the more fully for the awful vengeance of God. The answer which Christ gave them was deeply impressive. "Ye are they who justify yourselves before men," by your care of external appearances; "but God

knoweth your hearts." Do not, therefore, plume yourselves upon the approbation of your fellow-creatures; for it is frequently the case, that "that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." He then repeated what he had formerly observed concerning the eagerness with which men pressed into the kingdom of God, the permanency of the law, and the enormous evil of unnecessary divorce.

That no means might be wanted to impress their minds with these awful truths, he now related the parable of the rich man and the beggar; a parable which every one is in duty bound to read, to remember, and to make the subject of the most devout and humble meditation. "There was a certain rich man," who abounded with all the comforts of life, "was clothed in purple and fine linen, and (being greatly devoted to the enjoyments of the table) fared sumptuously every day. At his gate," within the hearing of his jovial songs, was laid "a certain beggar, named Lazarus," a faithful servant of the living God, but who, like Job, the pattern of his imitation, was full of sores. So low, also, was the station in life which this good man occupied, that he depended for his subsistence upon the "crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover," he was so destitute of necessary covering, that the dogs, according to the filthy, friendly disposition of those animals, "came and licked his sores." Death, however, reversed the scene. The beggar died; his body was barely huddled to the grave; but angels carried his soul into that state of felicity which, in allusion to Eastern entertainments, is denominated "Abraham's bosom. The rich man was also" obliged to pay the debt of nature; he was buried with great pomp and solemnity, but his soul departed to the abodes of misery, where he "lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus," the poor beggar whom I relieved, though I despised him, "that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this (inextinguishable) flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst (what thou didst vainly account) thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulph fixed: so that they that would pass (on an errand of mercy) from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us that (in order to escape from their torment) would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee, therefore, father, that thou wouldst send him to my father's house; for I have five brethren," living, as I did, in rebellion against God, therefore send him "that he may testify unto them, (of the truth and importance of eternal things,) lest they come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.

And he said, nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

By this parable, as Dr. Macknight observes, we are taught several important lessons: as, 1. That one may be great and renowned, and highly esteemed among men, who is entirely obscure and vulgar in the eyes of God, nay, an abomination unto him. For what can be greater or better in the eyes of men than to live adorned with all the splendour of wealth, luxury, and honours? and what more disgraceful in the sight of God, than to be polluted with sin, and fit only for the flames of hell? On the other hand, the parable teaches, that some who appear mean and despicable in the eyes of their fellows are men of great worth, and highly beloved of God. Wealth, therefore, and power, and grandeur, are not to be coveted; neither is poverty to be dreaded, since that honour which is the chief charm of the one, and that reproach which is the bitterest sting of the other, are altogether without foundation.

2. This parable teaches us, that the souls of men are immortal, that they subsist in a separate state after the dissolution of the body, and that they are rewarded or punished according to their actions in this life; doctrines very necessary to be asserted in those days, when it was fashionable to believe the mortality of the soul, and to argue in defence of that pernicious error. Further: it teaches us that the miseries of the poor who have lived religiously, and the happiness of the rich who have lived wickedly, do end with this life; and that the several stations in which they have lived, together with the past occurrences and actions of their lives, are distinctly remembered and reflected upon by them; and that the remembrance of past pains and pleasures will not lessen, but rather increase, the joys of the one and the sorrows of the other; and, consequently, that we make a very false judgment of one another's condition, when we think any man happy because he is rich, or any man miserable because he is poor.

3. From this parable we learn, that men shall be punished hereafter for entertaining principles inconsistent with morality and religion, for their worldly-mindedness and heedlessness with respect to matters of religion, for being immersed in pleasure, and for not using their riches aright, as well as for crimes of a grosser nature; wherefore, it affords a fit caution to all great and rich persons to beware of the rocks on which they are most apt to split. This great man who fell into the flames of hell is not charged with murder, adultery, injustice, oppression, or lying; he is not even charged with being remarkably uncharitable. Lazarus lay commonly at his gate; and though he received evil things, being treated by every one of the family as a beggar, he got his maintenance there, such as it was, other-

wise he would not have been laid there daily; nor would the rich man have desired Abraham to send him rather than any other of the blessed with a drop of water to cool his tongue, had he not imagined that gratitude would prompt him to undertake the office with cheerfulness. The rich man's sin, therefore, was his living in luxury and pleasure, which made him, on the one hand, neglect religion, for cultivating which he had the best opportunities; and, on the other, cherish atheistical principles, particularly such as flow from believing the mortality of the soul. If so, all who resemble this person in his character, should take warning by his punishment, and not delude themselves with thinking, that because they live free from the more scandalous vices, they shall escape damnation. In particular, all who make it their chief business to procure the pleasures of sense, neglecting to form their minds into a relish of spiritual and divine pleasures, may in this parable see their sad, but certain end. They shall be excluded for ever from the presence of God, as incapable of his joys, although they may have pursued their pleasures with no visible injury to any person. But if men, not accused of injustice in getting riches, are thus punished for the bad use they have made of them, what must the misery of those be who both acquire them unjustly and use them sinfully? As this parable admonishes the rich, so it is profitable for the instruction and comfort of the poor; for it teaches them the proper method of bringing their afflictions to a happy issue, and shows them that God will distribute the rewards and punishments of the life to come impartially, without respect of persons.

4. This parable teaches us the greatness of the punishment of the damned. "And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." We cannot, from this representation, infer that burning with material fire shall be any part of the true and proper punishment of the damned. The never-dying worm, which is sometimes joined with the fire of hell, is confessed by all to be metaphorical, and therefore the fire may be so likewise. Yet no man can be absolutely certain that the wicked shall not be burnt with flames, seeing the resurrection of their bodies, and the union of them with their souls, make the thing possible. In the mean time, be this as it will, the expressions found here, and in other passages of scripture, taken in the lowest sense, intimate that the pains of hell will be very great. For if wicked men retain the passions, appetites, and desires, which were predominant in them on earth, as it is highly probable they will, these desires being for ever deprived of their objects, must occasion a misery which they only can conceive who have felt what it is to lose, without hope of recovery, that which they were most passionately fond of, and to be racked with the violence of desires which they are sensible can never be grati-

fied. Or, although the passions themselves should perish with their objects, a direful eternal melancholy must necessarily ensue, from the want of all desire and enjoyment, the misery of which is not to be conceived. In such a state, the bitter reflections which the damned will make on the happiness they have lost, must raise in them a dreadful storm of self-condemnation, envy, and despair. Besides, their consciences, provoked by the evil actions of their lives, and now as it were let loose upon them, will prove more inexorable than ravening wolves; and the torment which they shall occasion will, in respect of its perpetuity, be as if a never-dying worm was always consuming them. This is the fire of hell, and those the everlasting burnings, (in Dr. Macknight's opinion,) threatened with such terror in the word, where they are represented, perhaps, by material flames, to strike the dull and gross apprehensions of mankind; but they are far more terrible than the other; for the misery arising from these agonizing reflections must be of the most intense kind. And as there is not any thing in that state to divert the thoughts of the damned from them, they must be uninterrupted also, not admitting the least alleviation or refreshment.

5. From this parable we learn that men's states are unalterably fixed after death; so that it is vain to hope for any end of their misery who are miserable, and unreasonable to fear any change of their prosperity who are happy.

6. The parable informs us, that if the evidences of a future state, already proposed, do not persuade men, they will not be persuaded by any extraordinary evidences that can be offered, consistently with the freedom requisite to render them accountable for their actions. The truth is, we do not call the reality of a future state into question, either because it is not demonstrated by sufficient arguments, or because we are not able to comprehend them. Every man has within his own breast what leadeth him to the acknowledgment of this grand, this fundamental support of religion; a certain foreboding of immortality, which is not in his power ever to banish. But, being addicted to sin on account of the present pleasures attending it, we vehemently wish that there were no future state; and, in consequence of these wishes, we will not allow ourselves to weigh the arguments offered in its behalf, and so, at length, come to work ourselves into an actual disbelief of it. Or if the truth, proving too hard for us, should constrain our assent, the habit of yielding to our passions, which we labour under, has influence sufficient to make us act contrary to our convictions. Wherefore, though the evidence of a future state was more clear and forcible than it is, men might hinder themselves from seeing it, just as they hinder themselves from seeing the evidence by which it is at present supported. In a word, the proofs of the soul's immortality have always been sufficient to

persuade those who have any candour or love of goodness, and to demand more is unreasonable, because, although it were given, it might prove ineffectual. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead." Accordingly, Abraham's assertion is verified by daily experience; for they who look on all the eternal Son of God, who actually arose from the dead, has said concerning the punishments of the damned, as so many idle tales, would pay little regard to any thing that could be told them even by a person risen from the dead.

Our Lord, after delivering this awful parable, warned his disciples that offences, stumbling-blocks, or occasions to fall, would certainly come; but that if any one, by a careless and improper conversation, should place them in the way of his brother, he would be guilty of a great crime, and bring a heavy woe upon his head. They were, therefore, enjoined to cultivate, among other duties, that of forgiveness, lest a spirit of malice and resentment should find its way among them. As the conversation was now desultory, the apostles asked their Master to increase their faith: when he told them, that "if they had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, they might say to a sycamore tree" that stood near the place, "be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea, and it should obey them." This passage is variously understood, some supposing that it refers to the faith of miracles, and is to be interpreted literally; while others take it as a proverbial expression, relating to the conquering of such temptations as might be the most difficult to subdue.

As nothing is more closely connected with every part of vital religion than a spirit of humility, our Lord then addressed them in a way well calculated to excite that disposition. [Luke xvii. 7—10.] "But which of you, having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me till I have eaten and drunken, and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So, likewise, ye, when ye shall have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants, we have done only that which it was our duty to do." Thus did Christ guard against those pernicious doctrines which were now taught by the Pharisees, and which afterwards did the most extensive injury in his church.

There dwelt, at this time, in the town of Bethany, a village about two miles from Jerusalem, a pious and respectable family, with whom Jesus was intimately acquainted, and whom he had visited on a former occasion, namely, that of Lazarus, and his two sisters, Martha and Mary. The former of these sisters had

distinguished herself by her assiduous attention to our Lord's accommodation; and Mary was marked as having chosen that better part which should never be taken from her. She also anointed our Lord's feet with ointment, and wiped them with the hair of her head, a little before that he was offered up. Lazarus, the brother, a young man whom Christ regarded with the most tender attachment, was now taken dangerously sick. His sisters despatched a messenger to Christ, to inform him of this trying circumstance, in the hope that he would favour them with his immediate attendance, and an exertion of his healing power. But when the Son of God received this information, he determined to abide longer in the country beyond Jordan, that the glory of God might be more fully manifested by the greatness of the miracle he was going to perform.

At length, after waiting two days, he expressed to his disciples his intention of returning to Judea, which so much excited their wonder, that they could not help intimating to him that he would, by this conduct, certainly endanger his life. "Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? if any man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if any man walk in the night," if he step out of the path of duty, or undertake his duty in an improper time or manner, "he stumbleth, because there is no light in him. These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep." His disciples understood him literally; and thought, therefore, that this was a favourable symptom, till he informed "them plainly that Lazarus was dead;" and that so far from being sorry that this was the case, he was glad that he had not been present, as they would speedily become the witnesses of an event, that would tend greatly to the confirmation of their faith. "Nevertheless, said he, let us go unto him. Then said Thomas unto his fellow-disciples," Since our Master will run this great hazard, "let us also go, that," if it be necessary, "we may die with him."

Thus, as Dr. Lardner has remarked, Jesus, who could have raised Lazarus from the dead without opening his lips, or rising from his seat, leaves the place of his retirement beyond Jordan, and takes a long journey into Judea, where the Jews lately attempted to kill him. The reason was, his being present in person, and raising Lazarus to life again before so many witnesses at Bethany, where he died, and was well known, would be the means of bringing the men of that and future ages to believe in his doctrine, which is so well fitted to prepare them for a resurrection to life; an admirable proof and emblem of which he gave them in this great miracle.

It is probable, in this journey towards Jerusalem, that our Lord met with ten lepers as he was passing through Samaria. These unhappy men drew near to the road, and called to Jesus

with a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." He did not seem to treat them with much regard, but only bid them "go and show themselves to the priests. And as they went, they" found themselves suddenly restored to a perfect soundness. "One of them," a poor Samaritan, perceiving the benefit which had been conferred upon him, cast himself at the feet of his deliverer, and returned God thanks; but the other nine, who, being Jews, had the benefit of better instructions, persevered in their journey without displaying the same sense of gratitude. Jesus inquired, "Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God," by a public acknowledgment of the miracle, "save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole."

When Jesus and his disciples were come nigh to Bethany, they learned from some of the inhabitants, whom they met accidentally, that Lazarus was four days buried. Wherefore, as a day or two must have been spent in making preparations for the burial, he could not well be less than five days dead when Jesus arrived. [John xi. 18.] "Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off. And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary to comfort them concerning their brother." The evangelist mentions the vicinity of Bethany to Jerusalem, and speaks of the company of friends that were with the two sisters, to show us, that by the directions of providence this great miracle had many witnesses, some of whom were persons of note, and inhabitants of Jerusalem.

It seems, the news of our Lord's coming reached Bethany before he arrived, and Martha, the sister of Lazarus, having heard of it, went out to meet him. Her intention, no doubt, was to welcome him: but, being in an excess of grief, the first thing she uttered was a complaint that he had not come sooner. "Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him; but Mary sat still in the house." Martha was so overjoyed with the news, that she did not take time to tell her sister, but went out in all haste. "Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." Imagining that Jesus could not cure her brother while at a distance from him, she thought that, by delaying to come, he had neglected to save his life. Thus Martha, in one respect, betrayed a mean notion of the Lord's power; though, in another, her faith aimed at something very high; for she immediately added, "but I know that, even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee;" insinuating that she believed his prayer might yet restore her brother to life. However, she founded her hopes, not on his own power, but on the power of God, to be exerted at his intercession. It is probable, that Martha either had not heard that Christ had before this raised two persons from the dead, or might think her brother's

resurrection to be more difficult than theirs, because his spirit had longer departed. Jesus assured her that her brother should rise again, meaning that it should take place immediately, and according to her desire. But her fears prevented her from understanding him in this sense, but of the resurrection at the last day. To cherish her weak faith, and, as it were, raise it by steps to the belief and acknowledgment of his power, "Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life:" I am the author of the resurrection, and of the life which followeth upon the resurrection; therefore I am able at any time to raise the dead. "He that believeth" as thy brother did, "though he were dead, yet shall he live," provided I be pleased to raise him. "And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die" eternally, nor shall even endure natural death, if I am pleased to preserve him by my almighty power. "Believest thou this? She said unto him, Yea, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, that should come into the world;" and therefore must admit all that thou hast asserted. "And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

Mary no sooner heard the joyful news of the arrival of Jesus, than she rose and went to him, without speaking a word to the company of friends who, because she was of a softer disposition than her sister, paid especial attention to her grief; for they remained with her in the house while Martha was gone out; and when she went out they followed her, fearing that she was going to the grave to weep there. They even wept with her, when they saw her weep as she spake to Jesus. By this means were the Jews that had come from Jerusalem brought out to the grave, and made witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus. When Mary came to Jesus, she fell down at his feet, and expressed herself just as Martha had done, only she wept as she spake. "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled." He could not look on the affliction of the two sisters and their friends without having a share in it. Besides, he groaned deeply, being grieved to find that his friends entertained a suspicion of his loving them less than their great love to him might claim, and was troubled. In the Greek it is, "he troubled himself;" he allowed himself to be angry at the malice of the devil, who had introduced sin into the world, and thereby made such havoc of the human kind. But to keep them no longer in suspense, he asked where they had buried Lazarus, that he might go to the grave, and give them immediate relief by bringing him to life again. On this occasion, it appeared that Jesus was possessed of a delicate sensibility of human passions. For when he beheld Martha, and Mary, and their companions around him, all in tears, the tender feelings

of love, and pity, and friendship, moved him to such a degree, that he wept as he went along. [John xi. 34.] "And said, where have ye laid him? they said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept." In this grief of the Son of God there was a greatness and generosity, not to say an amiableness of disposition, infinitely nobler than that which the Stoic philosophers aimed at in their so much boasted apathy. "Then said the Jews" who saw him weeping, "behold how he loved him. And some of them said, could not he who," in so many instances, "hath opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died. Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself," perhaps on account of his friends as well as of the Jews, who seemed all of them unwilling to admit the extent of his power, "cometh to the grave, which was a cave, and had a stone lay upon it," by way of cover. "Jesus said, take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh; for he hath been dead four days." She meant, probably, to insinuate, that her brother's resurrection was not to be expected, considering the state he was in. Wherefore, [John xi. 40.] "Jesus saith unto her, said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe thou shouldst see the glory of God?" i. e. an instance of the great power and goodness of God in thy brother's resurrection. "Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid." On many occasions, Jesus had publicly appealed to his own miracles as the proofs of his mission; but he did not ordinarily make a formal address to his Father before he worked them, though to have done so would have showed from whence he derived his authority. Nevertheless, being about to raise Lazarus from the dead, he prayed for his resurrection, to make the persons present sensible that, in working his miracles, he acted by the assistance, not of devils, as his enemies maliciously affirmed, but of God; and that this miracle in particular could not be effected without an immediate interposition of the divine power. The evangelist, it is true, does not say directly, either that Jesus prayed, or that he prayed for this end; but the thanksgiving which he tells us he offered up, implies both. "And Jesus lift up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me:" I did not pray for my own sake, as if I had entertained any doubt of thine empowering me to do this miracle, for I know that thou hearest me always; but I prayed for the people's sake, to make them sensible that thou lovest me, hast sent me, and art continually with me. By this prayer and thanksgiving, therefore, Jesus has insinuated, that his own resurrection from the dead is an infallible proof of his divine mission; no power inferior to God's being able to accomplish a thing of this kind. "And

when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth." The dead man heard the voice of the Son of God, and came forth immediately: for he did not revive slowly and by degrees, as the dead child did that was raised by the prophet Elisha. But the effect thus instantly following the command, plainly showed whose the power was that revived the breathless clay. If the Lord had not intended this, instead of speaking, he might have raised Lazarus by a secret inward volition. Because the people were not so much as dreaming of a resurrection, they must have been surprised when they heard our Lord pray for it. The cry, "Lazarus, come forth," must have astonished them more, and raised their curiosity to a prodigious pitch. But when they saw him spring out alive, in perfect health, that had been rotting in the grave four days, they could not but be agitated with many different passions, and overwhelmed with inexpressible amazement. [John xi. 44.] "And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave-clothes, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, loose him, and let him go." It would have been the least part of the miracle, had Jesus made the rollers wherewith Lazarus was bound unloose themselves from around his body before he came forth. But he brought him out just as he was lying, and ordered the spectators to loose him, that they might be the better convinced of the miracle. Accordingly, in taking off the grave-clothes, they had the fullest evidence both of his death and resurrection. For, on the one hand, the manner in which he was swathed must of itself have killed him in a little time, had he been alive when buried; consequently, it demonstrated, beyond all exception, that Lazarus was several days dead before Jesus called him forth. Besides, in stripping him, the linen might offer, both to their eyes and smell, abundant proofs of his putrefaction, and, by that means, convince them that he had not been in a trance, but was really departed. On the other hand, by his lively countenance appearing when the napkin was removed, his fresh colour, his active vigour, and his brisk walking, they who came near him and handled him were made sensible that he was in perfect health, and had an opportunity to try the truth of the miracle by the closest examination.

Considering the nature and circumstances of this great miracle, it might have overcome the obstinacy of prejudice, and should have put to shame the impudence of malice. Wherefore, we cannot help being surprised to find that the cry, "Lazarus, come forth," did not produce on all the people present an effect some way similar to that which it had on Lazarus. It raised him from the natural death, and might have raised the stupidest of the spectators from the spiritual, by working in them the lively principle of faith.

Every reader must be sensible that there is something incom-

parably beautiful in the whole of our Lord's behaviour on this occasion. After having given such an astonishing instance of his power, he did not speak one word in his own praise, either directly or indirectly. He did not chide the disciples for their unwillingness to accompany him into Judea. He did not rebuke the Jews for having, in former instances, maliciously detracted from the lustre of his miracles, every one of which derived additional credit from this incontestable wonder. He did not say how much they were to blame for persisting in their infidelity, though he well knew what they would do. He did not insinuate, even in the most distant manner, the obligations which Lazarus and his sisters were laid under by this signal favour. He did not upbraid Martha and Mary with the discontent they had expressed at his having delayed to come to the relief of their brother. Nay, he did not so much as put them in mind of the mean notion they had entertained of his power; but always consistent with himself, he was on this, as on every other occasion, a pattern of perfect humility and absolute self-denial.

This miracle was too remarkable not to produce the most important effects in the minds of the beholders. Some of them, struck with this instance of divine power and benevolence, yielded to the conviction, and acknowledged him as the true Messiah; but others, desirous of ingratiating themselves with the rulers of the nation, or perhaps, feeling the same envy and antipathy against Christ as actuated their superiors, "went their way to the Pharisees," who resided, in great numbers, at Jerusalem, and reported to them what wonderful "things Jesus had done" in their presence. Immediately upon this, "the chief priests and Pharisees" called a solemn council, in which it was deliberated what should be done to stop the progress of the Galilean prophet; and as malice, if openly avowed, is apt to disgust even the most wicked of mankind, they thought it proper to cover their designs by the pretext of consulting the public safety; and resolved to persecute Jesus, lest the people should receive him as a temporal Messiah, and the jealousy of the Romans be thus excited, to the destruction of their civil and religious liberties. The members of the assembly were not, however, unanimous in their resolution of putting Jesus to death. Some of them, who were his disciples, particularly Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, urged the unlawfulness of that which was proposed, from the consideration of his miracles and innocence. But the high-priest, Caiaphas, treated Christ's friends in the council with contempt, as a parcel of weak, ignorant people, who were unacquainted with the nature of government, and did not consider that it was sometimes expedient to commit acts of injustice for the public good. "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish

not." Caiaphas undoubtedly said this from a principle of human policy; nevertheless, the evangelist assures us that his tongue was directed by the inspiration of God, with which he was honoured, though a wicked man, in consequence of his possessing the office of the high-priesthood. "And this spake he not of himself, but being high-priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; and not for that nation only, but that he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad." The majority of the council having now resolved to put Jesus to death, he retired to a city called Ephraim, which was in the borders of the wilderness; but with the exact position of which we are not acquainted.

An important lesson, to endure with patience the contradiction of sinners, is inculcated by the whole life of Christ, but especially by the last recorded transactions. Here we learn, that the more the blessed Immanuel employed himself in contributing to the comforts of mankind, the more cruelly was he persecuted by his enemies. Let no one, therefore, of his followers account it strange when they meet with similar treatment; but seeking only the honour that is of God, commit their cause into his hands, and look forward with pleasing hope to that decisive day, when every secret thought shall be manifested, when the righteous shall shine forth as the sun in the firmament, and when the wicked shall be clothed with shame and everlasting contempt.

CHAPTER XI.

From the resurrection of Lazarus, till our Lord's public entry into Jerusalem.

Our Lord describes the nature of his coming—exhorts his disciples to constancy in prayer by the example of the importunate widow, and instructs them in the proper spirit in which to address the Deity by the parable of the Pharisee and publican—the Pharisees inquire Christ's opinion concerning divorce—Jesus blesses little children—the young man whom Jesus loved—Christ points out the difficulty of a rich man's entering the kingdom of heaven—the parable of the labourers in the vineyard—Christ foretells his own sufferings the sixth time—teaches Zebedee's children that they must expect to suffer for his sake, and exhorts his disciples to beware of worldly ambition—passes through Jericho, where he cures blind Bartimeus, and visits Zaccheus the publican—the parable of the nobleman's servants who had received every one a pound—Christ is anointed by Mary when he sups at her house at Bethany—he makes his public entry into Jerusalem, and laments the fate of that city.

WHILE Christ resided in the little city of Ephraim, the Pharisees pressed him with inquiries concerning the coming of

the kingdom of God, of which they entertained very high but mistaken opinions. Without inquiring into their motives, he informed them that Messiah's kingdom does not consist in any pompous outward form of government, to be erected in this or that particular country with the terror of arms and the confusion of war; but that it consists in the subjection of men's wills, and in the conformity of their minds to the laws of God, to be effected by a new dispensation of religion which was already begun.

Having thus spoken, he addressed his disciples; and, in the hearing of the Pharisees, prophesied concerning the destruction of the Jewish state, whose constitution, both religious and civil, was the chief obstacle to the erection of his kingdom; for the attachment which the Jews had to their constitution was one great spring of their opposition to christianity, and of their cruelty to its abettors. He told them first of all, that before this event took place, they and the whole nation should be in the greatest distress, and that they should passionately wish for Messiah's personal presence to comfort them under their affliction, but should not receive such a favour. [Luke xvii. 22.] "And he said unto the disciples, The days will come when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see it." He next cautioned them against certain deceivers, who should pretend to be Messiah, and promise deliverance to the people; and that they might the better distinguish between these wicked men and the Christ of God, he intimated that, after having lurked awhile in private, they would endeavour to collect forces by the diligence of their emissaries. "And they shall say to you, See here, or see there; go not after them, nor follow them." My coming will be sudden and powerful. "For as the lightning, that lighteneth out of the one part under heaven, shineth to the other part under heaven: so shall also the Son of man be in his day. But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation. And" such shall be the dreadful stupidity of your countrymen, that "as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded. But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." The Jewish people shall be sunk in the same carnal security, and shall suffer the like exemplary punishment, at the time when God reveals to the world, by the more public diffusion of his gospel, the person who was foretold by Daniel under the denomination of the Son of man. "In that day he that shall be on

the top" of one of those flat-roofed houses which have two staircases, one within, and the other without the house, and shall have "his stuff in the house, let him" descend by the outward staircase in the most expeditious manner, and "not come down" into the house "to take" his property "away; and he that is in the field, let him" likewise remember "not to return back" to his house to recover any article of property. "Remember Lot's wife. Whoever shall seek to save his life," by remaining in the city, "shall lose it; and whosoever," by fleeing to the country, "shall" seem as if he wished to "lose his life, shall preserve it." And the whole of this awful affair shall be so especially directed by the providence of God, that "I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken" away captive by the conquerors, "and the other shall be left" in the possession of his liberty. "Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord," shall all these dreadful calamities take place; "and he said unto them, Wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together." As eagles find out and gather round a carcass, so wherever wicked men are, the judgments of God will pursue them; and, particularly, in whatever part of the land any number of the unbelieving Jews are, there will the Romans, the executioners of divine vengeance, be collected together to destroy them. The expression appears to be proverbial, and in this instance very beautifully applied; as the Romans bore in their standards the figure of an eagle, and as a species of fowl that fed upon carcasses was reckoned, by the ancients, as belonging to the family of eagles.

When times of awful calamity approach, God is the refuge of his people; and it is by prayer that they commit their cause to him, and claim his gracious protection; Christ, therefore, now delivered to his disciples a parable, to teach them that they ought not to desist from praying, though the blessing might be long delayed. There was, said he, in a certain city, a powerful and wicked magistrate, who paid no regard to the approbation of God or of man. A poor widow in the city, having been grievously oppressed, came and related her story to him, and often entreated him for justice in vain. However, she continued her applications, and at length, by mere importunity, prevailed. "And shall not God avenge his own elect who cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" He will; as many of you will witness who shall survive the destruction of Jerusalem, and as will be more fully seen in the resurrection of the last day. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on earth? This question is understood to imply, that before the second coming of Christ, infidelity should greatly abound. And that many shall say, Where is the pro-

mise of his coming; for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.

In the company of Jesus there were certain vain persons, who were confident in their own righteousness and despised others. To these he delivered a parable, in which he represented two men of very different characters going up to the temple to offer their adorations to the Deity. The first was a Pharisee, a man of the strictest sect of the Jews, and in the highest reputation for sanctity. He advanced beyond the crowd of common worshippers, and in a tone of voice which evidently indicated his self-sufficiency, began with thanking God that he was free from the vices of other men, especially of a publican who was at that time in the temple; and concluded by enumerating the many virtues which adorned his character, the frequency and severity of his fasts, and the strictness with which he applied the tenth of his property to the support of the Mosaical establishment. The other character whom our Lord pointed out, was that poor publican whom the Pharisee had insulted, even in his prayers. He, conscious of innumerable imperfections, remained at a greater distance from the most holy place; and, without presuming so much as to "lift up his eyes to heaven, smote upon his breast, (in unaffected agony,) saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." God, who knows the secrets of the heart, and who delights in a broken and a contrite spirit, looked down upon this man with approbation; he received the blessing which he desired, "and went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

This parable teaches us, among other things, the wonderful subtilty with which pride insinuates itself into the mind; so that, whilst we express our gratitude to God for having kept us from the practice of open and notorious sins, we must take an especial care, lest, by ascribing any thing to ourselves, we offer before him the sacrifice of fools.

A very prevalent disposition among the Jews in the time of our Lord, was that to indulge themselves very freely in vice, whilst they pretended a great regard for the commandments of God: thus while, in conformity with the injunctions of Moses, they abstained from commerce with abandoned women, they equally gratified their sensual appetites, by frequently divorcing their wives on the most trivial pretexes, and marrying immediately to those who had more strongly attracted their regard. For this species of perfidious debauchery they were more infamous than any of the surrounding nations. The Pharisees hoped that on this subject they might ensnare our Lord, so that either he should irritate the people by condemning one of their favourite vices, or else should expose himself to reproach as a friend of dissolute manners. When, however, they asked him concerning the lawfulness of this kind of divorce, he referred

them to the early history of the human race, and said unto them, "Have ye not read that he which made them (the Creator) at the beginning made them male and female. And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they twain shall be one flesh. Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together (by this indissoluble bond) let no man put asunder. They say unto him, why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away. He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so." The hardness of the heart evidently means their passionate, stubborn temper, which, had they not been permitted to divorce their wives, would have excited many of them to murder or ill treat them; as, therefore, the dispensation of Moses was intended only to prepare the way for a better, he suffered a less evil in order to prevent a greater. He then proceeded to repeat what he had before observed in the sermon on the mount, that whosoever should put away his wife, except it were for fornication, and should marry another, would be guilty of adultery; and that he who should marry her that was thus dismissed should become a perpetrator of the same crime.

The disciples, it appears, were surprised at the decision of their Master; and, after having inquired of him further, when they had returned to the house, could not help remarking, that since the law of marriage was thus rigid, that unless the woman breaks the bond by going astray, her husband cannot dismiss her, but must bear with her, whether she be quarrelsome, peevish, prodigal, deformed, foolish, barren, given to drinking, or, in a word, troublesome by numberless vices, a man had better not marry at all. Jesus answered, It is not in every one's power to live continently; yet if any man has the gift, whether by natural constitution, or by the injury of human force used upon him, which has rendered him incapable of the matrimonial union, or by an ardent desire of promoting the interests of religion, animating him to subdue his natural appetite, and enabling him to live in voluntary chastity, unencumbered with the cares of the world; such a person will not sin, though he leads a single life.

An incident soon after occurred which contributed to place the character of Jesus in a most amiable point of view. Some persons who had young children brought them to Jesus that they might receive the blessing of so great a prophet, not unreasonably believing that many important blessings would follow, in consequence of his prayers for their welfare. The disciples, thinking that this was taking too great a liberty with their Master, rebuked these people, and attempted to dismiss them. But when Jesus knew it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, "Suffer the little children to come unto me,

and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God;" a sentiment which he had formerly expressed in teaching his disciples humility after the transfiguration. Then, taking up the children in his arms, he put his hands upon them, blessed them, and departed.

When our Lord had gone forth into the way, probably setting off in his journey toward Jerusalem, a certain young ruler of great riches, pleasant manners, and respectable character, but as deficient as his brethren in that deep sense of his own depravity which might have led him to an unconditional submission to the instruction of Christ, ran after him, overtook him, and kneeling down before him, said, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life." Jesus replied, Why callest thou me good? there is none that is infallibly good but God himself: since, therefore, thou hast not that high opinion of me, to believe that I am sent forth from God, thou hast committed a great crime in bestowing upon me such an appellation. "But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments," for I find that on these thou hast fixed thy dependance. "He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Christ, probably, intended to intimate, that even these commandments had an extent beyond that to which his morality had attained. The young man said unto him, "All these things have I kept from my youth up; what lack I yet?" Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said further, If thou wilt (attain to that which is really to) be perfect, go and sell thy possessions, freely distribute the produce to the poor, come to me, take up the cross, and follow me as my disciple, and a teacher of my gospel. Hearing this, he departed exceedingly sorrowful, that he could not obtain a place in the everlasting kingdom without renouncing those delights on which his heart had been fixed.

As soon as he had retired, Jesus looked round upon his disciples and said, "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!" You know the nature of the camel, how that it is accustomed, by descending to its knees, to pass through places which it would seem, from its height, impossible that it should ever enter: "but I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." Divine power must be more eminently called forth to humble a rich man to the meek and self-denying spirit of the christian, than so to compress the matter of a camel as to reduce its enormous bulk to the diminutive size of a little insect. "And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, who then can be saved? And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God, for with God all things are

possible." The energy of divine grace can infuse a new spirit into men, and cause them not only to submit to all my commandments, but to account it all joy when, for my sake, they pass through the severest tribulation.

This answer, however, did not satisfy the disciples, who, no doubt, had often thought with pleasure on the honours and profits of the great offices which they expected to enjoy in his kingdom. Among the rest, Peter was much disappointed, finding that his stewardship was to be of little service to him; the office he supposed his Master had promised to him under the metaphor of "the keys of the kingdom." Wherefore, addressing Jesus in the name of the rest, he begged him to consider that his apostles had all done what the young ruler refused to do; had left their relations, their employments, and their possessions, on his account. And since he was pleased to tell them that rich men could not enter into his kingdom, which was the same thing as to tell them there would be no kingdom, he desired to know what reward they were to have. Jesus replied, That they should certainly have a peculiar reward even in this life; because immediately after his resurrection, when he ascended the throne of his mediatorial kingdom, he would advance them to the high honour of "judging the twelve tribes of Israel;" that is, of ruling his church and people, of which the twelve tribes were a type. He further informed them, that every one who had forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or wife, or children, or lands, for his name's sake, should receive an hundred-fold, and should inherit everlasting life. Such as are willing to suffer for the sake of his gospel shall be no losers in the issue: because God, who designs to admit them into heaven, will give them the comforts necessary to support them in their journey thither, and will raise them up friends who shall be as serviceable to them as their nearest kindred, whom they have forsaken. By the special benignity of his providence, they shall have every thing valuable that relations or possessions can minister to them; and, besides, shall have persecutions, whose heat will nourish virtues in them of such excellent efficacy, as to yield them, even in this present world, joys an hundred times better than all earthly pleasures; so that they shall be fed by the bread of sorrows: but above all, in the world to come, they shall have everlasting life. Their afflictions, contributing to the growth of their graces, which are the wings of the soul, they shall, in due time, be raised on them, even up to heaven, leaving all sorrows behind them; and shall fly swiftly into the bosom of God, the fountain of life and joy, where they shall have full amends made them for all the evils they have undergone on his account. Thus many who, in the eyes of their fellows, are last in this life, by reason of their afflictions, mortifications, and self-denial, are really first, not only in point of future reward, but even in respect of present

satisfaction. [Matt. xix. 30.] "But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first." These words were spoken also with a view to keep the disciples humble after their imaginations had been warmed with the prospect of their reward: for, in all probability, they interpreted the promise of the thrones, so as to make it refer to the highest offices in the temporal kingdom, the offices of greatest power, honour, and profit, in Judea; and supposed that the other posts which were to be occupied at a distance from Messiah's person, such as the government of provinces, the generalship of armies, &c. would all be filled by their brethren Jews, to whom of right they belonged, rather than to the Gentiles. Nay, it was a prevailing opinion at this time, that every particular Jew whatever, the poorest not excepted, would enjoy some office or other in the vast empire which Messiah was to erect over all nations. In this light, Christ's meaning was, though you imagine that you and your brethren have a peculiar title to the great and substantial blessings of my kingdom which I have been describing, the Gentiles shall have equal opportunities and advantages for obtaining them; because they shall be admitted to all the privileges of the gospel on the same footing with you Jews; nay, in point of time, they shall be before you; for they shall universally embrace the gospel before your nation is converted. [Rom. xi. 25, 26.]

This doctrine Jesus illustrated by the parable of the householder who hired labourers into his vineyard at different hours, and, in the evening, gave them all the same wages, "beginning from the last unto the first." The true scope, therefore, of the parable is to show, that the Jewish nation, who, of all people, were first, in respect of external privileges, and particularly in respect of the offer, should be the last in receiving the gospel; and that when they did receive it, they should enjoy no higher privileges under that dispensation, than the Gentiles who were called at the eleventh hour. The application of the parable suggests this interpretation, "So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many be called, but few chosen." The vineyard signifies the dispensations of religion in general which God gave to mankind in the different parts of the world. The hiring of the labourers early in the morning, represents that interposition of providence by which the Jews then alive were born members of God's church, and laid under obligations to obey the law of Moses. [Matt. xx. 1.] "For the kingdom of heaven (the master of the kingdom of heaven) is like unto a man that is an householder, (the master of a family,) which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard." God's bestowing the gospel dispensation upon mankind, and the preparations previous thereto, may be illustrated by an householder's sending labourers, at different hours of the day, to work in his vineyard. "And when he had agreed with the

labourers for a penny a day, (a denarius, equal to our seven pence halfpenny, and the common wages of a day-labourer in those times,) he sent them into his vineyard" to work according as the steward or overseer should direct them. The hiring the labourers at the subsequent third, sixth, and ninth hours, signifies the various interpositions of providence by which many of the Gentiles, in the different ages of the world, were converted, either in whole, or in part, to the knowledge and worship of the true God, becoming, some proselytes of righteousness, others proselytes of the gate. "And he went out the third hour, and saw others stand idle in the market-place," where the labourers usually waited in order to be hired. "And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way. Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour and did likewise." The invitation given at the eleventh hour signifies God's calling the Gentiles in every country by the light of the gospel. "And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say unto him, Because no man hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right that shall ye receive." The householder did not, in the bargain which he made with those whom he hired at the third, sixth, ninth, and eleventh hours, fix any particular sum as their wages, he only said he would give them what was right, that is, give them in proportion to the hours which they should work; therefore his bestowing on them a whole day's wages was an act of generosity, especially to those who came at the eleventh hour. The labouring of those who began early in the morning, signifies their performing the various duties imposed by the law of Moses, the dispensation they were under; which, because it was a grievous yoke, obedience to its precepts was fitly expressed by bearing the heat and burden of a whole day. The labouring of such as were called at the subsequent hours, signifies the obedience which the proselyted Gentiles yielded to such precepts of the law as were obligatory on them. The labouring of those who were called at the eleventh hour, signifies the works of piety, justice, temperance, and charity, performed by the converted.

"So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny." The equal reward bestowed on all, the penny given to each labourer as his wages, signifies the gospel, with its privileges and advantages, which they all enjoyed on an equal footing. The steward who called the labourers to receive this reward, represents the apostles and first preachers, by whom the gospel was offered to both Jews and Gentiles. And

the rewards being first bestowed on the labourers who came at the eleventh hour, signifies that the idolatrous Gentiles and proselytes should all enjoy the gospel, with its privileges, before the Jewish nation was converted; the condition, not of a few individuals, but of great bodies of men, being represented in the parable. It is true, the labourers who came in the morning are said to have received the penny. Nevertheless, we cannot from hence infer that our Lord meant to say they would embrace the gospel. On the contrary, they murmured against the householder, and, in their passion, threw the money down upon the ground, as appears from his ordering them to take it up. [Matt. xx. 11.] "And when they had received it, they murmured against the good man of the house, saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong; didst not thou agree with me for a penny? take up that thine is, and go thy way; I will give unto this last even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with my own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?" Seeing I have given thee the hire which I promised thee, thou hast no reason of complaint; and if I choose to give unto those who came last into the vineyard as much hire as I have given to thee, who can find fault with it? I own it is an act of generosity, but am I not free to bestow what is my own as I see proper? And because I am bountiful, shouldst thou be envious? This part of the parable, therefore, is a striking representation of God's goodness in bestowing upon the Gentiles the gospel dispensation, in preference to the Jews themselves, and without subjecting them to the grievous burden of the Mosaic law. "So the last shall be first, and the first last; for many shall be called, but few chosen:" a proverbial expression which, as it is here applied, imports that the Jews should all be called by the apostles and first preachers to receive the gospel; they should have the gospel preached to them: but that few of them, in comparison, would obey the call, or become chosen servants, the generality of the nation remaining in infidelity and wickedness. Wherefore, this branch of the parable very fitly represents the pride of the Jews in rejecting the gospel, when they found the Gentiles admitted to its privileges, without becoming subject to the institutions of Moses. In the mean time, we must not urge the circumstance of the reward, so as to fancy that either Jews or Gentiles merited the blessings of the gospel by their having laboured faithfully in the vineyard, or having behaved well under their several dispensations. The gospel, with its blessings, was bestowed entirely of God's free grace, and without any thing in men's meriting it. Besides, it was offered promiscuously to all, whether good or bad, and was embraced by persons of all characters.

The conclusion of the parable deserves our attention; "many are called, but few chosen;" words of vast meaning and high importance, and therefore should often be meditated upon, that we may not content ourselves with having the offers of the gospel made to us, or even with being in the visible church of God, but may give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Some time after delivering the parable of the labourers in the vineyard, Jesus proceeded on his journey to Jerusalem, with an intention to celebrate the passover, and to suffer the things predicted concerning Messiah by the prophets. [Mark x. 32.] "And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus went before them, and they were amazed, and as they followed they were afraid." The rulers at Jerusalem had issued out a proclamation against our Lord immediately after the resurrection of Lazarus, and probably promised a reward to any that would apprehend him. [John xi. 37.] This, it should seem, was the reason why the disciples were astonished at the alacrity which their Master showed in this journey to the capital city, and were afraid while they followed him. They all expected, indeed, that the kingdom was immediately to appear. [Luke xix. 11.] But recollecting what had been said to them concerning the difficulty of rich men entering into it, and comparing that declaration with the behaviour of the rulers who had hitherto opposed and persecuted Jesus, they became very apprehensive of the dangers they should be exposed to at Jerusalem. In such circumstances, our Lord knew that a repetition of the prophecy concerning his own sufferings was proper, because it showed his disciples that they were entirely voluntary. And as he told them expressly that they had been predicted by the prophets, and consequently decreed by God, the opposition that he was to meet with ought only to increase their faith, especially as he had informed them that he should rise again on the third day. The apostles, however, understood not these things, "and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken."

On this occasion, the disciples showed their ignorance of the prophecies, by an action which likewise discovered, in the clearest manner, the temper of mind they were in, and the motives from which they followed their Master. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who seem to have fancied, that by their Master's resurrection after his sufferings, was meant his taking possession of the great empire which they believed he was come to erect, no sooner heard him mention his rising from the dead, than they came and begged the favour of him that he would confer on them the chief posts in his kingdom. This they expressed by asking to be seated, the one on his right hand, the other on his left, in allusion to his late promise of

placing the twelve apostles on twelve thrones, to judge the tribes. It appears from Matthew that they had employed Salome in making this request to our Lord, in which they might rather suppose that she would succeed, as she had always treated him with the greatest attention, and was known to have possessed much of his esteem. "But Jesus answered and said, ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, we are able. And he saith unto them, ye shall indeed drink of my cup;" ye shall certainly share with me in my lot, "and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with;" shall partake of my afflictions; "but to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father;" or rather, "It is not mine to give, except to them for whom it is prepared by my Father." I can give the chief places in my kingdom to none but to those who, according to the immutable counsels of my Father, are capable of enjoying them.

Jesus, perceiving that this ambitious project of the two brothers had excited the indignation of their companions, called the apostles around him, and said, "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them; and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister. And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." Thus powerfully did he inculcate the lesson, that true greatness consisted in the most self-denying obedience to all his commandments, and that humbling ourselves is the truest way to be exalted.

Pursuing their journey, they at length arrived at Jericho, near which city they met with two blind men, the most distinguished of whom was Bartimeus, the son of Timeus. This poor beggar, perceiving a great crowd pass by, inquired what was the occasion of this concourse, and they told him that it was Jesus of Nazareth, who was travelling that way. As he was well acquainted with our Lord's fame, his name was no sooner mentioned, than he conceived hopes of obtaining a cure; and being deeply impressed with a sense of his own affliction, he cried out so vehemently, that the people, in a passion, rebuked him for making such a noise. Still, however, he persisted to cry out as well as his companion. "O Lord, thou Son of David," thou blessed Messiah, who art come to deliver the nation, "have mercy on us." Having been called by Christ, and told him that their request was the recovery of their sight, he assured them that their faith had saved them, and they followed

him, glorifying God, and exulting in the possession of all their senses. This miracle attracted general attention, and produced a very favourable effect on the minds of the multitude.

Another transaction of our Lord in the neighbourhood of Jericho, though not at all miraculous, excited considerable interest. A certain publican of great authority and wealth, having the disadvantage of a diminutive size, climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see Jesus pass by. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and being perfectly acquainted with the secrets of his heart, though he was an entire stranger to his personal acquaintance, said unto him, "Zaccheus, make haste and come down, for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste and came down, and received him joyfully. And when they saw it they all murmured, saying that he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner. Zaccheus," probably overhearing them, "stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation," i. e. unjust exaction of the taxes, "I restore him four-fold." He said this to vindicate his own character, and show how unreasonable the prejudices were which the multitude had entertained against him, on account of his profession. Jesus, without saying any thing which might encourage self-righteousness in him or his accusers, only observed, "This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is the son of Abraham. For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which is lost," and therefore, though Zaccheus had been really as bad a man as the multitude took him, and his vocation bespake him, to be, Jesus was in the exercise of his duty when he went to lodge with him.

[Luke xix. 11.] "And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear." Because his followers were accompanying him to the royal city, in expectation that the kingdom of God would immediately appear, and with a resolution to assist him in erecting it, he spake a parable, wherein he showed them their duty, described the true nature of the kingdom of God, and taught them that it was not immediately to appear. The evangelist says, that "as they heard these things," namely, that salvation was come to Zaccheus's family, "he added and spake a parable." From this we gather that he spake the parable in Zaccheus's house. "He said, therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return." A certain king's son, in order to be confirmed in his father's kingdom, went into a far country to do homage unto a more powerful potentate, of whom he held it as a vassal. The allusion here is to a custom which prevailed greatly in our Lord's time among the princes of the East. Before they ven-

tured to ascend the throne, they went to Rome, and solicited the emperor's permission, who disposed of all the tributary kingdoms as he saw fit. The meaning of this part of the parable is, that before Jesus set up his kingdom, he was to die and ascend into heaven. Before he departed, he called his ten household slaves, and gave each of them a sum of money to be employed in trade till he should return. By the ten household slaves we are to understand chiefly the apostles and first preachers of the gospel, to whom Jesus gave endowments fitting them for their work, and from whom he expected due improvement of these endowments in the propagation of the gospel. This was their particular duty in the erection of the kingdom of God, about which they were now so solicitous. "But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us." His natural subjects hated him without a cause, as appears from the message which they sent to the potentate, from whom he sought what, in later times, has been called investiture: for, in that message, they alleged no crime against him, but only expressed their ill-will towards him, by declaring they would not have him to reign over them. This is a true representation of the causeless opposition which the Jewish great men made to Jesus. The message which these citizens sent after their prince had no effect; he received the kingdom, and returned with full authority, which he exercised in calling his servants to account, and in punishing his rebellious subjects. So the opposition which the Jews made to our Lord's being made king proved ineffectual. Having, therefore, all power in heaven and in earth given unto him after his death, he will return to reckon with his apostles, and ministers, and rebellious subjects. Nay, he has returned already, and punished the Jews with a most exemplary punishment for resisting his government. [Luke xix. 15.] "And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading." So Jesus, both at the day of men's death, and at the general judgment, will make a strict inquiry into the use and improvement which all his servants, but especially the ministers of the gospel, have made of the talents and opportunities committed unto them. "Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds." The pound here mentioned was in value in silver, five pounds, ten shillings, and three-pence; in gold, it was equal to ninety-five pounds, five shillings. The first servant having been very diligent and successful, was greatly applauded by his lord, who rewarded him by raising him to a considerable dignity in the kingdom which he had lately received. [Luke xix. 17.] "And he said unto him, Well done, thou good servant, because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten

cities." In like manner, the faithful apostles and ministers o. Christ shall be rewarded with great honour and authority in his kingdom.

"And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds." The modesty of this and the former servant is remarkable. They do not say that they themselves had gained the ten or the five pounds, but they say, "thy pound hath gained ten pounds," attributing their success, not to themselves, but to the gifts of his grace. "And he said likewise to him, Be thou also ruler over five cities." This servant, having been both diligent and successful, though in an inferior degree, was approved and rewarded accordingly; for his lord gave him authority over five cities. Thus the least of Christ's faithful ministers and servants shall be rewarded with a proportionable share of the pleasures of his kingdom.

"And another came, saying, Lord, here is thy pound, which I kept laid up in a napkin. For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow." This is a proverbial description of an unjust, rigorous character. The slothful servant, by applying it to his lord, aggravated his crime not a little. He impudently told him, that, knowing his severe and griping disposition, he thought it prudent not to risk his money in trade, for fear he should have lost it; that he had hid it in a napkin in order to deliver it to him safe at his return; and that this was the true reason why he had not increased his talent as the others had done theirs. Thus slothful ministers of religion, and pretended servants of Christ, will be ever ready to throw the blame of their unfaithfulness on God himself. "And he saith, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee thou wicked servant. Thou knewest," or rather, "didst thou know that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow? Wherefore, then, gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have received mine own with usury," (with interest). Thou hast been slothful in the highest degree; for if thou really hadst believed me to be the rigorous person thou sayest I am, thou certainly wouldst have been at the pains to lend out my money, a method of improvement of thy talent which would have occasioned thee no trouble at all; thy excuse, therefore, is a mere pretence. In like manner, all the excuses which wicked ministers offer in their own behalf shall, at the bar of God, stand them in no stead, whether they be drawn from the character which they affixed to God, or from his decrees, or from their own inability, or from the difficulty of his service, or from any other consideration whatever. [Luke xix. 24.] "And he said to them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds." They who stood by, the officers of justice who wait-

ed on the king, thought there was no occasion to give the pound to one who had so much already. Perhaps they thought it was more proper to give it to him who had only five pounds. But the king told them they should do as he ordered, because it was agreeable to the rules of all wise administrations, to bestow the most and greatest trusts on them who, by their fidelity in offices already enjoyed by them, have showed that they best deserved them. "For I say unto you, that unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken away from him." The opportunities and advantages which he enjoys shall be taken from him, and given to such as improve those already bestowed on them. "But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." Those who are guilty of rebellion against me, by doing all in their power to hinder my obtaining the kingdom, bring hither, and put them to death this instant. The Jews were Christ's enemies, who would not have him to reign over them, and for that crime he destroyed their nation.

They who affix a general meaning to this parable, suppose that the character and end of three persons are described in it. 1. The character of those who profess themselves the servants of Christ, and who act in a manner suitable to their profession. 2. The character of those who take on them the title, but do not act up to it. 3. The character of those who, though they be Christ's natural subjects, neither profess themselves his servants, nor yield him obedience; but endeavour to shake off his yoke, and oppose him with all their might. The first sort are the true disciples of Christ. The second sort are hypocrites. The third are the openly profane. The treatment which the servants in the parable met with from their lord, represents the judgment and end of the different sorts of Christians just now mentioned. True disciples shall be munificently rewarded with the honours and pleasures of immortality. Hypocrites shall be spoiled of all the advantages on which they relied, and stripped of those false virtues for which they valued themselves; so that, being showed to all the world in their proper colours, their pride shall be utterly mortified, and they themselves loaded with eternal infamy. Lastly, the detection and punishment of hypocrites, shall add to the honours of the truly virtuous, whose glory shall thus shine more conspicuously.

Having finished the parable, our Lord left the house of Zaccheus, and proceeded in his journey to Jerusalem. "And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem." By his alacrity in the journey, he showed how willing he was to undergo those heavy sufferings which he knew were to befall him in Jerusalem.

Our Lord was now on the road to Jerusalem, where he proposed to celebrate the passover. But the people who were

come up early to purify themselves, wondering that he was not arrived, inquired for him, and said to one another as they stood in the temple, Is he afraid, and will not come to the feast? This delay was occasioned by a commandment of the chief priests and Pharisees, that if any man knew where Jesus was, he should discover it, that they might apprehend him.

At length, Jesus came to Bethany six days before the pass-over. And because it was evening when he arrived, he turned in to lodge with Lazarus whom he had raised from the dead. "There they made him a supper, and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair." She did these things in token of the warm sense she had of the many favours he had conferred on her and her relations, but especially for the wonderful kindness he had lately showed to her brother Lazarus. From this action of Mary's, as well as from Martha's serving now and on a former occasion, it would appear that Mary was the elder sister. "And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." Judas was now angry because his Master had not taken this ointment with a view to sell it, pretending that the price received for it might have been bestowed on the poor. Nevertheless, his real motive was covetousness; for, as he carried the bag, he thought if his Master had sold the ointment, he would have gotten the money to keep, and so might have applied part of it to his own private use. But it is no new thing for the basest men to cover their blackest crimes with the fair pretence of zeal for the honour of God and the interests of religion.

Bethany being within two miles of Jerusalem, the news of his arrival soon reached the city, and drew out great numbers of the citizens; for they had a curiosity to see the man that had been raised from the dead, and the still more wonderful man that had raised him. When they came and saw Lazarus, many of them believed, that is, were convinced both of Lazarus's resurrection and of the divinity of Christ's mission. But the news of their believing, together with the reason of its being currently reported in Jerusalem, came to the chief priests' ears, and incensed them to such a degree, that they resolved to kill, not only Jesus, but also, if it were possible, to destroy Lazarus.

The multitude which attended our Lord in this journey [Matt. xx. 29.] having increased prodigiously as he advanced towards Jerusalem, he did not now shun them, and enter the city privately, as he had always done on former occasions. The people were to honour him with the title of Messiah publicly, that he might have an opportunity of accepting that august name in the most avowed manner, before he ascended into heaven. Moreover, the priests, who had issued out a pro-

clamation against him, [John xi. 57.] were to be awed, at least, for a while, and restrained from offering him violence. For as he had doctrines to teach, rebukes to give, and other things to do that could not fail to incense those proud rulers, without doubt they would have put him to death prematurely, had not the people appeared on his side. Accordingly, after the parable of the husbandmen was spoken, [Matt. xxi. 45.] the priests "sought to lay hands on him, but feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet." Nay, the whole council was intimidated by them; for, in their deliberation about putting Jesus to death [Matt. xxvi. 5.] they said to one another, "not on the feast-day, lest there be an uproar among the people." Our Lord's driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, his parables of the husbandmen and marriage supper, representing the rejection of the Jewish nation, and the downfall of their state, with the woes denounced against the Pharisees in their own hearing, made part of the work he had to do before he ascended, which would have brought instant destruction upon him, had not the great men's rage been restrained by the uncommon respect which the people generally showed him. Wherefore, the multitude being now very great, and Jesus having such good reasons not to shun them as formerly, he sent two of his disciples for an ass which never had been rode upon, but which, by his simple volition, he could tame, proposing, according to the prophecy, Zech. ix. 9, to ride into the city, amidst the surrounding throng. Probably there were strait passes in the mount of Olives, through which the road lay; [Luke xix. 37;] and, no doubt, narrow streets in the city also, by which he was to go to the temple. In these narrow passes and lanes he might have been incommoded by the press had he walked on foot. Besides, the strangers who were now in Jerusalem would increase the crowd. It seems, they knew of his coming, [John xii. 12.] and perhaps expected that he was bringing Lazarus along with him, to show him in public as a trophy of his power. [Compare John xii. 12, with verse 18.] For the sight of Lazarus in Bethany having induced many to believe, they might naturally suppose that his appearing openly would produce the same effect in Jerusalem: and as they were in full hopes that the kingdom was to be erected at this passover, they could not but think it necessary that all opposers should instantly be convinced and obliged to acknowledge Messiah's title to the throne of his illustrious ancestors.

Our Lord having supped and spent the evening in the company of Lazarus and his two sisters, set forward, probably, the next morning, in his way to Jerusalem. He sent before two of his disciples to the neighbouring village of Bethphage, with directions to take, for his service, an ass, which they should find tied, and a colt with her, which had never been ridden by any one. They were not to do this by force; but if the owners re-

monstrated with them on the making this use of their property, they were to reply it was at the command of their Master, who was well known throughout all that neighbourhood, by the distinguished miracle he so lately performed at Bethany.

When the disciples came to Bethphage, they found the ass with its colt as Jesus had said, and immediately set about loosing them; but the owner, happening to be present, reprov'd them: wherefore, they returned the answer which their Master had put into their mouths, and were suffered to lead both away.

The event thus corresponding to the words of Jesus, must have convinced the disciples that he knew every thing, and could influence the wills of men as often as he pleased to exert his power for that purpose.

Jesus had no sooner mounted the colt, than the animal became manageable; thus affording a proof, that not only the elements of nature, the minds of men, and the spirits of the deep, were subject to the commands of the Son of God, but that also his influence extended to the most untractable of the brute creation that are pressed into the service of man. When the multitude saw him mounted, they immediately bethought themselves of showing him the honours which kings and conquerors obtained in their triumphal entries. For as they all firmly believed that he would take the reins of government into his own hands at this passover, they had a mind to make his entry into Jerusalem have the air of triumph. Accordingly, some spread their garments in the way, others cut down branches off the trees and strewed them in the way, carrying the larger sort on high in procession before the Messiah as demonstrations of their joy.

The news of our Lord's approach having reached the city, great numbers of the people, who were come from the country to attend the feast, and who had a favourable opinion of his character, went forth with palm-branches in their hands to welcome Messiah to the capital. When the van of the procession that attended Jesus came to the descent of the mount of Olives, where the royal city first showed itself, they were met by the multitude from Jerusalem coming up the hill with palm-branches, the symbols of peace, in their hands. At meeting, the latter first saluted their brethren, and cried, "Hosanna, blessed is the king of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord." When the disciples looked on the royal city, and heard such a multitude of their countrymen proclaiming their Master Messiah, they felt high transports of joy, and answered by returning the salutation, saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."

Thus Jesus rode amidst the acclamations and shoutings of the admiring crowd: but we must not imagine that these honours were paid to him by any solicitation of his. The disciples and

the multitude did all of their own accord ; indeed, for the reasons mentioned, Jesus was passive in the matter, and would neither refuse the title of Messiah, nor reprove the people who offered it, though required to do both by the Pharisees, who had come with the multitude from the town, and were greatly displeased with the homage that was offered to him. [Luke xix. 39.] “ And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” This latter clause may signify, either that God would by miracle raise up others to glorify his name, rather than silence should be kept on this occasion, as Dr. Clarke explains it ; or that it was a thing altogether impossible to make the multitude hold their peace. But though Jesus did not refuse the honours that were now paid him, he was far from assuming the dignity of an earthly prince, or any state-pageantry whatsoever. On the contrary, he humbled himself exceedingly ; his riding on an ass being an instance of great meekness and humility, according to what was prophesied of him, Zech. ix. 9. [John xii. 14.] “ And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, (called by the other evangelists a colt,) sat thereon ; as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Sion ; behold thy king cometh, sitting on an ass’s colt.” We shall easily see the propriety of applying Zechariah’s prophecy to this transaction, if we remember that, in the East, riding on horses was anciently reckoned the greatest ostentation of magnificence. It was, therefore, becoming the meekness of the lowly Jesus, that, in his most public entry into the capital city, he chose to ride on an ass. At the same time, there was nothing mean or ridiculous in it, asses being the beasts which the Easterns commonly made use of in riding. It seems, the disciples did not at that time form a just notion of what their Master designed by this entry, or by any of the circumstances of it. Probably, they considered it as the first step of his exaltation to the throne. However, after his ascension, recollecting the prophecies concerning Messiah, they remembered how exactly they had been fulfilled in him, and found their faith greatly strengthened thereby. “ These things understood not his disciples at first ; but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.” But because the forwardness which the multitude now showed to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, was altogether extraordinary, the evangelist assigns the cause thereof. The witnesses of the resurrection of Lazarus zealously bestirred themselves on this occasion ; they had published the miracle far and near, they were many in number, and persons of reputation. Hence their report gained universal belief, and drew out an innumerable multitude to meet

Jesus; a circumstance which, as the historian observes, gave great credit to the miracle, as it proved what sense the people of the age and country where it was performed had of it. [John xii. 17.] "The people, therefore, that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record." The inhabitants of Bethany and Jerusalem, who were so happy as to be present at Lazarus's resurrection, by attending on Jesus at this time, and joining with the multitude in their acclamations, bare record to the truth of that astonishing miracle. For this cause the people also met him; for that they heard that he had done this miracle. In the mean time, the Pharisees and great men were exceedingly enraged, because every measure they had taken to hinder the people from following Jesus had proved ineffectual. "The Pharisees, therefore, said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold the world is gone after him."

As Jesus drew nigh he looked on the city; and notwithstanding he had already met with much ill usage from its inhabitants, and was at this very juncture to be put to death by them, yet, with a divine generosity and benevolence which nothing can equal, he wept over it in the view of the surrounding multitude, lifting up his voice, and lamenting aloud the calamities which he foresaw were coming upon it, because its inhabitants were ignorant of the time of their visitation. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side." Here Jesus foretold particularly the principal circumstances of the siege of Jerusalem; and to his prophecy the event corresponded most exactly. For when Titus attacked the city, the Jews defended themselves so obstinately, that he found there was no way to gain his purpose but to compass the city round with a trench and mound. By this means, he kept the besieged in on every side, cut them off from all hope of safety in flight, and consumed them by famine. The work which he undertook was indeed a matter of extreme difficulty; for the wall measured thirty-nine furlongs, or almost five miles, and the towers were thirteen in number, every one of them ten furlongs in compass. Nevertheless, the whole was finished in three days; for, to use the expression of Josephus, the soldiers, in performing this work, were animated by a divine impetus. [Luke xix. 44.] "And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee, and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another." This circumstance is taken notice of in the larger prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, [Mark xiii. 1.] Our Lord mentioned it likewise in one of his pro-

phetic parables, [Matt. xxii. 7.] The description which Josephus has given of the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, may be considered as a comment upon these prophecies. [Bell. vii. 18.] 'Thus was Jerusalem taken in the second year of Vespasian's reign, on the eighth day of September; and having been already five times surprised, it was again finally destroyed. Such was the end of the besieging of Jerusalem, when there was none left to kill, nor any thing remaining for the soldiers to get. Caesar commanded them to destroy the city and temple, only leaving certain towers standing that were more beautiful than the rest, viz. Phaselus, Hippicos, and Mariamme, and the wall that was on the west side, meaning there to keep a garrison; and that they should be a monument of the prowess of the Romans, who had taken a city so well fortified, as by them it appeared to have been. All the rest of the city they so levelled,' answering to our Lord's phrase, lay thee even with the ground, 'that they who had not seen it before would not believe that ever it had been inhabited.' And, in the preceding chapter, he says, 'they destroyed the wall, and burned the outward part of the city.' Our Lord, upon this occasion, assigns the true cause why the Jews were given up by divine providence, to experience such dreadful sufferings, namely, because they knew not the time of their visitation, and therefore rejected the only Messiah of God. That Christ should weep the destruction of his enemies while thus surrounded with the acclamations of his friends, affords a most delightful instance of the benignity of his disposition.

Having entered the city, he immediately proceeded to the temple; and having looked round upon all things which it contained, retired that same evening to Bethany, no doubt to the great mortification of his followers, who expected that he should now restore the kingdom to Israel.

CHAPTER XII.

The Discourses and Transactions of our Lord, from his public entry into Jerusalem till Judas covenanted with the Chief Priests to betray him.

Christ curses the fig-tree, and purges the temple—the power of faith—certain Greeks desire to see Jesus—he refuses to explain the nature of his authority—the parable of the vineyard let out to husbandmen—the marriage supper—the lawfulness and duty of paying tribute—the objection of the Sadducees to the resurrection confuted—which is the greatest commandment—how David called the Messiah Lord, though he was to be of his posterity—woes denounced against the Pharisees—the widow and her two mites—Christ foretells the destruction of Jerusalem—the parable of the ten virgins and of the talents—the last judgment described—Christ again foretells his own sufferings—he is anointed the third time—Judas agrees to betray his Master.

JESUS and his disciples having lodged all night in Bethany, departed next morning for Jerusalem. By the way, they happened to see a fig-tree that looked green, was full of leaves, and, at a distance, promised abundance of fruit. To this tree Jesus went, in expectation of finding figs thereon, for he was hungry, and the season of gathering them was not yet come. But finding that, notwithstanding these promising appearances, it had no fruit, addressing himself to this fig-tree, he said, Let no man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever, and it immediately began to wither away. This, like some other of our Lord's actions, was evidently emblematical, and its meaning the same as that of the parable of the barren fig-tree recited in a former chapter, each of them being intended to point out the approaching ruin of the Jewish nation.

It appears, that the Jews in our Lord's time carried their disdain of the Gentiles so far, that they accounted the outer court of the temple, which was allotted for the accommodation of the proselytes, as a place of no great sanctity, and therefore kept there a daily market of such things as were necessary for the offering of sacrifices. But as these abuses occasioned great disturbance to the proselytes, Jesus, on the same day that he had struck the fig-tree with barrenness, reformed them a second time, telling the people that were standing by, that the Gentiles worshipped there by divine appointment as well as the Jews, the temple being ordained of God as a house of prayer for all nations, and that such as had trafficked there, by their covetous practices, had turned it into a den of thieves. The

offenders, it is likely, were either supernaturally awed by a secret energy of Christ's omnipotence, or induced to retire from the number of those who had declared themselves his friends and supporters.

It seems, the opinion that Jesus was Messiah prevailed generally now; for while he was in the temple, the blind, and the lame, and other diseased persons, were brought to him in great numbers, from all quarters, to be healed; and the very children, when they saw the cures which he performed, proclaimed him the Son of David, so wonderfully were they struck with his miracles. Indeed, the chief priests and doctors, finding him thus universally acknowledged, were highly displeased; yet they durst not do any thing to put a stop to it, standing in awe of the multitude. They only asked him if he heard what the children said; insinuating that it was his duty to stop their mouths, by refusing the praises which they offered without understanding what they said. Jesus answered them out of the eighth Psalm, where David observes, that though all should be silent, God has no need of other heralds to proclaim his praise than infants who hang at their mother's breasts; because, notwithstanding they be dumb, the admirable providence of God, conspicuous in their preservation, is equal to the loudest and sublimest eloquence. By applying the Psalmist's words to the case in hand, Jesus signified that the meanest of God's works are so formed as to declare the greatness of his perfections; and that as the Father does not refuse the praise which arises from the least of his creatures, so the Son did not disdain the praise that was offered him by children. In the present instance, their praise was peculiarly acceptable, because it implied that his miracles were exceedingly illustrious, inasmuch as they led minds, wherein there was nothing but the dawnings of reason, to acknowledge his mission. The Messiah's praise, therefore, might, with remarkable propriety, be said, on this occasion to have been perfected out of the mouths of babes and sucklings. [Mark xi. 18.] "And the scribes and Pharisees heard it:" they heard the rebuke which he had given them for allowing the temple to be profaned: they heard likewise the application which he had made of the eighth Psalm to the case of the children in the temple, wishing him all manner of prosperity; "And sought how they might destroy him; for they feared him, because all the people were astonished at his doctrine." The authority which Jesus now assumed, and the honours which were paid to him, galled the scribes and Pharisees; for they began to be afraid of him, suspecting that he might raise some popular commotion, and the rather that all the common people were wonderfully struck with his doctrine. They durst not, however, attempt any thing against him openly; they only consulted among themselves how they might destroy him with as little noise as possible. When the evening was

come, Jesus left the city, and went to Bethany; the resurrection of Lazarus having procured him many friends in that village, among whom he was always in safety.

Next morning, as they were returning to Jerusalem, Peter, with the rest of the disciples, could not help expressing their astonishment when they observed how completely the fig-tree, which their Master had cursed, was withered away. Christ assured them, in reply, that if they exercised faith in God, they might not only perform as great miracles as that which had taken place in the fig-tree, but even command the mount of Olives to be removed, and cast into the sea, and it should obey them. He exhorted them to cultivate the duty of prayer for the increase of their faith; and to recollect, that unless they freely forgave every one that trespassed against them, the Lord would not condescend to receive their supplications.

Certain Grecian proselytes, or Jews, residing in heathen countries, having come up to worship at this passover, made an application to Philip, with whom they had probably had some correspondence in Galilee, and entreated him that he would introduce them into the company of Jesus. "Philip cometh and telleth Andrew," perhaps from some difficulty which he perceived in the case, "and again Andrew and Philip told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come that the Son of man should be glorified" by the conversion of the Gentiles. But it is necessary that he should first suffer: for "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me: and where I am, there shall also my servant be. If any man serve me, him will my Father honour."

Having taken a view of his own sufferings, and proposed them as an example to his disciples, the prospect moved him to such a degree, that he uttered his grief in the following doleful words: "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" accompanying them with a prayer for relief, "Father, save me from this hour." Some, however, understand these words interrogatively. Shall I say, "Father, save me from this hour?" supposing that the question implies a negation. "But for this cause came I unto this hour." His praying on this occasion shows us what is the best method of easing the mind in deep distress. At the same time, as in his prayer he expressed an entire resignation to the divine will, he has taught us, that although the weakness of human nature may shrink at the first thoughts of suffering, his disciples are not to yield, but ought to fortify themselves by just reflections on the wisdom of God, and on the happy end he promises by their afflictions. "Father, glorify thy name." This some consider as a farther expression

of resignation, importing that he was willing to submit to whatever the Father should judge necessary for the manifestation of his perfections. But the answer that was given to this part of Christ's prayer suggests another meaning, namely, that he begged God to demonstrate, perhaps by an immediate interposition, the truth of his mission, a full proof thereof being altogether necessary for vindicating the honour of God. Accordingly, the words were no sooner spoken, than a voice from heaven was heard answering distinctly to this sense of them. "Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." I have glorified it by the miracles which thou hast already performed, and will continue to glorify it by other miracles yet to be performed. Accordingly, by the miraculous circumstances which accompanied our Lord's crucifixion, but especially by his resurrection from the dead, by his ascension into heaven, and by the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon his apostles, the truth of Christ's pretensions and mission was demonstrated, and the glory of God was greatly advanced. The sound of this voice was evidently preternatural, being strong and loud as thunder, but, at the same time, so articulate, that all who had heard Jesus pray understood what it said. [John xii. 29.] "The people, therefore, that stood by and heard it said that it thundered, others said an angel spake to him." None of them took it for an human voice, it being entirely different from any thing they had ever heard. The reflection which Jesus made upon it was, that the voice had spoken, not to assure him of the Father's love, but to confirm them in the belief of his mission. The farther glorification of the name of God, promised to Jesus by the voice, signified the honour that should accrue to God from the new proofs wherewith his mission was to be adorned, particularly the great miracles of his resurrection from the dead, of the effusion of the Spirit on the first converts, and of the conversion of the Gentile world to the christian religion.

The subject of our Lord's prayer, and the answer which he received, naturally led him to meditate on the happy effects of his coming into the world, viz. the destruction of Satan's kingdom, and the exaltation of men with himself into heaven. These grand events afforded a prospect that was very reviving amidst the melancholy thoughts which now afflicted his soul. Wherefore, that his disciples might share with him in the comfort of them, he foretold them as the necessary effects of his sufferings. "Now is the judgment of this world:" the time of the destruction of wickedness is come. "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out." The devil, who has so long reigned in the hearts of the children of disobedience, is about to be dethroned. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, we have heard out of the law

that Christ abideth for ever; and how sayest thou the Son of man must be lift up? Who is this Son of man?" What sort of a Messiah must he be that is to die. Jesus replied, That the light, meaning himself, would continue with them but a little while longer; for which reason they would do well not to cavil at, but to believe what he said. "Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you: walk while ye have the light." Improve by my instructions, who am the light of the world, "lest darkness," i. e. spiritual blindness, "come upon you" by the just judgment of God. [Rom. xi. 25.] If that should happen to you, ye will be in a miserable condition; "for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth;" so is in danger of perishing: "while ye have the light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light:" while you enjoy the benefit of my doctrine and miracles, which clearly prove my mission from God, believe on me; for it is thus alone you can become the children of God. "These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them:" he retired privately with his disciples, perhaps to Bethany.

As the ministry of our blessed Redeemer was now drawing near a conclusion, the sacred historian, John, thought it proper to make some remarks on the effect of his preaching. He observes, that though Christ had performed so many miracles, the greater part of the Jews did not believe in the divinity of his mission and character; thus fulfilling the lamentation of Isaiah, "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed." Yet this was not wholly without exception; for some of the members of the Jewish sanhedrim admitted his pretensions, but were afraid openly to avow their sentiments, lest, through the influence of the Pharisees, they should be put out of the synagogue: "for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." Wherefore, to strengthen the faith of such, and to inspire them with courage, Jesus, on some occasion or other soon after this, cried and said, probably in the temple, [John xii. 44—50.] "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness; and if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not; for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak, therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

Though every part of the life of Jesus had been employed in

doing good, he now appeared uncommonly assiduous in communicating divine instruction, preaching daily in the temple to very numerous and attentive auditories. This made the chief priests more determined than ever to accomplish his destruction; and, as a step which might be important to the execution of their designs, they deputed some of their number to request that he would inform the sanhedrim whence he derived that authority to which he laid claim, by working of miracles, instructing the people, and baptizing such as acknowledged his character. But Jesus, in whom was all the meekness of wisdom, declined to answer, unless they would first inform him whence John the Baptist received his commission. Perplexed, on the one side, by the dread of the people, who venerated the character of John, and actuated, on the other, by the most violent hatred to the proceedings of that holy man, they replied, we cannot tell.

While, however, they yet staid, he said unto them, [Matt. xxi. 28—32.] “What think you, A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not, but afterward he repented and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir, and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, the first. Jesus saith unto them, verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and harlots believed him; and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward that ye might believe him.” Thus has it been found wherever the gospel has been preached, that self-righteousness has opposed a more formidable barrier to the spread of truth than the strongest attachment to the most vicious courses.

Our Lord did not rest satisfied with showing the heinousness of their sin in rejecting the Baptist. He judged it proper, likewise, publicly to represent the crime of the nation, in rejecting all the messengers of God from first to last, and, among the rest, his only-begotten Son; and in misimproving the Mosaical dispensation under which they lived. At the same time, he warned them plainly of their danger, by reason of the punishment which they incurred, on account of such a continued course of rebellion. The outward economy of religion, in which they gloried, was to be taken from them; their relation to God, as his people, cancelled; and their national constitution destroyed. But because these were topics extremely disagreeable, he couched them under the veil of a parable, which he formed upon one made use of long before by the prophet Isaiah v. 1. [Matt. xxi. 33.] “Hear another parable, There was a certain householder which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower;

that is, a house for lodging the wine-dressers, and watching the vineyard, for which reason it was built so high, as to have a prospect of the whole vineyard. The vineyard, with its appurtenances, represents the Mosaical dispensation of religion, a dispensation that was attended with great personal advantages, and had many promises of future blessings;—"and let it out to husbandmen:" bestowed this excellent dispensation of religion on the Jewish people; "and went into a far country;" gave them the enjoyment of this dispensation of religion for a long time. "And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it." He sent the prophets to exhort the Jews to entertain just sentiments in religion, and to lead holy lives, these being the returns due from persons who enjoyed so clear a revelation of the divine will. "And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another." Mark gives this branch of the parable more fully, xii. 2—5. "And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard. And they caught him, and beat him, and sent him away empty. And again he sent unto them another servant, and at him they cast stones, and wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully handled. And again he sent another, and him they killed." In this passage Mark and Luke agree. The meaning is, that the Jews, extremely irritated at the prophets for the freedom they used in reproving their sins, and exhorting them to a holy life, persecuted and slew them with unrelenting fury. "Again, he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did unto them likewise." The wickedness of the Jews in killing the prophets did not provoke God instantly to pour down vengeance on them; but, being very merciful and patient toward the nation, he sent more prophets to exhort and reclaim them. However, they met with no better treatment than the former. "But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, they will reverence my son." That no means might be left untried, God sent unto them his own son, whose authority, clearly established by undeniable miracles, ought to have been acknowledged with cheerfulness by wicked men. [Matt. xxi. 38.] "But when the husbandmen saw the Son, they said among themselves, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance." From this it would seem the Jews knew Jesus to be the Son of God. Yet Peter says, both of the rulers and of the people, that they crucified the Lord ignorantly. [Acts iii. 17.] Perhaps, therefore, like the other circumstance of their seizing on the inheritance, it may have been added, for the sake of completing the parable, without any particular design. Matthew and Luke say the husbandmen cast the son out of the vineyard and slew him. "And they caught him," laid hands on him, "and cast him out of the

vineyard, and slew him." Mark says, they first killed him, and then cast him out, xii. 8. But his meaning may have been this : they so beat and bruised him before they cast him out that he could not live, and after having cast him out, they completed the murder, killing him out-right. The manner in which Mark has expressed it, insinuates that, after they had killed him, they threw out his body, without burial, to the dogs ; a circumstance which does not seem to have any particular meaning, but is formed to show the greatness of the rebellion of these husbandmen.

"What, therefore, shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them ? He will come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others." Comparing the different evangelists with each other, it appears, that the chief priests approved of this decision, as agreeable to justice : but rejected it with abhorrence when applied to themselves. Christ then directed their attention to that which was written in the scriptures, "the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner ;" a passage in the hundred and eighteenth Psalm, which is plainly predictive of the rejection of Messiah by the Jews, and the introduction of a new dispensation. [Matt. xxi. 43, 44.] "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken. But on whomsoever it shall fall it shall grind him to powder." Our Lord seems here to have had in view Dan. ii. 34, 35, where the destruction of all the opposers of Messiah's kingdom is thus described : "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind carried them away that no place was found for them, and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the earth."

The chief priests, perceiving the drift of our Lord's parables, were highly incensed, and would have immediately apprehended him, had they not dreaded the fury of the surrounding multitude.

Christ then proceeded to repeat, with a few variations, a parable which he had already delivered, concerning the marriage supper of a king's son. He made, upon this occasion, the following important addition. [Matt. xxii. 6—14.] "And the remnant, not contenting themselves with rejecting the kind invitation, took his servants, the prophets, the Messiah, and the apostles, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth, and he sent forth his armies, the Roman legions who were employed as the executioners of his vengeance, and destroyed those murderers, and

burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, the wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye into the highways, and as many as ye shall find bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good, and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king, designing to do them honour, came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment, though a large store of them had been provided for the service of the company; and to refuse them was the highest affront that could be offered to the giver of the feast. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? and he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness," into a dark prison, where many criminals were confined, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen." The parable is concluded in this manner to show us, that the profession of the Christian religion will not save a man, unless he experiences that great and essential change of heart which our Saviour denominates regeneration. Wherefore, to use the words of Dr. Doddridge, let those who have obeyed the call, and are by profession the people of God, think often of that awful day, when the king will come in to see his guests; when God will, with the greatest strictness, view every soul laying claim to the joys of heaven: let us think of the speechless confusion that will seize such as have not on the wedding garment, and of the inexorable severity with which they will be consigned to weeping and gnashing of teeth; and let us remember, that to have seen for a while the light of the gospel, and the fair beamings of an eternal hope, will add deeper and more sensible horror to these gloomy caverns. On the other hand, to animate and encourage us, let us think also on the happy time when the marriage supper of the Lamb shall be celebrated, and all the harmony, pomp, and beauty of heaven, shall add to its solemnity, its magnificence, and its joys.

Incapable of hearing any more of the reproofs of Jesus, the chief priests and elders now left him, and went their way.

But though the adversaries of Jesus were silenced and confounded, their malice continued unabated, and they immediately determined to ensnare him in a question concerning the tribute. Some of the Pharisees and Herodians, though not at all friendly with each other, united, at the request of the sauledrim, for performing this design. Their business was to feign themselves just men, men who had a great veneration for the divine law, and dread of doing any thing inconsistent therewith; and, under that mask, to beg him, for the ease of their consciences, to give his opinion, whether they might pay taxes to the Romans consistent y with their zeal for religion. It seems, this question

was much debated in our Lord's time; one Judas of Galilee having taught the unlawfulness of paying the taxes, and gathered a numerous faction, especially among the common people. The priests, therefore, imagined it was not in his power to decide the point, without making himself obnoxious to some of the parties who had divided upon it. If he should say it was lawful to pay the taxes, they believed the people, in whose hearing the question was proposed, would be incensed against him, not only as a base pretender, who, on being attacked publicly, renounced the character of the Messiah that was expected to deliver the people from foreign servitude, but as a flatterer of princes also, and a betrayer of the liberties of his country, one that taught doctrines inconsistent with the known privileges of the people of God. But if he should affirm that it was unlawful to pay, the Herodians resolved to inform the governor of it, who they hoped would punish him as a fomentor of sedition. [Matt. xxii. 18—22.] "Jesus, however, perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then saith he unto them," since, by the use of Cæsar's coin, you acknowledge his authority, "render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things which are God's. When they had heard these things, they marvelled at his wisdom, and left him, and went their way."

The Pharisees and Herodians being thus repulsed, the Sadducees resolved, the same day, to try the success of their subtilty.

[Luke xx. 27—33.] "And they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. There were therefore seven brethren; and the first took a wife, and died without children. And the second took her to wife: and he died childless. And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also. And they left no children, and died. Last of all the woman died also. Therefore, in the resurrection, (here the word evidently signifies a future state simply,) whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife." As the Sadducees believed the soul to be nothing but a more refined kind of matter, they thought if there was any future state, it must resemble the present; and that men being in that state material and mortal, the human race could not be continued, nor the individuals made happy, without the pleasures and conveniencies of marriage. Hence they affirmed it to be a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the resurrection or future state, that every man's wife should be restored to him. This argument Jesus confuted by telling the Sadducees, that they were ignorant of the power of

God, who has created spirit as well as matter, and who can make men completely happy in the enjoyment of himself. He observed farther, that the nature of the life obtained in the future state makes marriage altogether superfluous; because, in the world to come, men, being spiritual and immortal like the angels, there is no need of procreation to propagate or continue the kind. [Matt. xxii. 29.] “Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.” [Luke xx. 34.] “The children of this world, the inhabitants of this world, marry, and are given in marriage. But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage. Neither can they die any more; for they are equal unto the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.” They, in some degree, partake of the felicity and immortality of God himself, blessings which they obtain by being raised from the dead. From this latter clause it is plain that our Lord is here speaking of the resurrection of the just, who are called God’s children on account of the inheritance bestowed on them at the resurrection, and particularly on account of their being dignified with immortality.

Having thus demonstrated that they were ignorant of the power of God, Jesus showed the Sadducees that they were ignorant of the scriptures likewise, and particularly of the writings of Moses, from whence they had drawn their objection: for out of the law itself he demonstrated the certainty of a resurrection, at least, of just men, and thereby quite overturned the opinion of the Sadducees, who, believing the materiality of the soul, affirmed that men were annihilated at death, and that the writings of Moses supported their opinion. His argument was this: as a man cannot be a father without children, nor a king without subjects, so God cannot properly be called God, unless he has his people, and be Lord of the living. Since, therefore, in the law he calls himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, long after these patriarchs were dead, the relation denoted by the word God still subsisted between them; for which reason, they were not annihilated, as the Sadducees pretended, when they affirmed that they were dead, but were still in being, God’s subjects, and covenanted people.

Perceiving that the Sadducees were thus silenced, one of the scribes inquired of Christ, [Matt. xxii. 36—40.] “saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind: this is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Mark informs us that the scribe declared his full approbation to this answer. [Mark xii. 32—34.] “And the scribe said unto him, Well,

Master, thou hast said the truth; for there is one God, and there is none other but he. And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question."

The Pharisees having, in the course of our Lord's ministry, proposed many difficult questions to him with a view to try his prophetic gifts, he, in his turn, now that a body of them was gathered together, thought fit to make trial of their skill in the sacred writings. For this purpose, he publicly asked their opinion of a difficulty concerning Messiah's pedigree, arising from the hundred and tenth Psalm. [Matt. xxii. 41.] "While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. [Mark xii. 35.] And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?" The words in Mark being a reply to the Pharisees' answer recorded by Matthew, their meaning is, I know your doctors tell you that Christ is the Son of David; but how can they support their opinion, and render it consistent with David's words in the hundred and tenth Psalm? [Mark xii. 36.] "For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool. [Matt. xxii. 45.] If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" The doctors, it seems, did not look for any thing in their Messiah more excellent than the most exalted perfections of human nature; for though they called him the Son of God, they had no notion that he was God, and so could offer no solution of the difficulty. Yet the latter question might have showed them their error: for if Messiah was to be only a secular prince, as they supposed, ruling the men of his own time, he never could have been called Lord by persons who died before he was born; far less would so mighty a king as David, who also was his progenitor, have called him Lord. Wherefore, since he rules over, not the vulgar dead only of former ages, but even over the kings, from whom he was himself descended; and his kingdom comprehends the men of all countries and times, past, present, and to come; the doctors, if they had thought accurately upon the subject, should have expected in their Messiah a king different from all other kings whatever. Besides, he is to sit at God's right hand, "till his enemies are made the footstool of his feet," made thoroughly subject unto him. Numbers of Christ's enemies are subjected to him in this life; and they who will not bow to him willingly, shall, like the rebellious subjects of other kingdoms, be reduced by punishment. Being constituted universal

Judge, all, whether friends or enemies, shall appear before his tribunal, where, by the highest exercise of kingly power, he shall doom each to his unchangeable state.

The disputations and conversations which Jesus had with the literati afforded great entertainment to all the common people who happened to be present in the temple. [Mark xii. 37.] "And the common people heard him gladly:" they heard him with great attention and pleasure. For the clear and solid answers which he returned to the ensnaring questions of his foes gave them an high opinion of his wisdom, and showed them how far he was superior to their most renowned rabbies, whose arguments to prove their opinions, and answers to the objections that were raised against them, were, generally speaking, but mean and trifling in comparison of his. [Matt. xxii. 46.] "And no man was able to answer him a word:" none of them could propose the least shadow of a solution to the difficulty which he had proposed; "neither durst any man from that day forth, ask him any more questions." The repeated proofs which they had received of the prodigious depth of his understanding, impressed them with such an opinion of his wisdom, that they judged it impossible to entangle him in his talk: for which reason they left off attempting it, and from that day forth troubled him no more with their insidious questions.

Thus did our Lord silence his most virulent opposers; and following up his blow, solemnly admonished the people to beware of the scribes and Pharisees, to practise indeed whatever duty they proved from the law, but by no means to take their conduct as an example for imitation. He charged these hypocrites, especially, with doing every thing to be seen of men; and, for this purpose, making broad their phylacteries, (certain slips of parchment containing portions of the law, which they wore upon their foreheads and their arms, and enlarging the borders of their garments, (or, as Michaelis renders it, the tassels which hung at the four corners of their mantle,) in pretended conformity to Deut. xxii. 12, with loving the uppermost rooms at feasts, the chief seats in the synagogue, and the high sounding titles of rabbi and master. Concerning these titles, which the disciples of Jesus were exhorted to avoid, Dr. Campbell makes the following pertinent observations.

"I propose now to make a few observations on the word teacher, and some other titles of respect current in Judea in the days of our Saviour. After the Babylonish captivity, when Jerusalem and the temple were rebuilt, and the people restored to their ancient possessions, care was taken, under the conduct of Ezra, and those who succeeded him in the administration of affairs, to prevent their relapsing into idolatry, which had brought such accumulated calamities on their country. It was justly considered as one of the first expedients for answering

this end, as we learn partly from scripture, and partly from Jewish writers, to promote amongst all ranks the knowledge of God and of his law, and to excite the whole people throughout the land to join regularly in the public worship of the only true God. For their accommodation, synagogues came, in process of time, to be erected in every city and village, where a sufficient number of people could be found to make a congregation. Every synagogue had its stated governors and president, that the service might be decently conducted, and that the people might be instructed in the sacred writings both of the law and the prophets. The synagogues were fitted for answering among them the like purposes with parish churches amongst us christians: but this was not all. That the synagogues might be provided with knowing pastors and wise rulers, it was necessary that there should also be public seminaries or schools, wherein those who were destined to teach others were to be taught themselves. And so great was their veneration for these schools or colleges, that they accounted them more sacred than even synagogues, and next, in this respect, to the temple. They maintained, that a synagogue might lawfully be converted into a school, but not a school into a synagogue. The former was ascending, the latter descending. Both were devoted to the service of God; but the synagogue, say they, is for the spiritual nourishment of their sheep, the school, for that of the shepherds.

‘ Now their schools were properly what we should call divinity colleges; for in them they were instructed in the sacred language, the ancient Hebrew not being then the language of the country; in the law, and the traditions; the writings of the prophets; the holy ceremonies; the statutes, customs, and procedure of their judicatories; in a word, in whatever concerned the civil constitution and religion of their country. I make this distinction of civil and religious more in conformity to modern and christian notions, than in reference to ancient and Jewish. In that polity these were so interwoven, or rather blended, as to be inseparable. Their law was their religion, and their religion was their law; insomuch, that with them there was a perfect coincidence in the professions of lawyer and divine. But as to their mode of education, that they had some kind of schools long before the time above mentioned, even from the beginning of their establishment under Joshua in the land of Canaan, or, at least, from the time of Samuel, can hardly be made a question. A certain progress in letters had been made very early by this people, and regularly transmitted from one generation to another. But this seems evidently to have been without such fixed seminaries as were erected and endowed afterwards; else it is impossible there should be so little notice of them in so long a tract of time, of which, as far as religion is concerned, we have a history pretty particular.

All that appears before the captivity on this subject is, that numbers of young men were wont, for the sake of instruction, to attend the most eminent prophets, and were therefore called the sons, that is, the disciples of the prophets; and that, in this manner, were constituted a sort of ambulatory schools for communicating the knowledge of letters and of the law. In these were, probably, taught the elements of the Hebrew music and versification. We are informed also that Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, sent priests, Levites, and others, to teach in all the cities of Judah. But this appears to have been merely a temporary measure, adapted, by that pious monarch, for the instruction of the people in his own time, and not an establishment which secured a succession and continuance. Now this is quite different from the erection that obtained afterwards, in their cities, of a sort of permanent academies, for the education of the youth destined for the upper stations in society.

‘ Those who belonged to the school were divided into three classes or orders. The lowest was that of the disciples, or learners; the second, that of the fellows, or companions, those who, having made considerable progress in learning, were occasionally employed, by the masters, in teaching the younger students. The highest was that of the preceptors, or teachers, to whom they appropriated the respectful title of doctor, or rabbi, which differs from rab only by the addition of the affix pronoun of the first person. All belonging to the school were accounted honourable in a certain degree. Even the lowest, the name disciple, was considered as redounding to the honour of those youths who were selected from the multitude, had the advantage of a learned education, and, by their diligence and progress, gave hopes that they would one day fill with credit the most important stations. The title companion, fellow, or associate, was considered as very honourable to the young graduate who obtained it, being a public testimony of the proficiency he made in his studies. And the title rabbi was their highest academical honour.

‘ Hence we may discover the reason why our Lord, when warning his disciples against imitating the ostentation and presumption of the scribes and Pharisees, in affecting to be denominated rabbi, father, guide, or conductor, does not once mention kyrios, sir, though of all titles of respect the most common. It is manifest, that his view was not to prohibit them from giving or receiving the common marks of civility, but to check them from arrogating what might seem to imply a superiority in wisdom and understanding over others, and a title to dictate to their fellows a species of arrogance, which appeared but too plainly in the scribes and learned men of those days. As to the title kyrios, he knew well that, from their worldly situation and circumstances, (which, in this matter, were the only rule,) they could expect it from none but those in the lowest ranks, who

would as readily give it to an artizan or a peasant, and that therefore there could be no danger or vanity from this quarter. But the case was different with titles, expressive, not of fleeting relations, but of these important qualifications which denote a fitness for being the lights and conductors of the human race. The title of father, in the spiritual or metaphorical sense, the most respectful of all, he prohibits his disciples from either assuming or giving, choosing that it should be appropriated to God; and, at the same time, claims the title of guide and spiritual instructor to himself.

The above discourse against the scribes and Pharisees was pronounced in the hearing of many of the order. They were, therefore, greatly incensed, and watched for an opportunity to destroy Jesus: but it was not a time for him now to be afraid of them. This being the last sermon he was ever to preach in public, it was necessary to use violent remedies, especially as gentle medicines had hitherto proved ineffectual. Wherefore, with a kind severity, he threatened them in the most awful and solemn manner, denouncing dreadful woes against them, not on account of the personal injuries they had done to him, although they were many, but on account of their excessive wickedness. They were public teachers of religion, who abused every mark and character of goodness to all the purposes of villany, than which a more atrocious sin in the sight of God cannot be perpetrated. Under the grimace of a severe sanctified air, they were malicious, implacable, lewd, covetous, and rapacious. In a word, instead of being reformers, they were corrupters of mankind; so that their wickedness being of the very worst sort, it deserved the sharpest rebuke that could be given. The woes are denounced against the scribes for the following reasons: 1. Because they shut up the kingdom of heaven from men, by taking away "the key of knowledge," as it is called in the parallel passage, [Luke xi. 52.] on the right interpretation of the ancient prophecies concerning Messiah, by their example and authority; for they both rejected Jesus themselves, and excommunicated those who did not: in short, by doing all they could to hinder the people from repenting of their sins and believing the gospel. 2. Because they committed the grossest iniquities, being covetous and rapacious; under a cloak of religion, they devoured widows' houses; and, at the same time, made long prayers in order to hide their villany. This, says Calvin, was as if, pretending to kiss the feet of God, one should rise up and audaciously spit in his face. 3. Because they expressed the greatest zeal imaginable in making proselytes, "compassing sea and land," that is, making long journeys and voyages, and leaving no art unpractised for that end; while, at the same time, their intention in all this was not that the Gentiles might become better men through the knowledge of true religion, but more friendly to them, yielding them the direction

of their purses as well as of their consciences. Accordingly, in the heathen countries, these worldlings accommodated religion to the humours of men, placing it, not in the eternal and immutable rules of righteousness, but in ceremonial observances; the effect of which was, either that their proselytes became more superstitious, more immoral, and more presumptuous, than their teachers; or that, taking them for impostors, they relapsed again into their old state of heathenism; and, in both cases, became "two-fold more the children of hell" than even the Pharisees themselves, that is more openly and unlimitedly wicked than they. 4. For their false doctrine. He mentioned particularly their doctrine concerning oaths, and declared, in opposition to their execrable tenets, that every oath is obligatory, the matter of which is lawful; because when men swear by the creature, if their oath has any meaning, it is an appeal to the Creator himself. In any other light, an oath by the creature is absolutely ridiculous, because the creature neither has knowledge with respect to the matter of the oath, nor power to punish the perjury. 5. For their superstition. They observed the ceremonial precepts of the law with all possible exactness, while they utterly neglected the eternal, immutable, indispensable, rules of righteousness. 6. For their hypocrisy. They were at great pains to appear virtuous, and to have a decent external conduct, while they neglected to beautify their inward man with goodness, which, in the sight of God, is an ornament of great price, and which renders men dear and valuable to all who know them. 7. For the success of their hypocrisy. By their care of external appearances, the Pharisees and scribes made a fair show, and deceived the simple. Like fine whited sepulchres, they looked very beautiful without, but within were full of all uncleanness, and defiled every one that touched them. They were publicly decent, but privately dissolute: and under the appearance of religion, were, in reality, the worst of men. 8. Because, by the pains they took in adorning the sepulchres of the prophets, they pretended a great veneration for their memory; and, as often as they happened to be mentioned, condemned their fathers who had killed them, declaring that if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they would have opposed their wickedness; while, in the mean time, they still cherished the spirit of their fathers, persecuting the messengers of God, particularly his only Son, on whose destruction they were resolutely bent. Therefore they were threatened, that upon them should come all the temporal judgments which were due in return for the righteous blood which had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom they slew between the temple and the altar. This passage is attended with difficulties, which a learned writer thus discusses and endeavours to remove.

Now it appears from 2 Chron. xxiv. 20—22, that Zacharias who was slain between the temple and the altar was the son, not of Barachias, but of Jehoiada; consequently if the account in the Chronicles be accurate, the reading Barachias at Matt. xxiii. 35, cannot be the true reading. Some commentators have had recourse to the supposition, that Jehoiada and Barachias were different names of the same person; but this assertion is wholly incapable of proof, and is in itself highly improbable. Wetstein conjectures that St. Matthew purposely avoided the use of the word Jehoiada, because it contained in it the abbreviated name of Jehovah, and therefore substituted Barachia. But this caution was confined only to the number fifteen, which, it is true, the Jews never noted by Jod He, though Jod is ten, and He is five. And even if this reverence extended to proper names, Wetstein's solution would be unsatisfactory; for, in the Hebrew, these two letters occur together in Barachia as well as in Jehoiada. That Zacharias, the eleventh of the minor prophets, who was the son of Barachias, was murdered, we read no where; and it is not probable that two different persons named Zacharias should both of them have been murdered under the very same circumstances. But if we admit that the eleventh of the minor prophets fell a sacrifice to the Jews as well as the son of Jehoiada, yet Christ would rather have instanced the son of Jehoiada, because the murder of this person was not only particularly known, but was supposed to call aloud for vengeance. The blood, therefore, of this Zacharias was more properly mentioned with the blood of Abel, than the blood of another Zacharias, whose murder, even if he did fall a victim, was unknown. Now at this passage Jerom relates, that the Hebrew gospel of the Nazarenes read Zacharia the son of Jehoiada. Others suppose that neither of the names were inserted in the original, but that the name of Barachias was interpolated from the margin of the Greek, as that of Jehoiada might be into the Hebrew gospel.

Our Lord then renewed the lamentation over Jerusalem which has been recorded in a former chapter.

This, Dr. Macknight observes, is by far the most spirited of all our Lord's discourses; and being pronounced, no doubt, with an elevation of voice and vehemence of gesture suitable to the sentiments which it expressed, it could not but astonish the people, who had always looked upon their teachers as the holiest of men. Even the persons themselves against whom it was levelled were confounded, their consciences witnessing the truth of what was laid to their charge. They knew not what course to take; and so in the midst of their hesitation they let Jesus go away quietly, without attempting to lay hands on him, or stone him, as they had sometimes done before upon much less provocation.

Jesus, being now in the treasury, in which were placed thir-

teen chests to receive the offerings of the people, observed, with peculiar satisfaction, a certain poor widow who put in two mites, which was the whole of her earning for the day, or, perhaps, of the money which she had then at command.

He now went out of the temple; when his disciples showed him with what large and beautiful stones the eastern wall, which fronted mount Olivet, was built. And Jesus answering, said unto them, "The days will come, in which there shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Accordingly Josephus informs us, that Titus, having held a council of his generals who were for burning the temple, declared that he would, by all means, save that edifice as an ornament to the empire. But one greater than Titus had determined and declared that it should be destroyed. Accordingly the soldiers burnt it without paying any regard to his orders. So Josephus informs us, Bell. 7. 10, where giving a particular account of the destruction of the temple, which was the first part of the city that was taken by the Romans, he says, that 'one of the soldiers, moved by a divine impetus, caught some burning materials, and, mounting the shoulder of his companion, thrust the fire in at one of the windows.' The fire, spreading itself, was observed by Titus, who cried to the soldiers to extinguish it; but they regarded neither his voice, nor the beckoning of his hand. God had determined to destroy this temple, and therefore the counsels and designs even of Titus himself, the instrument of this destruction, availed nothing to preserve it. The Jewish Talmud and Maimonides add, 'that Turnus (i. e. Terentius) Rufus, one of Titus's captains, did, with a plough-share, tear up the foundations of the temple.' So exactly was this passage of our Lord's prophecy fulfilled.

He now delivered a prediction of considerable length concerning the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, which has been very circumstantially fulfilled. The most complete elucidation we can give of it is to recite the text, and annex to it certain notes from Macknight which tend greatly to illustrate it.

[Matt. xxiv. 3.] "And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us when shall these things be, and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world."

Because the disciples joined their Master's coming and the end of the world with the demolition of the temple, this prophecy has commonly been thought to foretell the destruction of the world also. And, in support of this opinion, it is alleged, that the disciples connected the two events together, because they fancied the temple could not fall unless in the ruins of the world; but they must certainly have known that Solomon's building had been destroyed by the Babylonians, though erected by the appointment of God, and dignified with the Shechinah,

or visible symbol of the divine presence. If so, they could hardly think that a temple so much inferior, both in the greatness of its privileges and the beauty of its fabric, was not to perish unless in the desolation of the world. In the second place: according to this interpretation of the prophecy, Jesus hath declared, with the greatest solemnity, a thing which no person could be ignorant of. For who did not know that, with the world, Herod's temple and all other buildings should crumble into pieces? In the third place: our Lord himself has forbidden us to understand any part of this prophecy primarily of the destruction of the world: having connected all its parts in such a manner, that the things foretold, whatever they are, must have happened in close succession. [Matt. xxiv. 29.] "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened," &c. [Mark xiii. 24.] "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened," &c. Besides, at the conclusion of the whole, he declared that the generation of men then in being should not die till it was fulfilled. [Matt. xxiv. 34.] "Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass till all be fulfilled." For any interpreter to correct Christ's language here, and say that in the former passage immediately after signifies two or three thousand years after; and that in the latter, all these things signify only some of them, is a liberty which cannot be safely taken with his words. It ought also to be remarked, that the passage here translated end of the world, may be rendered the end of the age or dispensation preceding the Messiah.

"And he said, take heed that ye be not deceived, for many," referring to Simon Magus, Dositheus, and others, "shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, such as that which terrified the Jews when they were threatened with destruction by Caligula, for not admitting his image within the temple; "see that ye be not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places." Luke adds, that there should be "fearful sights and great signs from heaven." The prediction that nation should rise up against nation was fulfilled by the wars of the Jews among themselves, and of the Romans with the Syrians, Samaritans, and other neighbouring nations, before Jerusalem was destroyed.

In the time of Claudius and Nero, there were great earthquakes at Crete, Smyrna, Miletus, Chios, Samos, Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colosse, in all which places the Jews lived. Thus were there earthquakes in divers places. Moreover, there were judgments of this kind in Judea likewise; for Josephus tells us,

Bell. 4. 7, "There happened there an immense tempest and vehement winds, with rain, and frequent lightnings, and dreadful thunderings, and extreme roarings of the quaking earth, which demonstrated to all that the world was disturbed at the destruction of men."

The famine in the reign of Claudius, which afflicted Judea in particular, is well known. It is mentioned Acts xi. 28. It is taken notice of likewise by Suetonius Claudius, c. 18; and by Dio. Josephus tells us many perished in it, Ant. xx. 2.

That Judea was afflicted with pestilence likewise, we learn from Josephus, who tells us, Bell. 5. 1, that one Niger, being put to death by the seditious, imprecated pestilence upon them, which came to pass. Farther, concerning the pestilence and famine Josephus writes thus: 'Being assembled together from all parts to the feast of unleavened bread, presently, and on a sudden, they were environed with war; and, first of all, a plague fell upon them by reason of the straitness of the place, and immediately after a famine worse than it.' Besides, in the progress of the siege, the number of the dead, and the stench arising from their unburied carcasses, must have infected the air, and occasioned pestilence. For Josephus tells us, that there were no less than six hundred thousand dead bodies carried out of the city and suffered to lie unburied.

Of the fearful sights and great signs from heaven Josephus has given us a particular account. 'There was a comet in the form of a fiery sword, which, for a year together, did hang over the city. Before the first revolt and war, the people being gathered together to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth of April, at the ninth hour of the night, there was as much light about the altar and temple as if it had been bright day. This remained half an hour. At the same festival, the inner gate of the temple on the east side, being of massy brass, which required at least twenty men to shut it, was seen, at midnight, to open of its own accord. Not long after the feasts, on the twenty-first of May, there was seen a vision beyond all belief; and perhaps what I am going to relate might seem a fable, if some were not now alive who beheld it, and if the subsequent calamity had not been worthy of such a pre-sage. For before the sun set, were seen in the air chariots and armies in battle array, passing along in the clouds, and investing the city. And upon the feast of Pentecost, at night, the priests, going into the inner temple to attend their wonted service, said they first felt the place to move and tremble, after that they heard a voice which said, Let us depart hence. But that which was most wonderful of all was, one Jesus, the son of Ananus, of the common people, four years before the war began, when the city flourished in peace and riches, coming to the celebration of the feast of tabernacles at Jerusalem, suddenly began to cry out thus: A voice from the east and from the west,

a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against men and women newly married, a voice against all this people. And thus crying day and night, he went about all the streets of the city.' Josephus adds, that 'he was scourged by some of the nobility; but without speaking a word for himself, he persevered crying as before; that he was carried before Albinus the Roman general, who caused him to be beaten till his bones appeared, but that he neither entreated nor wept; but as well as he could, framing a weeping voice, he cried at every stroke, woe to Jerusalem;' that he went thus crying, chiefly upon holy days, for the space of seven years and five months, till, in the time of the siege, beholding what he had foretold, he ceased. And that once again, going about the city on the wall, 'he cried with a loud voice, woe, woe, to the city, temple, and people; and lastly he said, woe also to myself: which words were no sooner uttered, than a stone thrown out of an engine smote him, and so he yielded up the ghost, lamenting them all.'

"All these are the beginning of sorrows. Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake: and then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another." Luke has it, "But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake, and it shall turn out to you for a testimony; settle it therefore in your hearts not to meditate before what ye shall answer. For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist." How fully the particulars foretold in this verse were accomplished, we learn even from the Roman historians, Tacitus and Suetonius, who have given an account of the persecution raised against the christians by Nero. But the history of the Acts will throw the greatest light on this passage. For there we are told, that immediately after our Lord's ascension, Peter and John were called before the Jewish senate, [iv. 6, 7.] and beaten, [v. 40.] That Stephen was brought before the same court, [vi. 12.] and put to death, [vii. 58.] That Saul made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison, [viii. 3.] and punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, persecuted them unto strange cities, [xxvi. 11.] That James was brought before Herod, and by him put to death, [xii. 2.] That the same prince laid Peter in prison, intending to kill him likewise, [xii. 4.] That Paul, formerly himself a persecutor, but now converted, was, in his turn, frequently persecuted: that he and Silas were imprisoned and beaten in the synagogue of Philippi, [xvi. 23.] That he was brought

before the great synagogue or senate of the Jews in Jerusalem, [xxii. 30.] before king Agrippa and his wife; before the Roman governors, Gallio, Felix, and Festus; and last of all, before the emperor Nero in Rome, and his præfect, Helius Caesarianus.

“And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound,” as was particularly the case in Judea before the destruction of Jerusalem, “the love of many shall wax cold. But he that endureth unto the end, the same shall be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end of this dispensation come.” The fulfilment of this part of the prophecy we learn chiefly from the writings of the New Testament, which informs us that the gospel was preached by St. Paul in Arabia, and through the vast tract from Jerusalem to Iconium, in Lyconia, and in Galatia, and through all Asia Minor, and in Greece, and round about Illyricum, and in Crete, and Italy; probably, also, in Spain and Gaul. Besides, the gospel reached much farther than this apostle carried it; for we find him writing to christians who had never seen his face. Also we have still remaining Peter’s epistles to the converted Jews in Pontus, Asia, Cappadocia, and Bithynia. Probably the gospel was preached in these and many other countries by the Jews who sojourned there, and who, having come up to Jerusalem at the passover, were converted on the day of Pentecost. The Ethiopian eunuch converted by Philip would carry it likewise into his country. But whatever way it happened, the fact is certain, that in most of these countries churches were planted within thirty years after Christ’s death, or about ten years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Hence we find the apostle telling the Romans, [x. 18.] that the sound of the preachers of the gospel “had gone forth into all the world, and their word to the end of the earth.” Hence, likewise, he tells the church in Rome, chap. i. that “their faith was spoken throughout the whole world,” and the church at Colosse, [i. 6. 23.] that “the truth of the gospel was come not to them only, but to all the world, being preached to every creature.” Hence, also, when Mark wrote his gospel, the apostles had gone forth, and preached every where. [xvi. 20.] The preaching of the gospel through the whole world by twelve illiterate fishermen, and the destruction of Jerusalem, were events extremely improbable, and therefore the prediction and accomplishment of them deserve to be particularly taken notice of; and the rather that they were both absolutely necessary for bringing about the conversion of the world to christianity, and are mentioned in this prophecy as such.

Our Lord, having foretold both the remote and the more immediate signs of the end of the Jewish economy, proceeds to

describe the siege and destruction of Jerusalem. "When therefore ye shall see the abomination of desolation," the Roman armies with their idolatrous standards, stand in the holy place, or, as Luke expresses it, "When ye shall see Jerusalem encompassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let them which are in the midst of it depart out, and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house: neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes; and woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days. But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter," when travelling speedily is almost impossible; "neither on the sabbath-day," when you will think it unlawful.

The admonition to them who were in the midst of Jerusalem to depart out, and to them that were in the countries not to enter thereinto, shows that the encompassing Jerusalem with armies, spoken of in the prophecy, was such as would permit the inhabitants to flee out of it, and those that were in the countries to enter into it. Behold here the wonderful prescience of the author of the christian religion. Cestius Gallus in the beginning of the war, invested Jerusalem, and took Bethesa, or the lower town. Josephus says 'if he had continued the siege but a little longer, he would have taken the city. But I think that God, being angry with the wicked, would not suffer the war to be ended at that time. For Cestius removed his army, and having received no loss, very unadvisedly departed from the city.' This conduct of the Roman general, so contrary to all the rules of prudence, was doubtless brought to pass by the providence of God, who interposed in this manner for the deliverance of the disciples of his Son. Accordingly Josephus tells us, that 'immediately after Cestius's departure, many of the principal Jews daily fled from the city, as from a sinking ship.' Among these we may believe there were numbers of the christians, who, remembering their Master's admonition, foresaw what was to happen. Embracing, therefore, the opportunity afforded them by Cestius's departure, they fled out of Judea, and so escaped the general ruin, as their Master had promised them. [Matt. xxiv. 13. Luke xxi. 18.] To this agrees what Eusebius tells us, Hist. 3. 5, 'That the people of the church in Jerusalem, being ordered by an oracle given to the faithful in that place by revelation, left the city before the war, and dwelt in a city of Perca, the name of which was Pella.' Eusebius seems to say, that the christians were warned to fly by a particular revelation given them at that time. With him Epiphanes agrees: who, speaking of the same event, says, "that the christians in Jerusalem were admonished of its destruction by an angel." Nevertheless, the oracle, or divine

admonition, of which these authors speak, seems rather to have been our Lord's prophecy and admonition, to which every circumstance of the history perfectly agrees.

"For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world, no, nor ever shall be." Never had words a more sad or full accomplishment than these. For the miseries which befell this people about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were such as no history can parallel. Within the city, the fury of the opposite factions was so great, that they filled all places, and even the temple itself, with continual slaughter. Nay, to such a pitch did their madness arise, that they destroyed the very granaries of corn which should have sustained them, and burnt the magazines of arms which should have defended them. By this means, when the siege had lasted but two months, the famine began to rage, and at length reduced them to such straits, that the barbarities which they practised are not to be imagined. Even the mothers ate their own children. In short, from the beginning of the siege to the taking of the city there were slain by faction, by famine, by pestilence, and by the enemy, no less than eleven hundred thousand in Jerusalem. So that, as Josephus himself observes in his preface to the history of this war, 'If all the calamities which the world, from the beginning, hath seen, were compared with those of the Jews, they would appear inferior.' And that the peculiar hand of providence was visible in this destruction of the nation, the same author affirms. For, having described the vast multitudes of people that were in Jerusalem when it was besieged, he says, 'this multitude was assembled together from other places, and was there, by the providence of God, shut up, as it were, in a prison.' Besides, he tells us that Titus himself took notice, that the Jews were urged on by God himself to their destruction.

"And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and such of them as remain shall be led away captive unto all nations." The fulfilment of this part of the prophecy we have, Bell. 7. 16, where Josephus describes the sacking of the city. 'And now, rushing into every lane, they slew whomsoever they found without distinction, and burnt the houses, and all the people that had fled into them. And when they entered for the sake of plunder, they found whole families of dead persons, and houses full of carcasses destroyed by famine, then they came out with their hands empty. And though they thus pitied the dead, they did not feel the same emotion for the living, but killed all they met, whereby they filled the lanes with dead bodies. The whole city ran with blood, insomuch that many things which were burned were extinguished by the blood.' Thus were the inhabitants of Jerusalem slain with the sword; thus was she laid even with the ground, and her children with her. 'The soldiers being now wearied with killing the Jews,

and yet a great number remaining alive, Cæsar commanded that only the armed and they who resisted should be slain. But the soldiers killed also the old and the infirm; and taking the young and the strong prisoners, carried them into the women's court in the temple. Cæsar appointed one Fronto, his freed-man and friend, to guard them, and to determine the fate of each. All the robbers and the seditious he slew, one of them betraying another. But picking out such youths as were remarkable for stature and beauty, he reserved them for the triumph. All the rest that were above seventeen years of age were slain; and, during the time Fronto judged them, a thousand died of hunger.' Chap. 17, 'Now the number of the captives that were taken during the time of the war was ninety-seven thousand; and of all that died and were slain, eleven hundred thousand, and most of them Jews by nation, though not inhabitants of the place; for, being assembled together from all parts to the feast of unleavened bread, of a sudden they were environed with war.' Thus were the Jews led away captive into all nations. However, the falling by the edge of the sword mentioned in the prophecy, is not to be confined to what happened at the siege. It comprehended all the slaughters that were made of the Jews in the different battles, and sieges, and massacres, both in their own land, and out of it, during the whole course of the war: such as at Alexandria, where fifty thousand perished; at Cæsarea, ten thousand; at Scythopolis, thirteen thousand; at Damascus, ten thousand; at Ascalon, ten thousand; at Apheck, fifteen thousand; upon Gerozin, eleven thousand; and at Jotapata, thirty thousand. And thus was verified what our Lord told his disciples the first time he uttered his prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, that wherever the carcass was, there the eagles should be gathered together. [Luke xvii. 37.]

"And Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times" determined in the council of God for the conversion "of the Gentiles be fulfilled." The accomplishment of this part of the prophecy, as indeed of every article of it, is wonderful. For when the Jews were almost utterly destroyed by death and captivity, Vespasian commanded the whole land of Judea to be sold. Bell. 7. 26. 'At that time Cæsar wrote to Bassus, and to Liberius Maximus the procurator, to sell the whole land of the Jews; for he did not build any city there, but appropriated their country to himself, leaving there only eight hundred soldiers, and giving them a place to dwell in, called Emmaus, thirty stadia from Jerusalem; and he imposed a tribute upon all the Jews wheresoever they lived, commanding every one of them to bring two drachmas into the capital, according, as in former times, they were wont to pay unto the temple of Jerusalem. And this was the state of the Jews at this time.' Thus was Jerusalem, in particular, with

its territory, possessed by the Gentiles, becoming Vespasian's property, who sold it to such Gentiles who chose to settle there. That Jerusalem continued in this desolate state we learn from Dio; for he tells us that the emperor Adrian rebuilt it, sent a colony thither to inhabit it, and called it *Ælia*. But he altered its situation, leaving out Sion and Bethza, and enlarging it so as to comprehend Calvary, where our Lord was crucified. Moreover, Euschius informs us, that Adrian made a law, that no Jew should enter into the region around Jerusalem. So that the Jews being banished, such a number of aliens came into Jerusalem, that it became a city and colony of the Romans. In latter times, when Julian apostatized to heathenism, being sensible that the evident accomplishment of our Lord's prophecies concerning the Jewish nation made a strong impression upon the Gentiles, and was a principal means of their conversion, he resolved to deprive christianity of this support, by bringing the Jews to occupy their own land, and by allowing them the exercise of their religion, and of a form of civil government. For this purpose he resolved to rebuild Jerusalem, to people it with Jews, and to rear up the temple on its ancient foundations, because there only he knew they would offer prayers and sacrifices. In the prosecution of this design, he wrote a letter to the community of the Jews, which is still extant among his other works, inviting them to return to their native country; and, for their encouragement, he says to them among other things, 'the holy city Jerusalem, which, of many years, ye have desired to see inhabited, I will rebuild by mine own labour and will inhabit it.' And now the emperor, having made great preparations, began the execution of his scheme with rebuilding the temple; but his workmen were soon obliged to desist, by an immediate and evident interposition of God. Take an account of this matter in the words of Ammianus Marcellinus, an heathen historian, and therefore an author of unsuspected credit. 'He resolved to build, at an immense expense, a certain lofty temple at Jerusalem; and gave it in charge to Alypius of Antioch, who had formerly governed in Britain, to hasten the work. When, therefore, Alypius, with great earnestness, applied himself to the execution of this business, and the governor of the province assisted him in it, terrible balls of fire, bursting forth near the foundation, with frequent explosions, and divers times burning the workmen, rendered the place inaccessible. Thus, the fire continually driving them away, the work ceased.' This fact is attested likewise by Zammuth David, a Jew, who honestly confesses that Julian was hindered by God in this attempt. It is attested, likewise, by Nazianzen and Chrysostom among the Greeks; by Ambrose and Ruffin among the Latins, who lived at the very time when the thing happened; by Theodoret and Sozomen of the orthodox persuasion; by Philistorgius, an Arian, in the extracts of

his history made by Photius; and by Socrates, a favourer of the Novatians, who wrote the history within the space of fifty years after the thing happened, and whilst the eye-witnesses thereof were yet alive.

The divinity of our Lord's prediction will still more clearly appear, if we add the fact known throughout all Europe and Asia at this day; namely, that the Jews are still exiles from their own country, and have continued to be so ever since Titus dispersed them. In former times, the Jews, after being led away captive, were re-established. Why, then, should this captivity have lasted so long? Why should the effects of Titus's fury be indelible? God decreed that it should be so; "Jerusalem is to be trodden of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" and no power in the universe can frustrate his decree. For this reason, likewise, though the Jews are at present, and have been, through the whole period of their dispersion, vastly more numerous than they ever were in the most happy times of their commonwealth, none of the many efforts which they made to recover their own country has proved successful. Moreover, while every dispersed people mentioned in history has been swallowed up of the nations among whom they were dispersed, without leaving the smallest trace of their ever having existed, the Jews continue, after so many ages, a distinct people in their dispersion. The universal contempt into which they are fallen, one should think, ought to have made them conceal whatever served to distinguish them, and prompted them to mix with the rest of mankind. But in fact it has not done so. The Jews in all countries, by openly separating from the nations who rule them, subject themselves to hatred and derision; nay, in several places, they have exposed themselves to death by bearing about with them the outward marks of their descent. By this unexampled constancy, they have preserved themselves a distinct people every where. But of this constancy, can any better account be given than that it is the means by which God verifies the prediction of his Son? He has declared, that when the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled, the Jews shall be converted; and therefore, through the whole course of their dispersion, they must continue a distinct people. If the hand of providence is not visible in these things, it is certainly to be discovered no where.

"And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved; but for the elect's sake," from the regard that God hath to his covenant people, whom he hath chosen, but who must have a share in these sufferings, "he hath shortened those days," not permitting them to be so long as the iniquity of the Jewish nation deserved.

"And then if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ, or there, believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, inso-

much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. Behold, I have told you before. Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth; behold, he is in the secret chambers, believe it not." Grotius and others think our Lord had Barchochebas in view here, because he expressly called himself Messiah, and pretended to work great miracles. Nevertheless, as the passage describes what was to happen about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, it cannot be applied to Barchochebas, who arose in the reign of Adrian, about sixty years after. Josephus tells us, that under the government of Felix, 'the whole country was full of magicians, who deceived the people.' In the same chapter, he says, 'The magicians and deceivers persuaded the common people to follow them into the wilderness, promising to show them evident signs and miracles done according to the counsel of God.' It seems, these impostors pretended that the miracles they were going to perform were those which God had predicted Messiah would perform. Perhaps they assumed the title directly, though Josephus, after the destruction of his nation, was ashamed to make any mention of Messiah at all, or of the prophecies relating to him. After the example of Moses, these false Christs appealed to the miracles which they pretended to perform in proof of their being sent to deliver the nation from slavery. Moreover, they commonly showed themselves in desert places; for the historian tells us they persuaded the common people to follow them thither, promising to work miracles there. This circumstance our Lord distinctly foretold. [Matt. xxiv. 26.] "If they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth." The following passage will show these things still more clearly, Bell. 2. 12, where, speaking of affairs under Felix, the historian says, "Impostors and deceivers, under pretence of inspiration, attempting innovations and changes, made the common people mad, and led them into the wilderness, promising them that God would there show them signs of liberty, i. e. miracles in proof that they should be delivered from the Roman yoke, and obtain their liberty. This was the benefit the nation expected from Messiah; and those deceivers who promised it to them were readily believed; for the common people daily expected that Messiah would appear, and put them in possession of universal empire. Every impostor, therefore, who assumed that character, and promised them deliverance, was quickly followed and obeyed. Hence the propriety of Josephus's observation, that the impostors made the common people mad.

Ant. xx. 2 *fine*. The same historian tells us, that "under the procuratorship of Tadius, a certain magician, named Thendas, persuaded a great many people to take all their goods and follow him to the river Jordan; for he said he was a prophet, and told them that the river would divide itself into two parts

at his command, and yield them a free passage.' This Theudas was a different person from him whom Gamaliel spake of [Acts v. 37]; for this latter appeared before Judas of Galilee arose in the days of the taxing.

Josephus having told how the Romans stormed and burnt the porch of the temple, in which six thousand Jews perished, concludes his relation thus: 'A certain false prophet was the cause of their death, who, the same day, preached in the city, and commanded them to go into the temple, and behold signs of their deliverance; for many false prophets were then suborned by the tyrants to persuade them to expect God's help.'

"For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." These verses have been already explained.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken." These are strong figurative expressions, indicating the destruction of the Jewish polity both civil and religious. That such is their meaning, will be seen by comparing this passage with the second chapter of Acts, nineteenth and twentieth verses. And it has been exactly fulfilled, in that the Jews have never since subsisted as a people, united under a form of government administered by themselves, and possessing their own country.

"And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven, and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." The sign from heaven which both the disciples and the Pharisees expected, was some visible appearance of Messiah in the clouds, and some miraculous interposition of his power, by which the Romans, the masters of the world, were to be destroyed, and an universal empire over all nations erected in behalf of the Jews. The sign they were led to expect, because Daniel had said prophetically of the Son of man, that he saw him coming in the clouds of heaven, and that there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom that all nations and languages should serve. Nevertheless, by the coming of the Son of man in the clouds, Daniel meant his interposing for the erection of his kingdom, and for the destruction of his enemies, particularly the unbelieving Jews; and by the kingdom over all nations, he meant a spiritual kingdom, a new dispensation of religion, the gospel, which should comprehend the world within its pale. Therefore, to show the disciples that they had mistaken the prophecy, which referred wholly to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the conversion of the Gentiles, he adopted it into his prediction of these events, and thereby settled its true meaning. The expression, coming in the clouds

of heaven, is understood to signify God's interposing evidently and irresistibly to execute vengeance on a wicked generation, and to assert his own government over the world. "And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other." These angels are believed to mean the apostles, and their first followers; and the prediction is considered as fulfilled in the rapid diffusion of the gospel about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem; "and when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption" from your Jewish persecutors "draweth nigh."

"Now learn a parable of the fig-tree; when his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh; So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, this generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." The observation of Eusebius deserves a place here. 'Whosoever (says he) shall compare the words of our Saviour with the history which Josephus has written of the war, cannot but admire the wisdom of Christ, and acknowledge his prediction to be divine.' For as the Jewish nation was at this time in the most flourishing state, the event here foretold was altogether improbable. Besides, the circumstances of the destruction mentioned in the prophecy are very numerous and surprisingly particular. The time when it was to be accomplished is expressly determined, being to happen before that generation died, and yet not till the gospel was preached to all nations, and the Jews had persecuted its preachers in the most violent manner. The language, also, in which the whole is conceived, is without the least ambiguity. It is, therefore, a prophecy of such a kind, as could not possibly be forged by an impostor. Nevertheless, the disciples did not then understand any part of it; which is the more to be wondered at, as it was both plain and particular, and had been delivered once before. [Luke xvii. 20.] Probably, they applied all the dreadful passages of it to the heathen nations, especially the Romans, whose ambition they thought would lead them to oppose the erection of their Master's kingdom with all the forces of their empire.

"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels that are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." It may seem strange that the Son, who declared that he would come before the generation then in being went off the stage, and who, in the prophecy, had been pointing out the various signs by which the disciples might foresee his approach, should not have known the day and the hour, or the particular time of his coming. This difficulty some endeavour to obviate, by supposing that our Lord spake of himself only as a man. But the

name Father following that of Son, shows that he spake of himself as the Son of God, and not as the Son of man. Besides, the gradation in the sentence seems to forbid this solution: for the Son being mentioned after the angels, and immediately before the Father, is thereby declared to be more excellent than they, which is not in respect of his human nature, and therefore he cannot be supposed to speak of himself in that nature. The proper translation of this passage, Dr. Macknight thinks, is, neither man, nor angel, nor even the Son himself, can reveal the day and hour of the destruction of Jerusalem to you, because the Father hath determined that it should not be revealed. The divine wisdom saw fit to conceal from the apostles the precise period of the destruction of Jerusalem, in order that they might be laid under a necessity of watching continually. And this vigilance was especially proper at that time, because the success of the gospel depended in a great measure upon the activity and exemplary lives of those who first published it.

Our Lord then repeats what he had before observed concerning the striking resemblance there should be between these days of desolation and those of Noah, and concerning the evident interposition of divine providence, for the preserving of one while another was taken. As this prophecy is the most remarkable that Christ ever delivered, and is considered as affording a very strong evidence in defence of the christian religion, the following remarks of Michaelis, which place the passage strongly in this point of view, will not, we conceive, be unacceptable to the reader.

It were a bold assertion, that by accident alone was fulfilled a prediction thus circumstantially delivered, and thus precise in limiting the period of its accomplishment. "Verily, I say unto you, this generation shall not pass away till all these things be fulfilled." Besides, the knowledge of it had been so industriously propagated by the apostles among the several communities, that the truth of this prediction seemed in a great manner to determine the truth of the religion, they would, therefore, hardly have ventured to expose both themselves and their sect to so dangerous a trial, had no such prophecy been given by Christ. Let it be objected, that human sagacity were sufficient to foresee that the misfortunes which had long threatened must at last fall upon the Jews, since the storm had been gathering at a distance, before it burst forth with violence; but precisely to determine, not only that series of events recorded by St. Matthew, but even the period of its accomplishment, is surely beyond the reach of human foresight. We may go still farther, and deny that human penetration could have foreseen, in that age, even the event itself, of which Josephus has written in his history of the Jewish war, would have followed, had not a number of unexpected, and, at that time, improbable, circumstances arisen, of which no one by human means, during the life

of Christ, or even the lives of St. Peter and St. Paul, could have had the smallest conception. The injustice of the Roman governors, which, at length, excited a general rebellion, did not arise to such a pitch as to become intolerable till long after the death of Christ: the administration of Pilate, compared with that of his successors, was virtuous; and the government also of these, when compared with that of Gessius Florus, the last procurator of Judea, whose cruelties drove the nation to despair, and who purposely forced them to an open rebellion, in order to avoid what the Jews had threatened, an accusation before the Roman emperor. This Florus was the successor of Albinus, and Albinus that of Festus, under whose administration St. Paul was sent prisoner to Rome. No political wisdom could have predicted these events so early as the crucifixion, or even during the period in which were written the apostolic epistles. The troops, likewise, which lay in garrison at Cæsarea, and afterwards fanned into an open flame the sparks of rebellion which seemed almost extinguished, had been commanded by the emperor Claudius to leave their native country, and march into Pontus, he intending to supply their place by a garrison more attached to Rome. Had this command been executed, it is probable that no Jewish war would have followed, and no destruction of Jerusalem. But they sent a suppliant embassy to Claudius, and obtained permission to remain. Josephus makes, on this occasion, the following remark: "These are the persons who occasioned the dreadful calamities which befell the Jews, and laid, during the government of Florus, the foundation of those troubles which afterwards broke out into an open war, on which account they were banished from the province by order of Vespasian. The circumstance which gave birth to these misfortunes is so trifling in itself, that, independent of its consequences, it would hardly deserve to be recorded. In the narrow entrance to a synagogue in Cæsarea, some person had made an offering of birds, merely with a view to irritate the Jews. The insult excited their indignation, and occasioned the shedding of blood. Without this trifling accident, which no human wisdom could have foreseen, even the day before it happened, it is possible that the prophecy of Christ would never have been fulfilled. For the Jews were determined at all events to avoid an open rebellion, well knowing the greatness of their danger, and submitted to be oppressed by the Roman governor, in the hope of laying their complaints before the throne of the emperor. But Florus, regardless of the submission and entreaties of the Jews, and even of the intercession of Berenice, designedly concerted this private quarrel into public hostilities, and compelled the Jewish nation to rebel against its will. But, notwithstanding this open rebellion, a variety of circumstances occurred which seemed to render the destruction of the temple an event highly improbable: the recall of Vespasian into Italy

when Jerusalem was in danger, and the gentle character of Titus, who succeeded to the command of the Roman army in Judea, gave little ground to suspect so dreadful a calamity. It appears, therefore, from this whole detail, whose length the dignity of the subject will excuse, that no human wisdom, during the life of Christ, could have foreseen the destruction of the temple, and therefore that the wisdom which uttered the prophesy was divine.

As the miseries which men were to undergo at the destruction of Jerusalem, the reasons of that destruction, the passions which its approach would raise in their minds, together with the suddenness with which it would fall upon their heads, strikingly resemble what shall happen at the destruction of the world, it was natural for our Lord to put his disciples in mind of that awful day of retribution, when every one must give an account of every deed done in the body, whether it be good or bad. This exhortation begins Matt. xxiv. 44, where he excites the disciples to watchfulness, from the uncertainty of the hour of his coming, the blessedness which attends his humble and faithful followers, and the dreadful judgments which will fall upon the heads of those who, instead of feeding the flock of God, deliver themselves over to sensuality and dissipation, and all those vices with which these are connected.

Our Lord having mentioned the rewards and punishments of a future state in order to animate his disciples to the vigorous discharge of their duty, it was easy and elegant to pass from that subject to the consideration of the general judgment, at which these rewards shall be distributed in their utmost extent. And, therefore, to rouse men in every age, he has given a striking representation of the last judgment, with its consequences, in three excellent parables.

[Matt. xxv. 1—13.] “Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish. They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves. And while the bridegroom came, they that were ready went in with him to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

In this parable, the characters and final judgment of the subjects of the kingdom of heaven are described, that is to say, if persons who have enjoyed the outward dispensation of the gospel, and, by professing themselves to be christians, pretended to honour Christ. Some, with the fair light of an outward profession in their hands, have the principles of divine life in their heart, a stock of oil, to keep that light continually burning both pure and clear, by which means they persevere to the end. But others, having the blaze of a profession, and nothing to keep it alive, it must needs end in smoke and darkness, their oil failing them when they have most occasion for it. The slumbering of the virgins denotes that frame of mind, that distraction and dissipation of thought, which good men sometimes fall into by reason of their necessary worldly business. For although God must never be forgotten, the state of human affairs is such, that it is hardly possible to be so intent on our spiritual journey, that no cares shall ever retard or entangle us. Hence it comes to pass, that even those who are most vigilant do sometimes slumber, or, to all outward appearance, are off their guard like the wicked: but with this difference still, that though the exercise of grace, at least, so far as it consists in the sensible emotions of holy affections, may be scarcely perceived, they really subsist in their hearts, ready to be called forth into action. Whereas, the wicked are wholly destitute of them, not in act only, but in principle also. The two states of mind are excellently represented by the lamp's burning dimly for want of trimming, and by its going out for want of oil. The midnight cry raised at the coming of the bridegroom while the virgins were asleep, shows how suddenly and unexpectedly some are called away by death; so that little or no preparation can be made for the approaching judgment, in the confusion and perplexity of a death-bed sickness. In this parable, therefore, our Lord has taught us, that unless we persevere in grace, having it always, at least, in habit, and ready to be called into exercise as occasion requires, we shall be excluded from the abodes of the blessed without remedy, though we may have expressed considerable alacrity and diligence for a while. Also, that the grace of other men and their good works shall stand us in no stead at the day of judgment. To conclude: as the parable represents the suddenness of Christ's coming to call every particular person off the stage, it shows us both the folly and danger of delaying religion to a death-bed; and powerfully enforces habitual watchfulness, both in the acquisition and exercise of grace, upon all men in every age, from the consideration of the uncertainty of life. Accordingly the application of the parable is, [Matt. xxv. 13.] "Watch, therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

The second parable, which is nearly similar to the one already

repeated, is contained in Matt xxv. 14—30. “For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, and to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents. And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two. But he that had received one, went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord’s money. After a long time the lord of those servants cometh and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents, behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord. He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents, behold, I have gained two other talents beside them. His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy lord. Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth; lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strewed. Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents, For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Thus Jesus described the judgment of his own servants, his apostles, ministers, and all who are in eminent stations of life, showing, that though they are not blessed indeed with equal advantages, yet that all the gifts, whether of nature or of grace, which they enjoy, are bestowed on them for their Master’s service, to whom they properly belong; and that they should be employed in promoting his interests, the interests of truth and righteousness, which he came down to establish on earth; and that he esteems the most useful life to be the most praise-worthy, and will reward it accordingly. The behaviour of a good man in an eminent station of life is fitly enough compared to a

course of merchandize; for as merchants by laying out their money in trade receive it again with profit, so the servants of God, by occupying the abilities and opportunities which he has put into their hands, improve, strengthen, and increase them; and whatever success they have in this spiritual merchandize, their Master is pleased to consider it as his own, and to think himself enriched thereby, rejoicing infinitely in the happiness of his creatures. The excuse which the slothful slave made for himself truly expresses the thoughts of wicked men. They look on Christ as a hard, tyrannical master, who rigorously exacts what he has no title to, and who punishes with unreasonable severity things that are no faults at all, or but small ones: and they regard his laws as so many infringements of their liberty, by which they are secluded from much innocent pleasure. But the answer which the judge is said to have returned demonstrates, that all the excuses which wicked men can make for themselves shall stand for nothing at the great day. And truly it is not to be imagined how any man will produce a sufficient reason before God, justifying his having neglected to do good. The crime and punishment of this idle servant ought to be attentively considered by all, but especially by persons addicted to pleasure, who imagine that there is no harm in giving themselves up to sensual gratifications, provided thereby they do no injury to others: for the Judge of the world here solemnly declares, that one's doing no harm will not bring him off when tried at his bar; that a life spent merely in amusements will be severely punished; that it is highly criminal to let the knowledge of divine truth lie buried in idleness; and that all God's servants must be actively good, exerting themselves to the utmost in promoting his interest, which is no other than the happiness of his creatures. By this, indeed, they acquire no merit; yet it is by this that they are qualified for the enjoyment of heaven, the gates of which Christ hath set open by his death. To conclude: if the slave who hid his talent in a napkin was reckoned unfaithful to his trust, and punished accordingly, notwithstanding he delivered it up to his lord entire, what may they expect who destroy the noble faculties bestowed on them, or use those temporal blessings as occasions of sin which God intended as means for the exercise and improvement of grace? This parable was delivered formerly in the house of Zaccheus, but with different circumstances.

The third parable (if it be indeed a parable) is as follows: [Matt. xxv. 31.] "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory." By this, perhaps, is meant some shining cloud like that on which he ascended into heaven. [Acts i. 9.] For the angels at his ascension declared that he should come to judgment riding on a cloud. [Acts i. 11.] See Exodus xvi. 10. "And before him shall be gathered all na-

tions, and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. And he shall set his sheep on the right hand, but the goats on the left." This is agreeable to the language of the Old Testament, in which good men are compared to sheep, on account of their innocence and usefulness [Psalm xxiii. 1. c. 3.]; and wicked men to goats, for the exorbitancy of their lusts. [Ezek. xxxiv. 17.] The allusion, however, is dropt almost at the entrance of the parable, the greatest part of this representation being expressed in terms perfectly simple: so that, though the sense be profound, it is obvious. Here the judgments of all nations, Gentiles as well as christians, is described, and the points on which their trials are to proceed are showed. They shall be acquitted or condemned according as it shall then appear that they have performed or neglected works of charity, the duties which, in christians, necessarily spring from the great principles of faith and piety. But then we are not to understand this as if such works were meritorious in either; for all who are acquitted at that day, shall be acquitted solely on account of the righteousness of Christ as the meritorious cause. The sentence passed upon the righteous affords a noble motive to patience in well doing. "Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand:" In the beginning of the parable he had called himself the Son of man only; but he now changes the appellation, taking the title of king with great propriety, when he is speaking of himself as exercising the highest act of kingly power, in passing final sentence upon all men as his subjects, whereby their state shall be unalterably fixed for ever. But while, in this grand representation, Jesus asserts his proper dignity as Lord over all, he acknowledges his subordination in the kingdom to his Father; by addressing the righteous in the sentence, he passes upon them the compellation of persons blessed of his Father:—"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." The present state of good men is, at best, but a melancholy banishment from their native country. Moreover, they are oftentimes exposed to manifold temptations, to poverty, to reproach, and to innumerable other evils. But that they may bear all with indefatigable patience, and overcome through the strength of an invincible courage, they are made to know by this sentence that they are beloved and blessed of God as his own children, that there is no less than an eternal kingdom prepared for them even from the foundation of the world, and that they are the undoubted heirs of this eternal kingdom. Well may such bear with the violence of their opposers, knowing what an exceeding and eternal weight of glory awaits them. They may look on the most flourishing prosperity of the wicked without envy, when they descry the never-fading crown, the fragrancy of the blossoms of which, though it is so distant as heaven, gladdens

and refreshes the senses of men on earth. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. [Matt. xxv. 35.] For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." In the whole of your conduct you have imitated the goodness and benevolence of my Father, and therefore I now declare you blessed and beloved of him, and appoint you to inherit this kingdom. Moreover, that you may know how acceptable acts of kindness and charity are to me, I assure you that I reckon every thing of this kind as done to myself. It was I who was an hungered, and athirst, and a stranger, and naked, and sick, and in prison. It was I whom you clothed, and lodged, and visited, and comforted, in prison. The righteous, in great surprise, ask, with reverence and humility, when all this happened, since they never had seen him in want of their assistance, nor could remember that they had ever bestowed aught upon him. [Matt. xxv. 37.] "Then shall the righteous answer, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? when saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the king shall answer and say unto them, (the king of angels and men,) Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." This is unspeakably astonishing! The united wisdom of men and angels could not have thought of any thing more proper to convey an idea of the extent of the divine benevolence to men, or offer a more constraining motive to charity, than that the Son of God should declare from the judgment-seat, in the presence of the assembled universe, that such good offices as are done to his afflicted servants are done to him.

"Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed of my Father, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in; naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." If such be the dreadful portion prepared for those who do not render the friends of God all the services in their power, what must be their condemnation who delight to slander and persecute them. The issue of the judgment, as represented in this

description, is awful beyond conception. "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." If the meaning of this short sentence were duly considered by sinners, how deep an impression would it make on their minds! Everlasting punishment! Eternal life! What is there not comprehended in these!

The next day being the last day of our Lord's public teaching, it was more full of action than any other mentioned in his history, as will appear from the following induction of particulars.

He came to Bethany six days before the passover, probably about sun-setting. He rode into the city surrounded by the multitude next afternoon: for when he had looked round on all things in the temple after his entry, it was evening: [Mark xi. 11.] this happened five days before the passover. He went in again from Bethany the day following, viz. four days before the passover, and, by the way, blasted the fig-tree; after that, he drove the buyers and sellers out of the temple. Next morning, viz. three days before the passover, and the last of his public teaching, being on his way to town, he spake concerning the efficacy of faith, on occasion of the disciples expressing great astonishment at seeing the fig-tree, that was cursed the day before, withered from the roots. When he appeared in the temple, the deputies that were sent by the council came and asked him concerning his authority. He answered them with a question concerning the baptism of John; then spake the parable of the two sons commanded to work in their father's vineyard; after that, the parable of the marriage supper. Then he avoided the snare that was laid for him in the question concerning the tribute-money; confuted the doctrine of the Sadducees concerning the resurrection; showed the scribe which was the great commandment in the law; asked the Pharisees whose son Christ is; cautioned his disciples to beware of the scribes and Pharisees, against whom he denounced many grievous woes. When the woes were finished, he looked on the people throwing their gifts into the treasury, probably as they worshipped at the evening sacrifice, and commended the poor widow for her charity. After the service was over, he left the temple, and went to the mount of Olives, where he foretold the downfall of the nation; and spake three parables representing the procedure of the general judgment. Last of all, he concluded the work of the day by predicting his own sufferings. By this time it must have been about sun-setting. He went away, therefore, with his disciples, to Bethany, intending to pass the night there, at a distance from his enemies, the chief priests and the scribes, who were now gathered together at the high-priest's palace to deliberate how they might put him to death.

Having spent the night with his disciples at the mount of

Olives, the people collected early in the morning in the temple to hear him; but we are not informed that our Lord delivered to them any public discourses, but, on the contrary, employed his time in preparing his disciples for the dreadful trial which they were speedily to undergo. In the mean time, the chief priests, scribes, and elders of the people, held a solemn council in the palace of the high-priest Caiaphas, where they formed some designs of taking him and killing him by subtilty, probably by private assassination. It seems, they were led to thoughts of this kind from the danger which they apprehended in attempting to seize him publicly, on account of the number of his adherents.

When Jesus and his disciples came to Bethany, they took up their lodging with Simon the leper, probably one of those who had experienced the healing efficacy of his power. During the time of supper, a woman came, and breaking up the seal of an alabaster box of very precious ointment, poured it upon our Lord's head. The disciples, being sensible that their Master was not delighted with luxuries of any kind, rebuked her for throwing away so much money idly, as they imagined. But they expressed themselves so as to cast a tacit reflection on our Lord himself. They did not say that the money with which this ointment was purchased might have been given to the poor, but this ointment might have been sold and given, insinuating that Jesus was to blame for not causing the ointment to be thus disposed of. But Jesus, knowing every thing they said and thought, told them, that whereas the poor were always at hand for the exercise of their charity, he should soon be removed from them; and that this very act, which they condemned as so highly extravagant, was intended by the great regulator of events as a preparation for his approaching funeral, and should bring upon the performer of it the respect and approbation of the remotest ages.

It is supposed by some, that the irritation that Judas Iscariot, who was foremost in condemning the woman's conduct, felt on occasion of the reproof which had now been given him, induced him to go over to the high priests, and offer, for a certain stipulated sum, to direct them to the hiding-places of his Master, and thus afford them an opportunity to seize him without any danger from the interference of the multitude. But as this was certainly the most abominable action that ever was perpetrated by any of the sons of Adam, the following inquiry into the motives of the traitor's conduct, which is made by an eminent expositor, may afford no unentertaining conclusion to the chapter.

'The treachery of Judas Iscariot in betraying his Master must raise the astonishment of every reader who has any just notion of our Lord's character. Wherefore, the motives swaying

him to be guilty of such an atrocious crime, and the circumstances which attended it, deserve a particular consideration.

‘Some are of opinion that he was pushed to commit this villainy, by his resentment of the rebuke which Jesus gave him for blaming the woman who came with the precious ointment. But though this may have had its weight with him, I think it could not be the only motive; because the rebuke was not levelled against him singly, but was directed also to the rest, who had been equally forward with him in censuring the woman, and who, having been rebuked at the same time, must have kept him in countenance. Besides, though he had been rebuked alone, it can hardly be supposed that so mild a reproof would provoke any person, how wicked soever, to the horrid act of murdering his friend, much less Judas, whose covetousness must have disposed him to bear every thing at the hand of his Master, from whom he expected great preferment. If it is replied, that his resentment was so great as to hinder him from exercising his reason, and hurried him on precipitantly, it should be considered, that though he struck the bargain with the priests a few hours after he was rebuked, almost two days passed before he fulfilled the bargain. Besides, to impute his treachery to the sudden impulses of a strong resentment, is such an alleviation of his crime, as seems inconsistent with the character given of it in scripture, where it is always represented in the blackest colours, and said to merit the heaviest punishment.

‘Others think that Judas betrayed his Master out of covetousness: but neither can this be admitted, if by covetousness is understood an eager desire of the reward given by the priests; for the whole sum was not in value above three pounds ten shillings, sterling; a trifle which the most covetous wretch cannot be supposed to have taken as an equivalent for the life of a friend, from whom he had the greatest expectations of gain. The reader will see the strength of this reason, when he calls to mind that all the disciples believed the kingdom was instantly to be erected; and that, according to the notion which they entertained of it, each of them, but especially the apostles, had the prospect of being raised in a little time to immense riches. Besides, the scripture tells us, that Judas’s predominant passion was covetousness. He would not, therefore, be so inconsistent with himself, as, when just on the point of reaping such a reward of his service, to throw all away for the trifling sum above mentioned.

‘Others attribute Judas’s perfidy to his doubting whether his Master was the Messiah, and suppose that he betrayed him in a fit of despair. But of all the solutions this is the worst founded; for if Judas thought his Master was an impostor, he must have observed something in his behaviour which led him to

form such an opinion of him; and, in that case, he certainly would have mentioned it to the chief priests and elders at the time he made the bargain with them, which it is plain he did not; otherwise he would have put them in mind of it when he came to them, and declared his remorse for what he had done. Doubtless, also, they would have urged it against our Lord himself in the course of his trials, when they were at such a loss for witnesses to prove their accusations; and against the apostles afterwards, when they reproved them for preaching in Christ's name. [Acts iv. 15, v. 27.] Further, had Judas thought his Master an impostor, and proposed nothing by his treachery but the price he put upon his life, how came he to sell him for such a trifle, when he well knew that the priests would have given him any sum rather than not have gotten him into their hands? To conclude: the supposition of Judas's believing that his Master was an impostor, is directly confuted by the solemn declaration which he made to the priests, implying the deepest conviction of Christ's innocence, "I have sinned," said he, "in betraying the innocent blood." It is also confuted by the remorse which he felt for his crime when Jesus was condemned; a remorse so bitter that he was not able to bear it, but fled to a halter for relief.

Since Judas's treachery proceeded from none of the motives mentioned, it may be asked what other motive can be assigned for his conduct? The evangelist John tells us that he was so covetous as to steal money out of our Lord's bag. This account of him gives us reason to believe that he first followed Jesus with a view to the riches and other temporal advantages which he expected that Messiah's friends would enjoy. Likewise, it authorizes us to think, that as he had hitherto reaped none of those advantages, he might grow impatient under the delay; and the more so, that Jesus had of late discouraged all ambitious views among his disciples, and neglected to embrace the opportunity of erecting his kingdom, that was offered by the multitude who accompanied him into Jerusalem with hosannas. His impatience, therefore, becoming excessive, put him upon the scheme of delivering his Master into the hands of the council, thinking it the most proper method of obliging him to assume the dignity of Messiah, and consequently of enabling him to reward his followers. For as this court was composed of the chief priests, elders, and scribes, that is, the principal persons belonging to the sacerdotal order, the representatives of the great families, and the doctors of the law, Judas did not doubt but that Jesus, when before such an assembly, would prove his pretensions to their full conviction, gain them over to his interests, and enter forthwith on his regal dignity. And though he could not but be sensible that the measure which he took to bring this about was very offensive to his Master, he might think that the success of it would procure his pardon, and even

recommend him to favour. In the mean time, his project, however plausible it might appear to one of his turn, was far from being free from difficulty. And, therefore, while he revolved it in his own mind, many things might occur to stagger his resolution. At length, something happened which urged him on. Thinking himself affronted by the rebuke which Jesus had given him in the matter of the last anointing, and that rebuke sitting the heavier on him as he had procured a former mark of his Master's displeasure by an imprudence of the same kind, he was provoked. And though his resentment was not such as could inspire him with the horrid design of murdering his Master, it impelled him to execute the resolution he had formed of making him alter his measures. Rising up, therefore, from table, he went straightway into the city, to the high priest's palace, where he found the chief priests and elders assembled, consulting how they might take Jesus by subtilty. To them he made known his intention; and undertook, for a small sum of money, to conduct a band of armed men to the place where Jesus usually spent the nights, and where they might apprehend him without the danger of a tumult. Thus the devil, laying hold on the various passions which now agitated the traitor's breast, tempted him by them all.

That these were the views with which Judas acted in betraying his Master, may be gathered, First, From the nature of the bargain which he struck with the priests; "What will ye give me," said he, "and I will deliver him unto you?" He did not mean that he would deliver him up to be put to death: for though the priests had consulted among themselves how they might kill Jesus, none of them had been so barefaced as to declare their intention publicly. They only proposed to bring him to a trial for having assumed the character of the Messiah, and to treat him as it should appear he deserved. The offer, therefore, which Judas made to them of delivering him up, was in conformity to their public resolution. Nor did they understand it in any other light: for had the priests thought that his design was to get Jesus punished with death, they must likewise have thought that he believed him to be an impostor; in which case they certainly would have produced him as one of their principal evidences, no person being more fit to bear witness against any criminal than his companion. Or, though Judas had repented before the trial came on, and had withdrawn himself, the priests might have argued with great plausibility, both in their own court and before the governor, that for a man's disciple to require the judges to bring him to condign punishment, branded him with such a suspicion of guilt as was equal to a full proof. Likewise, when Judas returned to them with the money, declaring that he had sinned in betraying the innocent blood, instead of replying "What is that to us? see thou to that," it was the most natural

thing in the world to have upbraided him with the stain he had put upon his Master's character, by the bargain he had entered into with them. It is true, they called the money they gave him "the price of blood." [Matt. xxvii. 6.] But they did not mean this in the strictest sense, as they neither had hired Judas to assassinate his master, nor can be supposed to have charged themselves with the guilt of murdering him. It was only the price of blood consequentially, being the reward they had given to the traitor for putting it in their power to take away Christ's life under the colour and form of public justice. Nay, it may be even doubted whether Judas asked the money as a reward of his services. He, covetously indeed, kept it, and for that reason called it the price of blood. But he demanded it, perhaps on pretence of gratifying and encouraging the people that were to assist him in apprehending Jesus. To conclude: Judas knew that the rulers could not take away the life of any person whatever, the Romans having deprived them of that power, [John xviii. 31.] and therefore could have no design of this kind in delivering him up; not to mention that it was a common opinion among the Jews that Messiah would never die, [John xii. 34.] an opinion which Judas might easily embrace, having seen his master raise several persons from the dead, and among the rest one who had been in the grave no less than four days.

Second, That the traitor's intention in betraying his Master was what I have said, is probable, from his hanging himself when he found him condemned, not by the governor, but by the council, whose prerogative it was to judge prophets. Had Judas proposed to take away his Master's life, the sentence of condemnation passed upon him instead of filling him with despair, must have gratified him, being the accomplishment of his project: whereas, the light wherein I have endeavoured to place his conduct, shows this circumstance to have been perfectly natural. Judas, having been witness to the greatest part of our Lord's miracles, and having experienced the certain truth of them in the powers that had been conferred upon himself, could never think that the council would have condemned him as a false Christ, far less as a blasphemer. He knew him to be perfectly innocent, and expected he would have wrought such miracles before the council as should have constrained them to believe. Therefore, when he found that nothing of this kind was done, and that the priests had passed the sentence of condemnation upon him, and were carrying him to the governor to get it executed, he repented of his rash and covetous project, came to the chief priests and elders, the persons to whom he had betrayed him, offered them their money again, and solemnly declared the deepest conviction of his Master's innocence, hoping that they would have desisted from the prosecution. But they were obstinate, and would not relent, upon which his

remorse arose to such a pitch, that unable to support the torment of his conscience, he went and hanged himself. Thus I think it probable that the traitor's intention in delivering up his Master was, to lay him under a necessity of proving his pretensions before the grandees whom he had hitherto shunned, thinking that if they had yielded, the whole nation would have immediately submitted, and the disciples have been raised forthwith to the summit of their expectations.

This account of Judas' conduct is by no means calculated to lessen the foulness of his crime, which was the blackest imaginable. For even in the light above mentioned, it implied both an insatiable avarice and a wilful opposition to the counsels of providence, and so rendered the actor of it a disgrace to human nature. But it is calculated to set the credibility of the traitor's action in a proper light, and to show that he was not moved to it by any thing suspicious in the character of his Master; because, according to this view of it, his perfidy, instead of implying that he entertained suspicions of his Master's integrity, plainly proves that he had the fullest conviction of his being the Messiah. And, to say the truth, it was not possible for any one intimately acquainted with our Lord, as Judas was, to judge otherwise of him, having seen his miracles, which were great and true beyond exception; and having experienced his power in the ability of working miracles, which, along with the rest of the apostles, he had received from him, and no doubt exercised with extraordinary pleasure. However, as the motives of men's actions at such a distance of time must needs be intricate, especially where history is in a great measure silent concerning them, we ought to be very modest in our attempts to unravel them; for which cause the above account of Judas's conduct is proposed only as a conjecture worthy of further inquiry

CHAPTER XIII.

The Discourses and Transactions of our Lord at his last Passover.

Peter and John are sent to prepare the passover in a room to which they are miraculously guided—Jesus washes his disciples' feet, and inculcates similar conduct in them towards each other—while they are partaking of the passover, he declares who should betray him—the Lord's supper is instituted—the disciples contend about the chief posts in the kingdom—Peter's denial foretold the first time—after delivering a consolatory discourse, he walks to mount Olivet, and again foretells the fall of Peter—he shows forth the intimate union which there subsists materially between his Father, himself, and his people—he prays with his disciples at considerable length, and undergoes inexpressible sufferings in the garden of Gethsemane.

THROUGHOUT the whole survey which we have hitherto taken of the life of Jesus, we have found a character developed to our view more beautiful and interesting than that of any of the sons of men. Descending from the bosom of the Father, and laying aside the splendour of his eternal glory, he was found in the fashion of a man, took upon himself the form of a servant, and became acquainted with the bitterness of grief. With patient and indefatigable zeal he sought out and saved those that were lost, feeding the hungry, curing the diseased, cleansing the lepers, giving sight to the blind, and commanding back the spirit to its recently forsaken clay: but while he was thus doing good, he was pursued with the most unmerited reproaches, marked out as a sheep for the slaughter, and at length betrayed by one of his most intimate associates. The darker the shades of sorrow, which are collecting round the head of Immanuel, the more delightful will be those rays of divine beneficence which we shall see beaming forth in the day of his deepest distresses. It is not, therefore, too much to affirm, that our attention will henceforth be directed to scenes more highly gratifying to the best feelings of human nature, than any other which have been exhibited in the theatre of the universe.

It was now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, when our Lord gave orders to Peter and John, two of his most intimate friends, to make preparation for the passover. This preparation, we may conclude, consisted in the providing a room ready furnished for the occasion, the purchasing a lamb, getting it killed and roasted, and procuring the bread, wine, and bitter herbs, which were made use of at this solemnity.

When they requested to know where he would keep the feast, he informed them, that, on their entering the city, they should meet a servant of a certain man, whom he named, carrying a pitcher of water, him they were to follow, as they would be thus guided to his Master's house. They were directed, then, to tell the head of the family, that their Master wished him to point out a guest-chamber where he might eat the passover with his disciples. They did so; and were directed to a large upper room ready furnished for the purpose, as many rooms were at this time, which were disposed of without hire to the strangers who came up to Jerusalem.

When the evening approached, Jesus left Bethany; and every thing being prepared by the time he came into the city, they all sat down at the appointed hour. Christ, now feeling his love to his disciples very strongly excited by the certain apprehension of his approaching sufferings, expressed to them the fervent desire which he had experienced to partake of this last solemn and social feast with them, before his more weighty sufferings commenced. For, saith he, "I will not eat any more thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of heaven," by the deliverance of perishing men from the bondage of sin; a deliverance typified by that of the Israelites from the Egyptian bondage, to preserve the memory of which the passover was instituted. Having thus spoken, Jesus took a cup of wine in his hand; and, having given thanks to almighty God for his great goodness to mankind, began the solemnity by delivering the cup to his disciples, "saying, Take this and divide among yourselves. For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come," by the commencement of the gospel dispensation.

Supper being now ended, or, as others more properly translate it, being now come, Jesus, being possessed of the most perfect knowledge of the awful circumstances in which he was placed, determined to teach his disciples and mankind the lovely virtue of humility by his own example. He, therefore, though he was the only-begotten Son of God, rose from the table, and, girding himself with a towel after the manner of a servant, poured water into a bason, "and began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." But when it came to Peter's turn to receive that favour, he, at first, modestly, and then resolutely, declined it. At once to subdue his resistance, Jesus answered him, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me;" if thou dost not submit to all my orders implicitly, thou art not my disciple; or, as others understand it, unless I cleanse thee from the pollution of sin, emblematically represented by washing thee with water, thou art none of mine. Peter, therefore, understanding him literally, and desiring to enjoy the glories of his temporal kingdom, replied, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands

and my head. Jesus saith unto him, he that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." This sentence, probably, refers to those who came out from a bath, and were therefore perfectly clean, unless their feet, which might be dirtied by immediately walking on the ground; but it has evidently a spiritual meaning, and it is understood to teach, that those who are once converted need no more a thorough change, but have only to cleanse themselves from the particular sins which they happen to commit through infirmity. "Ye are clean, but not all;" referring to the traitor Judas.

After having performed this kind and humiliating office, he sat down and asked them whether they knew the intent of what he had done to them. I am what you style your Lord and Master; but I have now washed your feet, that I might the more deeply impress upon your minds the duty of mutual condescension. "The servant is not greater than his lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him;" and therefore, knowing your duty in this particular, ye are happy if you diligently practise it. "I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but that the scripture may be fulfilled, [Psalm xli. 9.] he that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me." I have foretold this distressing event, "that when it is come you may believe that I am" the Messiah of God, and rest assured of your share in my protecting favour; for "he that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me."

Jesus having thus openly denounced the treachery of one of the company, the eleven who were innocent were every one of them exceedingly anxious to know for himself that he was not the person to whom this heavy charge applied. Peter, therefore, beckoned to John, who lay next to Jesus on the couch, and, consequently, was leaning in his bosom, that he would inquire of their Master who it was that should be guilty of this enormous wickedness. Christ immediately answered, probably, in a whisper, "he it is, to whom I shall give the sop when I have dipped it." This sop we may understand to be a morsel of meat dipped in a thick bitter sauce, which they made use of, by divine appointment, in the celebration of the passover. Judas, perhaps, conceiving this to be a reproach for his gluttony, found his indignation rising; so that Satan took a still deeper possession of his soul. Christ, who knew the state of his mind, and was anxious to complete his dreadful labour of love, requested him to perform quickly that which he knew it was his intention to do. The other disciples, knowing that Judas kept the bag, suspected no harm of him in particular, but supposed that he had orders to prepare something for the succeeding days of the feast, or to make some charitable donation to the poor. Their perplexity, therefore, still increasing, they could no longer keep silence, but every one of them exclaimed ear-

nestly, "Lord, is it I? And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, (probably of bitter sauce,) the same shall betray me. The Son of man goeth (to suffering and death) as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed, it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Upon this, Judas, recovering himself a little, asserted his innocence by a question, which implied a strong negation of the charge. But Jesus silenced him, with positively affirming that he was the person of whom he spake. Thus were the eleven acquitted to their infinite satisfaction, while the wretched traitor was saved from confusion only by the impenetrable hardness of his heart.

Judas, having received the sop, appears to have left the company; and Jesus, whose mind was supported by the divinity within, proceeded to institute the Lord's supper as a memorial of his love, to be preserved throughout all succeeding generations. The fullest description of it is given by the apostle Paul, in the eleventh chapter of the first epistle to the Corinthians, 23—26 verses. "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, (the type and representation of my body,) which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." Thus was this blessed institution appointed, not as a sacrifice to the offended Deity, nor as an expedient to prepare the unconverted soul for heaven, but as an imperishable memorial of that most wonderful of all events, the voluntary suffering of the Son of God on mount Calvary.

So slow is the mind in receiving the impressions of truth and holiness, that even at this late period of the ministry of Christ, and while he was visibly agitated by the most distressing sensations, the disciples were carrying on a contest, who should be esteemed the greatest. "And he said unto them, the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them" assume pompous titles, and are called benefactors, as was literally the case with several kings of Egypt and Syria. "But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth; is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth." These last words refer, no doubt, not merely to the general tenor of his life, but particularly to his late act of condescension in washing their feet. He then proceeded to assure them, that as they

had continued with him in his temptations, while Judas was gone forth to betray him, they should eat and drink at his table in his heavenly kingdom, "and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." At the same time, to check their ambition, and lead them to form a just notion of his kingdom, he told them that he was soon to leave them, and that whither he was going they could not follow him at that time; for which cause, instead of contending with one another about which of them should be greatest, they would do well to be united among themselves by the happy bond of love.

Peter, however, still retained his carnal ideas of the Messiah's kingdom, and therefore inquired to what place Christ was going, as wherever he travelled he was determined to bear him company. To check his confidence, Christ informed him that Satan was then busily seeking the destruction of all the apostles, by the subtily of his temptations; but that he had prayed for them, and especially for him, as exposed to the greatest danger, that his faith should not fail; adding, "when thou art converted," by a full acquaintance of my character and kingdom, then shalt thou be useful to "strengthen thy brethren." Peter, probably, felt himself hurt by thus being singled out as the weakest, and declared that, so far from being frightened by any of the dangers of the way, he had resolved to be his faithful companion, even in imprisonment and death. "Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? verily, verily, I say unto thee, the cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice."

When the disciples of Christ had been first sent out, they went forth without purse, and scrip, and shoes, and yet suffered the want of nothing. He told them, however, that matters were now altered: they were to be violently assaulted by their enemies, were to meet with the strongest temptations, and to be so hotly persecuted by their countrymen, that they could no longer expect any succour at their hands; for which reason, he ordered them, in their future journies, to provide money and swords for themselves, that is, besides relying on the divine providence as formerly, they were to use all prudent precautions in fortifying themselves against the trials that were coming upon them. But lest they should think that he intended them to make war upon their enemies, he informed them that two swords were fully enough for their purpose, which was, probably, only to defend themselves against the wild beasts of the desert.

Jesus not only forewarned his disciples of the great trial that was coming upon them, and commanded them to arm themselves against it, but he spake a long discourse, wherein he animated them to sustain that trial manfully, and comforted them under the dismal apprehensions which it might raise in them. They were to see him crucified whom they had acknow-

ledged as the Messiah. Wherefore, having been always accustomed to consider immortality and temporal dominion as the characteristics of their deliverer, and great worldly prosperity as the privilege of his subjects, the death of their Master, and the persecutions befalling themselves, could not fail to give a violent shock to their faith. But that the force of these blows might be weakened, he foretold his own sufferings, and thereby made it evident that he voluntarily submitted to them. Withal, to reconcile their minds to the thoughts of his sufferings, he distinctly explained the end of them. [John xiv. 1.] "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." Be not discomposed with the thoughts of those temptations that are to come upon you. As you believe in God, the almighty preserver and governor of the world, who is able to deliver you out of all your distresses, you ought to believe in me, who am not only sent by God, but, being appointed governor and judge of the world, I can both protect you from evil, and reward you plentifully for whatever losses you sustain on my account. For "in my Father's house (whither I am carrying you) are many mansions," or apartments, in allusion to the palaces of kings. "If it were not so I would have told you." If there were no state of felicity hereafter, into which good men are to be received at death, I would have told you; and not have amused you with dreams of things that never shall happen. And, therefore, though I am to be killed, ye need not be troubled at it, since I go away for no other reason but to prepare those mansions in my Father's house for your reception, which were destined for you from the foundation of the world. [Matt. xxv. 34.] "I go to prepare a place for you." I die to open heaven to you. [John xiv. 3.] "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." I will return, and carry you with me into the mansions of the blessed, that you may be for ever where I am to remain, and that you may partake with me in my felicity. This Christ will accomplish when he comes to judge the world. [John xiv. 4.] "And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know." Ye cannot but know the place to which I am going, and the way that leads to it; for I have told you both plainly enough. "Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" We know not where thy Father's house stands, and consequently cannot know the way to it; for as their thoughts turned very much upon a temporal kingdom, they might imagine that their Master intended to remove to some splendid palace on earth, which he was to prepare for their reception, making it the seat of his court. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." Perhaps our Lord had now in view the metaphors which he formerly

used, viz. "I am the door of the sheep." [John x. 7.] "I am the bread of life." [John vi. 35.] Or we may suppose the form of expression to be an Hebraism, whose meaning is, I am the true and living way; as Dan. iii. 7, "all the people, the nations, and the languages," signifies people of all nations and languages. But in whatever manner we resolve the sentence, its meaning is the same, viz. this faith in me and obedience to my commandment, will lead you to the Father's house whither I am going; they are the only true road to the mansions of felicity. "If ye had known me ye should have known my Father also." If ye had known my doctrine fully, and obeyed my precepts, ye should have known the perfections and counsels of my Father, and have done his will as far as is necessary to your enjoyment of him. "And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him. Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." It is hard to say whether Philip as yet understood who the Father was of whom his Master spake. If he did, we cannot suppose that he asked a sight of the divine essence, which in itself is invisible; but, like Moses, he desired to see the inaccessible light wherein God dwells, it being the symbol of his presence in heaven. "Jesus saith unto him, have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; (for I am the image of the invisible God;) and how sayest thou then, show us the Father? believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself, but the Father that dwelleth in me he doth the works." Dost thou not believe that there is the closest union between the Father and the Son? and that as the Father knows all the thoughts of the Son, so the Son causeth men to know all the thoughts of the Father respecting their salvation, and is vested with his power and authority. This thou must acknowledge, if thou considerest the works which I do, even the miracles whereby my mission is established. "Believe me, (upon my own testimony,) that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

Having mentioned his miracles, Jesus promised to endow his apostles with a power of working greater wonders than any they had ever seen him do. [John xiv. 12.] "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto my Father." He made them this promise to animate them in their work, and that they might not despond in his absence, when they received such tokens of his remembering them, and such proofs of his power with the Father. Farther: he assured them that whatever miracle they asked in his name they would perform, provided it tended to the glory of God, and the furtherance of the gospel. This promise is conceived in ge-

neral terms. "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." Nevertheless, the subject treated of directs us to understand it particularly of miracles to be wrought in confirmation of the gospel. He added, moreover, that any other matter which they should ask for the furtherance of the gospel, he would by his own power and authority bring to pass. "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." However, he required an exact and stedfast obedience to his commands, as the condition on which their prayers were to be heard. "If ye love me keep my commandments." He told them, in that case, he would send down another comforter, advocate, or intercessor, who would abide with them constantly, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world could not receive. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you," not for a little while, as I have done, but for ever. "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, as you shall do, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." The world being blinded with sensuality, can neither discern the operations of his Spirit, nor partake of his joys. "But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Ye know him, because he is with you in some measure, already enabling you to work miracles, and because he shall be given you much more abundantly hereafter. This happened on the day of Pentecost; from which time forth the Spirit dwelt with the apostles, and was in them. Thus, said he, though I am going away, [John xiv. 18.] "I will not leave you comfortless." Besides, I will return to you myself; "I will come to you." For, although the time is at hand that the world shall see me no more, ye shall see me. "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more, but ye see me: nay, because I live (by rising from the dead) ye shall live also" by arising from the dead. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father." When ye see me after my resurrection, ye shall no more doubt that I am come from God; but ye shall be fully convinced that I have all along acted by the power and authority of the Father, and that I have had his counsels fully communicated to me. "And you in me, and I in you." Ye shall likewise be sensible that my will is fully revealed to you, and my power bestowed on you. For which reason, though I be absent in body, ye shall enjoy every advantage that could have accrued to you from my personal presence. Ye shall preach by my inspiration, and govern the minds of men by my power. In a word: ye shall be sensible that I am in you, only you must constantly bear this in mind, that you obey my commandments; for they alone love me who do so. And they that love me shall be loved both of my Father and me; and, as an expression of my love, I will manifest my love unto them. "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall

be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself unto him." These latter words surprised the apostles not a little: for, according to the notions they had conceived of Messiah, he was to appear unto all the Jews, nay, to the whole world, and was to take unto himself universal empire. "Therefore Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus told him that he spake chiefly of a spiritual manifestation, such as the Father and he make of themselves to true believers, even on earth, by the influences of the Holy Spirit who dwells in them as his temples. [1 Cor. iii. 16.] For, through the influences of the Spirit of God, believers are enlightened with the knowledge of the perfections of God, and with just views of the characters and offices of his Son. Moreover, by the same influences, they are sanctified for an habitation of God, [Eph. ii. 22.] who makes his abode with them, that is to say, who fills them with all joy and peace in believing, and with the most elevating hopes; and, in consequence of their sanctification, sheds abroad in their hearts a sense of his love, and, by so doing, gives them prelibations of heaven while on earth. "Jesus answered and said unto them, If a man love me he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." This latter clause is remarkable. For had our Lord been a creature, though of the highest rank, it would have been blasphemy in him to have joined himself in this manner with God. "He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings; and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me." The reason why those who profess to be my disciples do not obey my precepts, is because they do not love me: for which cause, since my precepts are the precepts of God, such a person has no ground to expect God's love, or any manifestations from God.

[John xiv. 25.] "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you." I have spoken these things during my personal presence briefly, because my time with you is short. And though you may not just now understand many of the particulars mentioned by me, you shall have perfect knowledge of them afterwards. For my Father will give you the Holy Spirit to supply my place; and he shall be a comforter to you, teaching you every article of the christian faith, and bringing to your remembrance all the things I have ever said to you in the course of my ministry. "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." "Peace be to you" was the common salutation and compliment mutually given by the Jews to each other at meeting and at

parting. But although this compliment implied a wish of every thing that could make one happy, it was often used without any meaning. At best, it was but a wish, however sincere; and had no real efficacy in making him happy to whom it was given. Yet in the mouth of Jesus, by whose wisdom and power the affairs of the world are governed, a farewell wish was a matter of a very different kind. His peace, his parting blessing, would draw down all manner of felicity upon those who were the objects of it. Accordingly, he encouraged his disciples from that consideration, under the prospect of his departure, desiring them not to be in the least anxious about what was to befall them after he was gone. Moreover, he bade them remember what he had told them before, namely, that though he was to die, he would rise again from the dead. "Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice because I said, I go unto my Father; for my Father is greater than I." These words afford a strong argument for the proper divinity of our Lord. For had he been a mere man, or even a creature of the highest order, the comparison would have been foolish and impertinent. "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass ye might believe." I have foretold my sufferings and death in order that, when they happen, your faith, instead of being shaken, may be confirmed. But I shall not have much opportunity to talk with you after this, because the devil will stir up wicked men to kill me. "Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." Be assured that I shall undergo the punishment of death, not because I deserve it, "but that the world may know that I love the Father." I undergo it to show the world how much I love the Father: for in this I act according to his express commandment; "and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence:" let us, in conformity to the divine will, go away, that I may enter in my sufferings.

Having thus spoken, they finished the passover with singing a hymn, and went out to the mount of Olives. [Matt. xxvi. 30.] "And when they had sang an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives." The hymn which they sung was, probably, the conclusion of that which the Jews called the Hallel, or great hymn, and which consisted of the hundred and thirteenth, with the five subsequent Psalms; part thereof being sung in the beginning, and part at the end of the solemnity. [Luke xxii. 40.] "And when he was at the place, he said unto them, pray that ye enter not into temptation." When he was come to the scene of his sufferings, he desired them to fortify themselves by prayer, and forewarned them of the lamentable effects which his sufferings were to have upon them; they would make them all stumble that very night, agreeably to Zechariah's prophecy,

ch. xiii. 7. [Matt. xxvi. 31.] "Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night; for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." To strengthen their faith, therefore, he not only mentioned his resurrection, but told them where they should see him after he was risen. "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." No sooner did Jesus mention the offence which his disciples were to take at his sufferings, than Peter recollected what had been said to him in particular before they left the house. Wherefore, being grieved afresh to find his Master still entertaining such thoughts of him, and being now armed with a sword, the vehemence of his temper hurried him to boast a second time of his courageous and close attachment to Jesus. "Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men should be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." In this protestation, Peter, no doubt, was sincere. Nevertheless, he was greatly to blame for not paying a due attention to his Master's repeated predictions concerning his fall, for the preference which he gave himself above his brethren, and for leaning to his own strength instead of begging assistance of him from whom all human sufficiency is derived. Wherefore, to make him sensible, if possible, that pride, confidence, and security, are great enemies to virtue, his Master thought fit to forewarn him again of his danger. [Mark xiv. 30.] "And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me thrice. [Matt. xxvi. 35.] "Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples." They all joined Peter in professing their fixed resolution of suffering death rather than they would deny their Master; yet the event was exactly as Jesus had said: from which we may learn how ignorant men are of themselves; and that to be virtuous, it is not enough that we form the strongest resolutions.

Our Lord spent the remaining hours of his ministry in preaching to his disciples a long, but excellent sermon, recorded by John in the fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of his gospel. He began with the parable of the vine, taken from the vines that were growing around them on the mount of Olives. In this parable, he taught them the excellency of his religion, and the nature of the relation they stood in to him by the profession thereof. Moreover, he explained to them the advantages which accrued to them from this relation. As the branches of the vine draw nourishment and are made fruitful by their union to the stock, and by the care of the dresser, so the disciples of Christ, by the belief of his religion, by the influences of the Spirit, and by the care of providence, are made fruitful in holiness. [John xv. 1.] "I am the true vine:" my gospel is the most excellent dispensation of religion that was ever given to men. "My

Father is the husbandman :” my religion is from God, belongs to him, and, with its professors, is the peculiar object of his care. “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away :” though by the outward profession of religion you become members of the visible church of God, you must remember that, of itself, this is not sufficient to entitle you to the favour of God, the great Master of this dispensation. You must answer the end for which it is given, by bringing forth fruit ; otherwise he will cut you off, depriving you of all the advantages which true disciples reap from the sincere profession and practice of the christian religion. He told them farther, that as the husbandman prunes the bearing branches of his vines, so God, among other methods, suffers the lovers of virtue to be spoiled of the conveniences of this life, for no other reason but that their virtue may grow the stronger, and become the more fruitful. In the course of his providence, my Father sends a variety of afflictions upon every one who sincerely makes profession of my religion, and who diligently endeavours to obey its precepts, spoiling him of the temporal enjoyments which engage his affections, and render him unfruitful.

These things Jesus said to reconcile his disciples to the persecutions that were coming on them ; perhaps, also, he had in his view the other methods which God makes use of for purifying his people ; for in the following verse, he represents his disciples as cleansed through the word he had spoken unto them. The doctrine I have preached to you by the blessing of God, has cleansed you from many evil affections, has inspired you with holy desires, and invigorated you with good resolutions ; so that, like the pruned branches of the vine, ye are fitted to bring forth fruit. Yet there is still need to caution you against backsliding. Continue stedfast in the belief and profession of my religion, and be diligent in the practice of its precepts ; for this is the method to derive from me all needful supplies, particularly the influences of my Spirit, the comfort of my presence, the direction of my word, and the protection of my providence. Your continuing in the belief, profession, and practice, of my religion, is as necessary to your performing good works, as the continuing of the branches in the vine is to their fruitfulness. To make you sensible of this, was what I proposed when I told you that I am the true vine, and you the branches. I must therefore repeat it again, that sincerity in the belief, stedfastness in the profession, and diligence in the practice, of my religion, followed, as they always are, with my blessing and assistance, are the only means of making a man remarkably fruitful in holiness. “He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit : for without me,” separated from me, in allusion to the vine and his branches, “ye can do nothing.” If you apostatize from me, and are deprived of my influences, you can do nothing for your own sanctifica-

tion and salvation. To show you further the necessity of abiding stedfastly in the belief and profession of my religion, I would propose to your consideration the dreadful effects and punishments of apostasy. By apostasy you separate yourselves from me, and deprive yourselves of all the advantages which accompany the sincere belief, stedfast profession, and diligent practice, of my religion, particularly the influences of my Spirit, the direction of my word, and the protection of my providence; also the pardon of your sins, and the enjoyment of heaven. Nor is this all: you shall be punished as apostates; for you shall be cast out of the presence of God, and gathered into hell, where you shall be burned as withered branches, persons fit for the flames. Grotius thinks that in this verse Jesus points out to the apostles, in an obscure manner, the crime and punishment of Judas, one of their own number, as an example and warning to them.

Our Lord, having thus exhorted the twelve as disciples and private christians, proceeds to give them directions as apostles or preachers, commissioned by him to teach his religion to the rest of mankind. [John xv. 7.] "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." If ye abide in me in the sincere profession and practice of my religion, and my words abide in you; if ye faithfully teach mankind my doctrines and precepts, notwithstanding the difficulties you meet with in this work; you may ask any miracle you please in confirmation of your authority, and it shall be granted unto you. But though this be the primary meaning of the passage, it may, in a limited sense, be understood also of the pious prayer of all good christians, as Dr. Clarke observes. As the end for which my Father has given the gospel dispensation to men is to make them fruitful in holiness, you, my apostles, by spreading the true knowledge thereof through the world, and by reforming yourselves and others, will do honour unto God's wisdom and goodness in bestowing this dispensation upon you. Moreover, by your diligence in preaching and practising my gospel, you shall show yourselves to be real disciples to me, who am the author of the gospel, and who have chosen you to be my assistants in spreading the knowledge of it through the world. The friendship which I have showed you, and the honour which I have conferred on you of preaching the gospel, is of the same kind with the friendship and honour conferred on me by the Father. "Continue ye in my love:" beware of doing any thing inconsistent with your character as my apostles, or which will diminish my love towards you. If you carefully perform all the things which I have enjoined you, both as my apostles and private christians, you shall ever be the objects of my love; even as I have exactly performed all the duties of my mission, all the things which my Father enjoined me for the salvation

of the world, and on that account am the eternal object of his warmest love.

I have spoken these things, hoping they will influence you to keep my commandments, whereby you shall be the objects of my love; and, in the consciousness thereof, shall be filled with the same kind of joy which I feel from obeying my Father's commandments, and from the consciousness of his love. I have spoken these things likewise, that your eternal joy may be full in heaven, where you shall shine as stars, because you have turned many to righteousness. Others translate the passage in the following manner; I have spoken these things, hoping that, by your diligence in obeying them, I shall always have cause to rejoice in my friendship, in the honour I have conferred on you, and in the eternal possession of heaven. "This is my commandment; that ye love one another as I have loved you;" as I told you before, [John xiii. 34.] the chief of all the commandments which I enjoined you, whether as apostles or private christians, is, that ye love one another: I do not mean after the hypocritical manner of the world, who often love in word and in tongue, whilst nothing is more remote from their heart; but in the sincere, tender, constant manner of my love to you. He was thus earnest in pressing them to mutual love, not only because the great design of his gospel is to promote mutual love, but because this virtue, exercised by the apostles among themselves and towards all mankind, was one great means of making their preaching successful, just as Christ's immense love to men will always have a great influence in drawing us to him. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" my love to you is stronger than death; for I will lay down my life for you. A greater degree of love than this never existed in the world. This is the love I bear towards you, and which I recommend as the pattern of your love to one another. "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." Jesus had commanded them to love one another as he loved them; [John xv. 13.] he insinuated that he loved them so as to lay down his life for them. Wherefore, in this verse, he tells them he would reckon them his friends if they laid down their lives for one another; that being the thing he commanded them, by enjoining them to love one another after the pattern of his love to them. The plain proposition of this precept might have terrified the apostles; but to insinuate it in the beautiful manner our Lord has done, was altogether necessary for the direction of men, who, by preaching the gospel, were to put their lives in jeopardy every hour, and who at last were to lose their lives in that cause for the benefit of the world. "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth." Though the distance that is betwixt you and me, and your obligations to obey me, might have warranted me to treat you as

servants, and particularly to conceal from you my counsels and designs, I have not in that manner acted towards you. But I have treated you as friends ought to be treated : I have admitted you into all the familiarities of friendship ; for I have all along communicated to you the most important of those gracious counsels which my Father, as the expression of his friendship, imparted unto me ; nay, I have commissioned you to reveal them to the world, and have made you, not only my friends, but my assistants, in the great work of saving the world. From this consideration, therefore, as well as out of gratitude to me, you ought to lay down your lives in the cause. Accordingly, it is added, “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain.” You have not, as principals in this affair, adopted me your associate ; but I, the great author of the gospel, have adopted you as my associates, to share with me in the vast honour of giving a new religion to the world. For I have ordained you my apostles, that you should go out into the world fraught with the doctrines of salvation, by the preaching of which you should produce a general reformation both in the opinions and manners of the heathens, greatly to the honour of God ; inasmuch as the christian religion, thus planted by you, shall endure to all ages — “that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.” I have clothed you with the dignity of my apostles, that whatsoever miracle you shall ask of God, for the confirmation of your doctrine, or for the success of it, the consideration of your character, and the end for which you ask it, may induce him to grant it, especially if, in your prayers, you plead the relation you stand in to me as my apostles.

“These things I command you, that ye love one another.” I have explained to you the high nature and vast importance of your office as my apostles, and I have put you in mind of my loving you so as to die for you, that I may inspire you with ardent love to one another. You will need the help of this principle much in the execution of your office. It will animate you to be diligent, it will inspire you with fortitude, it will enable you to lay down your life in the cause : for that you will meet with opposition and persecution while you preach the gospel is certain ; only it needs not surprise you, when ye consider how I, your Master, have been hated and persecuted by the Jews. If the generality of men in all countries shall oppose and persecute you, as most certainly they will, you must encourage yourselves under these difficulties, by remembering that I, your Lord and Master, have suffered the same things from the Jews. Moreover, you should consider that [John xv. 19.] “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own.” If your dispositions and actions were like those of the bulk of mankind : if you flattered men in their vices, and framed your doctrines into

a consistency with their passions and interests, no doubt you would meet with general approbation, and be much caressed. But because your dispositions and actions are very different from those of the world, and because I have separated you from secular affairs, and commissioned you to oppose all false religions, to reprove men's vices, and to press the necessity of a general reformation, therefore the bulk of mankind every where will hate and persecute you.

“Remember the word that I said unto you, the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” To reconcile you to the persecutions you are to meet with, ye ought always to bear in mind what I told you on this subject the first time I sent you out; that no servant can expect to be treated better than his Master; and therefore, seeing they have persecuted me, they will naturally persecute you. You are to expect they will keep your saying only if they have kept mine; therefore, by the reception which my doctrine meets with, you may judge how yours will be relished. “But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.” None of the evils which you shall suffer on my account, or the gospel's, will flow from any deficiency in the evidences of my mission, or from any fault that can justly be found with the gospel. They will all flow from your persecutors being ignorant of the nature and perfections of the true God, who has sent me into the world, and of the doctrines of religion published to them under former dispensations. I assure you it is so; and when the things happen you will actually find this to be the case. Withal, the consideration of it will strengthen you not a little. However, the ignorance of the Jews in particular will not excuse them, seeing they have had more than sufficient means of information. If I had not appeared in person among them, according to their own prophecies, and proved my mission by arguments which put it beyond all reasonable possibility of doubt, they would not have been so much to blame for rejecting the gospel: but now that all the things foretold by Moses and the prophets are fulfilled in me, that my gospel is every way worthy of God, and that my mission from God is sufficiently proved by my miracles, they have no plea whatever to excuse their unbelief. In short, this clearness of evidence wherewith my mission is attended, makes the crime of rejecting me equal to, if not the same with, the crime of rejecting God. [John xv. 23.] “He that hateth me hateth my Father also.” The proofs of my mission which I have principally in view are my miracles, concerning which I must observe, that if they had not been more in number, and greater than the miracles of Moses, the Jews would not have been to blame for rejecting me, who am come to abrogate the institutions of Moses. “If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not

had sin. But now they have both seen and hated me and my Father." In my miracles, which are greater than any hitherto exhibited, they have seen, or might have seen, who I am, namely, the only-begotten Son of God. In these miracles, likewise, they have seen who is my Father; for the glory of the whole divine perfections shineth in my miracles. Nevertheless, they have rejected me who have performed these miracles, and my Father likewise who sent me to perform them; so that they are utterly inexcusable. "But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, they have hated me without a cause." Be not surprised that I, who am Messiah, have been rejected of the Jews. It hath happened according to the prediction of their own prophets. For your encouragement, however, I assure you, that they will not always continue thus obstinately bent against me and my religion. When he who is to comfort you under all your troubles, by the aid he will afford, and who, on that account, is justly styled the Comforter; when this person is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father to remain always with you, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness to me and to my religion so effectually, that many of the Jews shall be converted. "And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning." In process of time, men's eyes shall be opened to discern the authority of your testimony: they shall give credit to your reports concerning me, because ye have been my companions from the very first, consequently eye and ear-witnesses of all that I have done and said; so that after a while you shall bear witness concerning me, and preach my religion far more successfully than it will be in your power to do at the beginning, before the Spirit has descended.

[John xvi. 1.] "These things have I spoken unto you that ye should not be offended." The things which I have now told you concerning the hatred of the world, the reason of that hatred, the dishonour done by it to God, the punishment wherewith it shall be followed, and the supernatural assistance which you shall receive, I have spoken to keep you from taking offence at the further discoveries I am going to make of the evils you shall be exposed to, and to prevent your being overcome by those evils when they befall you. The Jews will excommunicate you as the most execrable of men; nay, to such a length will their hatred of you carry them, that whoever killeth you will think he doth the most acceptable thing possible unto God. "And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father nor me." They will excommunicate and kill you, and, in so doing, will think they serve God; because they are ignorant of his will concerning the abolition of the Jewish economy, and the establishment of the new dispensation; also because they do not know me to be the Messiah,

and mistake the nature of my religion. For, seeing Jesus is here speaking of the Jews, he cannot be supposed to say that they did not know God in general, but only that they did not know his will concerning the gospel.

“ But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come ye may remember that I told you of them.” I have spoken these things to you, that when they come to pass you may remember that I foretold them, which, indeed, will be of manifold advantage to you, both as it will convince you that these things did not happen beyond my expectation, and as it will hinder them from surprising or discouraging you. “ These things I said not to you from the beginning, because I was with you.” From Matt. x. 17—28, it appears that Jesus plainly enough foretold the persecutions which his apostles and disciples were to meet with after his death. I did not inculcate these things upon you from the beginning; I did not frequently insist upon them, because the lesson would come time enough before my departure: or by these things we may understand the Jews’ ignorance of God’s designs, and their ignorance of Jesus as Messiah; particulars which he had just now mentioned as the causes why the Jews would persecute his apostles, and which, no doubt, were more afflicting to the latter than the persecutions themselves; because these persecutions they supposed would end in the enjoyment of the kingdom; whereas, the rejection of their Master cut off their hopes all at once. “ But now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?” But now that my ministry is drawing towards a conclusion, and I am going to him that sent me, I could no longer defer speaking of these things to you. In the mean time, I cannot but take notice, that though I mentioned to you my departure once before, [John xiii. 33.] none of you has inquired of me the reasons of my departure, nor the effects of it. However, I impute this to the deep impression which my prediction concerning the persecutions you are to meet with when I am gone hath made upon you, filling you with sadness, and engrossing your thoughts. “ But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your hearts. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.” Though you have not asked the reasons of my going away, I will declare them to you. Hear them then: it is necessary even on your account that I depart; because if I do not go away, and take possession of my mediatorial kingdom, the Comforter, by whose assistance, as I told you, [John xv. 26.] you are to convert the world, will not be given you: whereas, if I depart and take possession of my kingdom, I will send him unto you as the first fruits of the exercise of my kingly power. “ And when he is come, he will convince the world of their sin, of my righteous-

ness," and of my title to government. This description of the office of the Holy Ghost seems to be taken from the office of an advocate at the bar, who, by producing witnesses, and pleading upon the proof, shows his adversary to be guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, or clears the innocence of his client falsely accused, and gets justice executed upon the guilty. When the Comforter comes, he will, by the miraculous effusion of his gifts, convince the world of the sin they commit in disbelieving me, who, though absent, am able to confer such extraordinary powers on my ministers. Accordingly we find that multitudes of the Jews were thus convinced by the miraculous effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the apostles. [Acts ii. 37.] The Comforter, by teaching you the true nature of Messiah's kingdom, and making you explain it to the world, will convince the Jews more especially of the fitness of my leaving the world, of my going to the Father, and of my not returning any more till the last day. That this is the meaning of the passage appears from the precedent and subsequent verses, in which the latter clauses are explicatory of the former. For as the sin of which the world was to be convinced was that of their not believing in Christ, and the judgment was that of the prince of this world; so the righteousness of which they were to be convinced must have been the righteousness of Christ's going away, and of the disciples' seeing him no more. And to say the truth; considering how firmly the Jews expected their Messiah was to erect a temporal kingdom, and to remain with them for ever on earth, it was absolutely necessary that the Holy Spirit should have been sent to convince them of the fitness of his departure out of the world. In the last place, when the Holy Ghost cometh, he will convert men from idolatry to the knowledge and practice of true religion; and by thus vigorously depriving the devil of that dominion which he has hitherto exercised over the minds of men, he will convince the world of judgment; he will demonstrate, not only that the world is governed by God, but that all power in heaven and earth is given to me, who, by my Spirit, have dethroned the devil. Moreover, this present punishment of the devil will be an earnest and proof of that judgment, which, at the last day, I will execute upon him and all his adherents.

[John xvi. 12.] "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." I have many other things to tell you besides those I have mentioned; but your prejudices in favour of your own nation and law, your aversion to the Gentiles, and your weakness of understanding, are so great, that you cannot yet bear the discovery; for which reason, I judge it more prudent to be silent. The things our Lord had in view were the abolition of the whole Jewish economy, the doctrine of justification by faith only, the reception of the Gentiles into the church without subjecting them to the law of

Moses, and the rejection of the Jewish nation. "Howbeit, when he, even the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." You will sustain no loss by my not discovering these things to you now; for when the Comforter comes, who, on account of his office, is fitly styled the Spirit of truth, he will inspire you with the knowledge of them and of every other matter necessary for you to understand. And that you may have the greater confidence in, and satisfaction from, the revelations which he shall make to you, know that he shall not speak to you of himself, but by my direction, revealing to you nothing but what he is commissioned to discover. "For he shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear, that he shall speak." Besides, his revelations shall be so full and complete, that he will discover unto you all such future events as you may be any way concerned to know. "And he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." He shall do me great honour in this respect, that all his revelations to you shall be perfectly conformable to the doctrines which I have taught you in person: for though he shall be instructed and commissioned by the Father, he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. Be not surprised that I said unto you, he shall receive of mine, and show it unto you; for the whole treasures of the Father's wisdom belong to me. [See Col. ii. 3.] Those who oppose the divinity of Christ seem to be at a loss for an explication of this passage. Le Clerc tells us it is highly figurative, that the subject treated of is such as cannot be understood by reason, that the manner of it is not revealed, and therefore that it is not possible to mark precisely the proper sense of every expression. All these things he told them it was their interest, as well as their duty, to rivet in their memories, because they were his dying words. A few hours would put an end to his life; and though he was to rise again from the dead, he was to remain but a very little while with them. He was soon to ascend into heaven, and to be seated at the right hand of God. "A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father."

The terms in which Jesus had spoken of his death, resurrection, and ascension, being very obscure, the disciples were altogether at a loss to understand them. Wherefore, having revolved them awhile in their own minds, they asked one another privately if they could comprehend what he meant. But each of them declared, with a kind of astonishment, that he could affix no idea to his words at all. [John xvi. 17.] "Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us? A little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me; and because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, a

little while? we cannot tell what he saith." Jesus, observing their perplexity, and knowing that they inclined to ask him about this matter, prevented them, by signifying that he knew what they had been saying. "Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, a little while, and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me? I will explain myself upon this point: your not seeing me is an event that shall occasion great grief to you, and joy to my enemies. From these circumstances you may collect, that by your not seeing me I meant my dying. However, your sorrow shall be turned into joy; you shall see me again, for I will rise again from the dead. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy." The state of mind you shall be in when the events happen of which I am speaking, I cannot better describe than by comparing it to the condition of a woman in travail. During her labour she hath exquisite pain, because the birth approaches; but as soon as she is delivered she forgets the anguish she was in, being filled with joy that she has brought one of the species into the world. Just so you, my disciples, will be in the greatest distress during the time of my departure. But as I am to rise again from the dead, and to ascend into heaven, you will forget your sorrow, and rejoice exceedingly; and from that time forth your joy shall be of such a kind as that it shall not be in the power of men to rob you of it. One great source of your joy in the period I am speaking of will be, that your understanding shall be enlarged and enlightened, so that you shall have no need of my personal presence with you, nor any occasion to ask questions concerning intricate points, as you find yourselves obliged to do now. And if ever you stand in need of instruction or assistance, or any other blessing, whether for the propagation of the gospel or your own salvation, the Father will immediately supply you with, upon your asking it in my name. On this occasion, I must put you in mind that you have never yet prayed to God in my name. From this time forth, I command you to put up all your petitions in my name, and you shall receive such gracious answers as will exceedingly increase your joy. "Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." Perhaps you do not yet understand me, because I have expressed myself in dark sayings; but you may comfort yourselves with this thought, that the time is at hand when I shall speak no more obscurely; but by the teaching of my Spirit, I shall show you in plain language the whole counsels of God relating to the erection of his church and the salvation of men. "These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in pro-

verbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father." I repeat it to you again; that after my ascension you shall offer up all your addresses unto the Father through my mediation; by this I do not mean, that I will solicit the Father in your behalf, as if he was unwilling to bestow on you the blessings ye stand in need of: no; the Father himself bears a warm love towards you chiefly on this account, that ye have loved me, and have believed that I came from God.

To conclude: the true and proper meaning of my discourse to you at this time, and particularly of the expression which appeared so obscure to you, is, that as I was commissioned by the Father, and came into the world to reveal his will to mankind, so, having finished that work, I now leave the world, and return to the Father from whom I came. "His disciples said to him, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb. Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee; by this we believe that thou camest forth from God." We acknowledge that now thou speakest in such a manner as we can understand thee; for what thou sayest is by no means dark, like the things which thou utteredst before. Moreover, by the things which thou hast now spoken to us, we clearly perceive that thou knowest the hearts of men, and that in conversing with men thou hast no need that they should tell thee their thoughts by any question.

In short: thy knowledge of our hearts fully convinces us that thou art come from God. It seems, through the whole of this discourse, Jesus had obviated the objections and answered the questions which the apostles were going to propose, or would gladly have proposed to him. Jesus answered, "Do ye now believe? behold, the hour cometh, nay, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me." Are ye now, at length, fully persuaded that I am the promised Messiah? be on your guard. Your faith in me is not so firm but it may be shaken. For the time is coming, nay, is come already, when every one of you shall desert me, flying wherever you think to be in safety from the approaching danger, so that I shall be left singly to encounter mine enemies. Nevertheless, I am not alone, because the Father is with me continually. I have said these things to you, concerning my departure out of the world, concerning the coming of the Holy Ghost, concerning my resurrection from the dead, concerning the Father's hearing your prayers, and concerning the trial you are to be exposed to, in order that you may have consolation in the prospect of the benefits you are to receive, and not be terrified when the afflictions draw nigh which are to overtake you. The truth is, you shall have great tribulation in this present life, because the malice of men will every where pursue you; nevertheless, be not discouraged, rather take heart by reflecting how,

through constancy and patience, I have overcome the malice of the world, and that I am able to make you overcome it in like manner also.

As the beauty of the succeeding prayer would be obscured by mutilation, we conceived that we could do it the most justice by giving the whole complete in the translation of Dr. Campbell, a translation which casts considerable light on some important particulars.

[John xvii. 1—26.] “When Jesus had ended this discourse, he said, lifting up his eyes to heaven, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee; that, being endowed by thee with authority over all men, he may bestow eternal life on all those whom thou hast given him. Now this is the life eternal, to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus the Messiah, thy apostle. I have glorified thee upon earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now Father glorify thou me in thine own presence, with that glory which I enjoyed with thee before the world was.”

‘I have made known thy name to the men whom thou hast given me out of the world. They were thine; and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Whatsoever thou hast given me, they now know to have come from thee; and that thou hast imparted unto me the doctrine which I have imparted unto them. They received it, (as such,) knowing for certain that I came forth from thee, and am commissioned by thee. It is for them that I pray. I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me, because they are thine. And all thine are mine, and mine thine, and I am glorified in them. I continue no longer in the world; but these continue in the world; and I come to thee. Holy Father, preserve them in my name which thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those whom thou hast given me I have preserved. None of them is lost except the son of perdition, as the scripture foretold. But now that I am coming to thee, I speak these things in the world, that their joy in me may be complete. I have delivered thy word to them, and the world hateth them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I do not pray thee to remove them out of the world, but to preserve them from evil. Of the world they are not, as I am not of the world. Consecrate them by the truth; thy word is the truth. As thou hast made me thy apostle to the world, I have made them my apostles to the world. And I consecrate myself for them, that they may be consecrated through the truth.

‘Nor do I pray for these alone, but for those who shall believe on me through their teaching, that all may be one; that as thou, Father, art in me, and I am in thee, they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me;

and that I have given them the glory which thou gavest me, that they may be one as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that this union may be perfected, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and that thou lovest them as thou lovest me. Father, I would that where I shall be, those whom thou hast given me may be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, because thou lovedst me before the formation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world knoweth not thee, I know thee; and these know that I have thy commission. And to them I have communicated, and will communicate, thy name, that I being in them, they may share in the love wherewith thou lovest me."

On this prayer we remark: 1. That the denominating the Father the only true God, is evidently not meant to deny the divinity of Jesus Christ, but to distinguish the Jehovah of Israel from the false gods of the heathen. To mention no other passage, the very first verse of this gospel asserts the important doctrine of our Saviour's Godhead in the most express and explicit language. 2. The glory which Christ had with his Father was not merely predicted, but possessed, before the world began. This also is evident from the verse we have just now cited. 3. The sanctification, or, as Dr. Campbell more properly translates it, the consecration, which is here spoken of with respect to Christ and his people, signifies a dedication to sacred purposes, like that of the priest, the altar, and the sacrifice, under the law. Nothing more powerfully counteracts the love of sin, than the consideration that we are redeemed to be kings and priests to our God, and to the Lamb; and that therefore, being members of an holy kingdom, it becomes us not to be partakers of the unfruitful works of darkness. 4. This prayer is evidently divided into two parts; the first, which terminates with the nineteenth verse, particularly relating to the apostles; and the latter part of it, to the christians who should believe through their preaching. 5. It appears that the whole dignity and happiness of christians consist in their union with the Son, and through him with the Father; a doctrine which our Lord had beautifully illustrated in his late discourse concerning the vine and its branches.

When our Lord had terminated this prayer, he went with his disciples to a place near the mount of Olives, which was called Gethsemane. This is supposed to be a field which was crossed by the brook Cedron; and in it, on the other side of the brook, opposite to the mount of Olives, was a garden, commonly known by the name of the garden of Gethsemane. Having entered into this garden, he left the greater part of his disciples, probably as a watch at the door, while he took with him Peter, James, and John, to be the witnesses of his agony, as they had been of his transfiguration. A sore amazement, attended with all the bitterness of sorrow, now seized upon his

soul. After commanding his three most favourite disciples to watch, he went forward about a stone's cast; and, finding his human nature inconceivably burdened, he fell on the ground, and besought his heavenly Father, that if it were possible, or consistent with the great end of his mission, he might be delivered from the sufferings that were then laying upon him. That it was not the mere apprehension of dying on the cross that so heavily afflicted him, is evident from this, that to suppose it, would be to degrade our Lord's character infinitely. Make his sufferings as terrible as possible; clothe them with all the aggravating circumstances imaginable; yet if no more is included in them than the pains of dying, Jesus, whose human nature was strengthened by its union with God, would not have shrunk at the prospect, when many of his followers have endured more terrible deaths without the least emotion. The difficulty is solved when we recollect, that the Lord laid upon him the iniquities of us all; and that, therefore, the sense of that strong aversion which God has to every species of sin, was, no doubt, the heavy burden that pressed so heavily upon him. Under the pressure of this heavy load, he first poured out his soul in prayer; and then, returning to his disciples, mildly rebuked them, but more especially Peter, who had so much boasted of his strength, for being found sleeping at such an unseasonable hour. But such was the mildness of his disposition, that even now he half excused those whom he thus reproved, acknowledging that the spirit was willing, though the flesh was weak. He then a second and third time retired to supplicate his Father, and, returning to his disciples, found them a second and a third time sunk in slumber. It is remarkable, that between his two last prayers, an angel was sent to succour him, which is, by some, understood to imply, that now the divinity withdrew his usual support. His third prayer appears to have been more vehement than the rest, his perspiration having the colour and consistency of drops of blood. There is no reason for supposing this miraculous, as it has happened in a few other instances, Voltaire himself being witness; but it serves to mark the extremity of his sufferings; and as it is an event of a very unusual kind, serves to strengthen the credibility of the gospel history. When he rose up from prayer, he came to his disciples, and said unto them, "Why sleep ye? behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise, and let us be going, behold he is at hand that doth betray me."

CHAPTER XIV.

The Last Sufferings of our Lord.

The apprehension of Christ—he restores the ear of Malchus, the chief priest's servant—Pilate thrice denies his Master—Jesus is examined before the council, and condemned as guilty of blasphemy—Judas hangs himself—Christ is brought before Pilate—Pilate refuses to condemn him, but declares him innocent—he is sent to Herod, who treats him reproachfully—Barabbas released instead of Christ—Pilate at length condemns him to appease the multitude—he is scourged, crowned with thorns, and buffeted—he is led forth and crucified between two thieves—a superscription is put upon the cross—Christ is reviled by the mob, the rulers, the priests, and one of the thieves—a miraculous darkness overspreads the earth—Christ expires—an earthquake—the observation of the centurion—the conduct of Mary Magdalene and other women—Christ's side is pierced—his body is begged by Joseph of Arimathea, and wrapped in spices by Nicodemus—he is laid in the sepulchre, and secured by a stone—the seal of the priests, and a guard of soldiers.

WHILE Jesus was pouring forth his soul in the most bitter agonies in the garden, his enemies were indulging a malicious joy to think their plots for his destruction were now likely to be very soon accomplished. Having obtained a cohort of Roman soldiers commanded by their proper officer, they joined with these a number of their own servants and dependants, and placed the whole under the direction of Judas, while they themselves followed in the train. This motley multitude was armed with swords and staves, and furnished with lanterns; because, though the moon was full, the sky might be clouded, or which is more probable, it was a dark and shady place to which Jesus had retired. The sole object of Christ's persecutors appears to have been his destruction, without intending to involve that of his followers. It was, therefore, necessary that the soldiers should be able to distinguish him with accuracy, and therefore Judas had appointed to salute him with a kiss, as a sign that he was the proper person for the soldiers to take into custody. The better to accomplish his detested design, the traitor appeared at a little distance before; and, having approached his Master in the garden, called him by that appellation, and instantly proceeded to kiss him, as the strongest token of reverence and affection. It was, perhaps, his wish to appear as one that apprized him of his danger; but if so, Christ immediately detected the imposture; but, retaining his usual mildness, said to him, "Friend, wherefore art thou come? betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?"

The appointed time of our Lord's sufferings being now come, he made no attempt to escape from his enemies, but went forth to meet them, and asked them whom it was that they were thus eagerly pursuing. They replied, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, "I am he;" and immediately the whole band of men walked involuntarily backward, and fell to the ground. This display of omnipotence glorified the Lord Jesus Christ, by showing that he could easily have resisted his enemies, and even punished their temerity; but he freely gave up his life to fulfil his wise and benevolent designs. They, probably, supposing that the shock which they had experienced proceeded from the operation of some infernal power, by whom the priests had asserted the miracles of our Saviour to have been performed, rose from the ground, and advanced a second time to apprehend him. He then surrendered himself into their hands, only desiring that they would peaceably dismiss his disciples, who had not yet done their appointed work, nor received sufficient strength to prepare them for martyrdom. Some of the soldiers now rushed forward and seized him, while his disciples, standing by, were filled with the deepest amazement and concern. One of them, Simon Peter, determined now to perform his promise of abiding stedfastly by his Master, even unto death; and therefore, hastily snatching his sword from the scabbard, smote off the right ear of one Malchus, a servant of the high-priest, who was probably uncommonly officious upon this occasion. He would, no doubt, have attacked the whole band, had not Jesus checked him by observing, that "all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." This passage is understood not less than three different ways. Some take it as an absolute prohibition for any of the followers of Christ to engage in acts of hostility: others regard it only as an intimation to Peter that his defence was unseasonable, and only likely to procure the destruction of himself and the other apostles: and a third opinion is, that it is a prediction that God would punish the Jews, the murderers of his Son, by giving them up to perish by the swords of the Romans. And whereas, continued Jesus, you seem now to be greatly alarmed at beholding me surrounded by a single cohort or regiment of Roman soldiers, my heavenly Father, if it were consistent with the end of my mission to make such a request, would immediately afford me the assistance of more than "twelve legions of angels," beings, one of which was able singly to destroy the whole army of Sennacherib. But this is not the intent of my coming into the world, which is to drink the cup of suffering that is ready prepared by my Father. Then, asking permission of the soldiers that held him, he touched the ear of the wounded man, and either restored that member to its place, or, at least, instantly healed the wound. Then, turning to the chief priests, captains of the temple, and members of the sanhedrim, he asked them why

they collected such a mighty force to arrest one who had always taught openly in the temple, and never attempted to resist their power. But he himself assigned the reason: "this is your hour, and the power of darkness;" and it is necessary that these things should be done for the accomplishment of the scriptural predictions, which have been delivered by the prophets. His disciples then fled, while he was bound and led away as a prisoner.

The evangelist Mark has recorded a circumstance which strongly marks the confusion and uproar of that dreadful night. A young man, probably awakened by the noise, came out with no other covering than that of a linen garment, such as the peasants of Egypt and Syria made use of both to sleep and to wear. Some of the soldiers laid hold on him, perhaps in jest; and he was so apprehensive of being made a prisoner, that he fled away naked, notwithstanding the aversion which the inhabitants of the East have to be seen in that condition.

Christ was first conducted to Annas, who was a person much revered by the Jews, being father-in-law to Caiaphas, and having himself performed the office of high-priest. But he refusing to act singly in the affair, Christ was conducted to the palace of the high-priest Caiaphas, where he found the chief priests, the elders, and the scribes, assembled together.

The apostles, no doubt, were in great consternation when their Master was apprehended, as appears from their having forsaken him and fled. Some of them, however, recovering out of the panic that had seized them, followed the band at a distance, to see what the end would be. Of this number was Peter, and another disciple, whom John has mentioned without giving his name, and who is therefore supposed to have been John himself. This disciple, whoever he was, being acquainted at the high-priest's, got admittance, first for himself, then for Peter, who had come along with him. But the maid who kept the door, concluding that Peter was a disciple also, followed him, after a little while, to the fire, which was kindled in the midst of the hall; and, looking earnestly at him, charged him with being a disciple of Jesus. Her blunt attack threw Peter into such confusion, that he flatly denied having any acquaintance with Jesus of Galilee. Thus the apostle, who had formerly acknowledged his Master to be Messiah, who was honoured with the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and who had most confidently boasted that he would not forsake him in the greatest dangers, became guilty, in the hour of trial, of the most despicable cowardice. After having stood a little while longer at the fire, he went out into the porch, hoping, probably, to conceal his confusion, and there heard the cock crow for the first time. He had not long, however, remained in the porch, before he met with another servant, or servants, who again charging him with being a disciple, he replied, "Man, I am not." As Matthew and Mark both men-

tion a maid as being the person who, on this second occasion, nonplussed Peter, it is probable, though the Greek word translated man will apply to either sex, that both a male and a female servant attacked him on this present occasion. Torn by a variety of different passions, and finding that not even the porch would afford him concealment, he again returned to the fire, resolving, if possible, to wait the result. Here, however, he met with a kinsman of Malchus, who vehemently charged him with being a member of the Galilean faction. Being now filled with a greater panic than ever, he not only resolutely denied the fact, but, to give the better colour to the lie, he invoked the eternal God as a witness, and imprecated the most deadly curses on his head, if he had the slightest acquaintance with Jesus of Nazareth. This was, however, the utmost limit at which the wickedness of Peter was suffered to arrive; for he had no sooner denied his Master the third time, than the cock again crew; and, probably, either awakened in him the first convictions of his sin, or, at least, made him look to his Master, in order to see if he was taking notice of what had happened: but at the same instant, Jesus, turning about, fixed his eyes on his cowardly disciple. The look pierced him; and, with the crowing of the cock, brought his Master's prediction afresh into his mind. He was stung with deep remorse; and being unable to contain himself, he covered his face with his garment, went out, and wept bitterly. The whole of this transaction brings into our view the weakness of human resolutions, the danger of self-confidence, the forgiving mercy of Jesus, and the powerful influence of his love in subduing the most rebellious passions of the heart.

Luke here introduces the account of the cruel mockings which our Lord Jesus endured in the palace of the high-priest, though it was not quite certain whether this took place before or after his examination. "And the men that held Jesus mocked him and smote him. And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophecy," i. e. inform us by thy pretended supernatural knowledge, "who is he that smote thee? And many other things blasphemously spake they against him."

At length, after a delay of several hours, occasioned, probably, by the absence of some members of the council, the court being duly constituted, and the prisoner placed at the bar, the trial began about break of day. The high-priest commenced his proceedings by inquiring concerning his disciples and his doctrine; why he had collected the one, and what were the peculiar characteristics of the other. All this was done to draw from him, if possible, an explicit declaration, whether or not he was the Messiah; that if he acknowledged he was not, he might be punished for accepting the honours that were due only to that illustrious character; and that if he laid claim to

the title, he might be condemned as a blasphemer. Justly deeming that every attempt to make a prisoner condemn himself was unjust, our Lord called upon them to prove their accusation by witnesses, alleging that if it were well founded, this might easily be done, as he had constantly taught in the temple. An officer that stood by, hearing him give such an answer to the high-priest, smote him with the palm of the hand, as one that did not sufficiently reverence the sacerdotal dignity. Christ replied, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil," by showing wherein it consists; "but if well, why smitest thou me?"

When the council found that Jesus would not thus furnish them with an opportunity to condemn him, "they sought false witness against him, that they might put him to death." For a long time they were unsuccessful, as the testimonies of those who came forward would not agree with each other. At length, there came two false witnesses, who asserted that "this fellow," as they vilely denominated our Lord, "said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, this temple that is made with hands, and to build in three days another temple made without hands." They did not exactly agree even in this testimony; but the judges before whom they spoke gladly accepted their evidence, being before determined to crucify the Lord of Glory. The accusation which was now preferred was a mis-statement and misinterpretation of what Christ said when he had purged the temple at the first passover. "Destroy this temple," pointing, probably, to his body, "and I will raise it up in three days." The variations in the statement were principally these two, that Christ never said that he would destroy this temple, but that, when the Jews destroyed it, he would rebuild it in three days; and that he spoke concerning the temple of his body, and not the temple of Jerusalem. To this accusation our Lord, when called upon by the high-priest, made no reply, upon which the council desired him to tell them plainly whether he was the Christ. He answered, "If I tell you ye will not believe, and if I also ask you," i. e. propose the proofs of my mission, and require you to give your opinion of them, "ye will not answer me, nor let me go." The high-priest, therefore, to cut the trial short, and ensnare Jesus, obliged him, upon oath, to tell whether or no he was the Christ. And Jesus, who could no longer refuse to answer, said, "I am. Nevertheless," or as it ought rather to be rendered, moreover, "I say unto you," though I have here appeared clothed in the weakness of humanity, "hereafter ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven" to judge the nations of the earth. "Then said they all," a number of them crying out together, as in great astonishment at his blasphemy, "Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am," which, in the Jewish mode of

speaking, was a strong affirmation. When the high-priest heard our Lord's second reply, he solemnly rent his clothes, which he was not allowed to do in cases of common grief, crying out that he had spoken blasphemy, and appealing to the council that they needed no further witness. With this the council fully agreed, and immediately condemned him as deserving of death.

Then did Christ suffer a severe and cruel buffeting, similar to, if not the same as, that which we have already described. Thus, as it is excellently observed, was the Judge of the world placed at the bar of his own creatures, falsely accused by the witnesses, unjustly condemned by his judges, and barbarously insulted by all. Yet, because it was agreeable to the end of his coming, he patiently submitted, though he could, with a frown, have made his judges, his accusers, and those who had him in custody, all to drop down dead in a moment, or shrivel into nothing.

The priests and elders having thus condemned Jesus, consulted together again, and resolved to carry him before the governor loaded with chains, that he, likewise, might give sentence upon him. It happened very conveniently for their purpose that the governor was now at Jerusalem, on account of the concourse of people that assembled at the feast, as otherwise they must have gone to Cesarea with him, as it was there the chief magistrate usually resided; and they had not the power themselves of executing any sentence which concerned life and death. It was now early in the morning, and they themselves did not enter into the judgment hall, lest they should receive any pollution that might disqualify them for eating the passover.

In the mean time, Judas Iscariot, finding his project turn out quite otherwise than he expected, was pierced with the deepest remorse on account of what he had done. Therefore, to make some reparation for the injury, he came and confessed his sin openly before the chief priests, scribes, and elders; and, as the most decisive testimony he could give of his Master's innocence, and of his own repentance, desired them to take back the wages of his iniquity. They would not, however, either reverse their sentence, or receive the money; so that, stung with the most bitter recollection of his guilt, he cast down the thirty pieces of silver, and went and hanged himself. Comparing the account of the evangelist Matthew with that of the apostle Peter, in the first chapter of Acts, it is highly probable, that he chose for his desperate purpose a tree which grew on the brink of a precipice; and that either the branch of the tree, or the rope with which he was suspended, giving way, he fell down, and, with the violence of the fall, burst asunder, and his bowels gushed out. Thus perished Judas Iscariot, a miserable example of the fatal influence of covetousness, and a standing

monument of the divine vengeance; fit to deter succeeding generations from acting contrary to conscience through the love of the world, for which this wretch betrayed his Master, and cast away his soul. The thirty pieces of silver were appropriated, by the priests, to buy the potters' field, as a place of interment for strangers. This transaction fulfilled a prophecy which is found in Zechariah, (though by an easy mistake of a transcriber, in consequence of their contracted manner of writing proper names in Greek, it is said to be spoken by Jeremy,) saying, "And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potters' field, as the Lord appointed me." The historians mentioning the purchase of the potters' field with the money for which Judas betrayed his Master, being a public appeal to a very public transaction, puts the truth of this part of the history beyond all manner of exception.

Jesus being carried into the palace, and the priests, with the multitude, having taken their station without, Pilate began by asking them what accusation they had to offer against the prisoner. They, either wishing to extol their own regard to justice, and their extreme unwillingness to punish any of their countrymen, or else to insinuate that the governor had conceived an improper partiality for him, answered, "If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee. Then said Pilate unto them, take ye him, and judge him according to your law," since it is not likely that he has committed any greater crime than the laws of Cæsar permit you to punish. But the priests peremptorily refused this proposal, because it condemned the whole of their procedure; and told him that it was not lawful for them to put any man to death; by which they insinuated that the prisoner was guilty of a capital crime, that he deserved the highest punishment, and that none but the governor himself could give judgment in the cause. The evangelist observes, that the Jews were directed thus to speak and act, that there might be an accomplishment of the divine counsels concerning the manner of our Lord's death, of which counsels Jesus himself had given frequent intimations in the course of his ministry.

Pilate being obliged to proceed to the trial, the Jews began, and accused Jesus of perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, resting their accusation upon this, that he gave himself out to be Christ, a king. Then Pilate entered the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and inquired of him whether this charge was just. Jesus answered him, Dost thou ask this question of thy own accord, because thou thinkest that I have affected regal power? or dost thou ask it according to the information of the priests, who affirm that I have acknowledged myself to be a king? "Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?" and consequently acquainted with your opinions and practices?

“Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me (as a seditious person); what hast thou done” to merit this charge? “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world; if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight,” that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now it is evident that “my kingdom is not from hence. Pilate, therefore, said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, (in the Hebrew style of affirmation,) Thou sayest that I am a king;” and though I am now pleading at the peril of my life, I will not deny the charge; “for to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.” My disciples are instructed in the like doctrine; for every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. This is what Paul calls the good confession, which he tells Timothy Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate. Christ’s assuming the title of king does not appear, when thus explained, to have offended Pilate, who, probably, compared him to the wise man represented by the Stoics, as having arrived at the royal dignity by the complete government of his passions and desires; he therefore only asked, what is this truth you profess to teach? and, without waiting for an answer, went out again to the Jews, and saith unto them, I do not find the least fault in the man you have thus bitterly accused; he appears to me, on the contrary, to be a very harmless and unoffending character.

Neither disconcerted nor abashed by this declaration of Pilate, the priests persisted in their accusations with more vehemence than before, affirming that he had attempted to raise a sedition in Galilee. They artfully mentioned Galilee to inflame Pilate, who, they knew, was prejudiced against the people of that country. To this heavy charge Jesus made no answer at all. Nay, he continued mute, notwithstanding the governor expressly required him to speak in his own defence. A conduct so extraordinary in such circumstances astonished Pilate exceedingly; for he was ignorant of the divine counsels, which were then hastening to an accomplishment.

In the mean time, desirous to get rid of the affair, wishing to conciliate the respect of Herod, and believing that prince to be the best judge concerning an affair which is said to have happened within his province, he sent Jesus to him immediately, as he happened then to be at Jerusalem. The king, who had for a long time desired to see Jesus, rejoiced at this opportunity; for he hoped to have had the pleasure of seeing him work some miracle or other. Nevertheless, because Herod had apostatized from the doctrine of John the Baptist, and had put his teacher to death, Jesus, liberal as he was of his miracles to the poor and afflicted, would not work them to gratify the curiosity of a tyrant, nor so much as answer one of his questions, though he proposed many to him. Herod, finding himself thus disap-

pointed, ordered Christ to be clothed with an old robe, in colour like those which kings used to wear, and permitted his attendants to insult him, and to ridicule his pretensions to the dignity of Messiah. He would not, however, condemn him, being, perhaps, unwilling to increase the remorse which he already felt on account of the murder of the Baptist. "And the same day Herod and Pilate were made friends together; for before this they were at enmity between themselves."

As at former passovers, the governor had obliged the people by releasing any one prisoner whom they pleased from confinement, the crowd which was gathered together began now to desire that they might again experience this favour. There was then in custody a notorious villain, whose name was Barabbas, one who had excited a sedition, in the course of which he had committed murder. Pilate, glad of this opportunity, told the multitude that he was ready to comply with the established custom, and would therefore release either Jesus or Barabbas; but as the former had not had even the charge of murder brought against him, he wished rather that he might be the object of mercy. Pilate is said to have done this, because he had been informed by some of the friends of our Lord that the chief priests had delivered him from motives of envy. While these things were doing, the governor received a message from his wife, who happened to be with him in Jerusalem, and who had had a dream that morning about Jesus, which gave her so great uneasiness, that she could have no rest till she sent an account of it to her husband. The people had not yet said whether they would have Jesus or Barabbas released to them. Therefore, when Pilate received his wife's message, he called the chief priests and the rulers together: and, in the hearing of the multitude, made a speech to them, wherein he gave an account of the examination which Jesus had undergone at his tribunal, and at Herod's; and declared that, in both courts, the trial had turned out honourably to his character. Wherefore, he proposed to them that he should be the object of the people's favour, after having received some chastisement, which might save his prosecutors from the disgrace of having conducted a frivolous and vexatious suit. "But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. And they cried out, (all at once,) saying, away with this man, (lead him to immediate crucifixion,) and release unto us Barabbas." Pilate having again pressed them to prefer Jesus to so abandoned a villain, they began to cry out the more exceedingly, "crucify him, crucify him." Finding it, therefore, in vain to struggle with them any longer, he called for a bason of water, and washed his hands before the multitude, crying out at the same time, that the prisoner was a just man, and that he was innocent of his blood. Whether this was done in conformity to Jewish or heathen customs, it

was a striking appeal both to the senses and consciences of the multitude; and they acknowledged it to be such by replying, "his blood be upon us and on our children"—an imprecation, the weight of which lies heavy on the Jewish nation to this day, and has been awfully fulfilled in a long succession of dreadful calamities. The governor, finding by the sound of the cry that it was general, and that the people were fixed in their determination, passed the sentence which they desired.

The Romans usually scourged the criminals whom they condemned to be crucified; with this custom Pilate complied, and his orders were executed with rigour, and probably in the presence of the Jews.

The soldiers having received orders to crucify Jesus, carried him into the prætorium after they had scourged him. Here they added the shame of disgrace to the bitterness of his punishment; for, sore as he was, by reason of the stripes they had laid on him, they dressed him as a fool in an old purple robe, in derision of his being king of the Jews. Then they put a reed into his hand instead of a sceptre; and, having made a wreath of thorns, they put it on his head for a crown, forcing it down in such a rude manner, that his temples were torn, and his face besmeared with blood. To the Son of God, in this condition, the rude soldiers bowed the knee, pretending respect; but, at the same time, gave him severe blows, which drove the prickles of the wreath afresh into his temples, then spit upon him, to express the highest contempt of him. The sight of the sufferings of Jesus so far excited the compassion of Pilate, that he determined to make another effort to procure his liberation. With this view, therefore, he resolved to carry him out, a spectacle which might have softened the most envenomed, obdurate, enraged enemies. And that the impression might be the stronger, he went out himself and spake to them. [John xix. 4.] "Pilate, therefore, went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you that ye may know that I find no fault in him." Though I have sentenced him to die, and have scourged him that is to be crucified, I bring him forth to you this once, that I may testify to you again how fully I am persuaded of his innocence; and that ye may yet have an opportunity to save his life. Upon this, Jesus appeared upon the pavement, having his face, hair, and shoulders, all covered with blood, and the purple robe bedaubed with spittle. But that the sight of Jesus in this distress might make the greater impression upon the multitude, Pilate, while he was coming forward, cried, "Behold the man!" as if he said, Will nothing make you relent? have you no bowels, no feelings of pity? can you bear to see the innocent thus injured? Perhaps, also, the soldiers were allowed to mock and buffet him anew on the pavement before the multitude: for though the Jews would not take pity on Jesus as a person unjustly condemned, yet, when

they saw one of their countrymen insulted by heathens, it was natural for the governor to think, that their national pride being provoked, they would have demanded his release out of spite. But all was to no purpose. The priests, whose rage and malice had extinguished, not only the sentiments of justice and feelings of pity natural to the human heart, but that love which countrymen bear to one another, no sooner saw Jesus, than they began to fear the fickle populace might relent. And, therefore, laying decency aside, they led the way to the mob, crying out with all their might, "Crucify him! crucify him!" The governor, vexed to find the grandees thus obstinately bent on the destruction of an innocent person, fell into a passion, and told them plainly, that if they would have him crucified, they must do it themselves, because he would not suffer his people to murder a man who was guilty of no crime. But they refused this also, thinking it dishonourable to receive permission to punish one whom his judge considered as undeservedly condemned; and, perhaps, thinking that Pilate might afterwards accuse them of sedition, for executing a sentence themselves which they had extorted from the governor by the vehemence of their clamour. Wherefore, they told him, that as Jesus had spoken blasphemy in calling himself the Son of God, they had a law handed down to them by their ancestors, and originally received from God, by which such offenders were adjudged to death.

When Pilate heard that Jesus called himself the Son of God, he was more perplexed than ever, beginning to apprehend, from the comparison of this declaration with the reports he had frequently received, that he might really be some demigod, or some deity in human shape, such as his religion taught him had, in many instances, appeared. He therefore resolved to proceed cautiously; "and, going again into the judgment-hall, saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou?" art thou a mortal man, or the offspring of the immortal gods? But Jesus gave him no answer, lest Pilate should reverse his sentence, and thus frustrate the great end of his incarnation. "Then Pilate saith unto him, speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above; therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Being sensible that you are Caesar's servant, and accountable to him for your management, I forgive you any injury which, contrary to your inclination, the popular fury constrains you to do unto me. Thou hast thy power from above, from the emperor; for which cause, the Jewish high-priest, who hath delivered me into thy hands, and by pretending that I am Caesar's enemy, obliged thee to condemn me; or, if thou refusest, will accuse thee as negligent of the emperor's interest; he is more to blame than thou. This

sweet and modest answer made such an impression on Pilate, that he went out to the people, and declared his resolution of releasing Jesus, whether they would or no. Finding the governor's determination, they told him, with a threatening air, that by thus releasing one who had endeavoured to excite rebellion, he would show himself unfaithful to the interests of Cæsar, and therefore give them an opportunity of accusing him at Rome. This argument was weighty, and shook the resolution of Pilate to the ground. He was terrified at the very thought of being accused to Tiberius, who, in matters of government, always suspected the worst, and was ready to punish every default with death. Being thus constrained to yield, he was angry with the priests for agitating the people, and resolved to affront them. He, therefore, brought forth Jesus a second time unto the pavement, wearing the purple robe and crown of thorns; and, pointing to him, said, "Behold your king!" either in ridicule of the national expectation, or to show how vain the fears were which they pretended to entertain about the emperor's authority in Judea; the person who was the occasion of them being wholly unambitious, and suffering with the greatest resignation. But they cried out, "Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar;" thus renouncing their allegiance to God, giving up their hope of the Messiah, excluding themselves from every peculiar claim to divine protection, and bringing down upon their heads those awful judgments which have pursued them from that time to the present.

The unwillingness of the governor to pass sentence upon Jesus has something in it very remarkable, as being totally opposite to his general character. To what then could it be owing, that so wicked a man thus steadily adhered to the cause of justice, and defended Christ with an uncommon bravery, till he was vanquished by the threatenings of the grandees? And when he did yield, taking from our Lord his life, how came he to leave him his innocence? Certainly this can be attributed to no meaner cause than the direction of the providence of God, who intended that, while his Son was condemned and executed as a malefactor, his innocence should be announced in the most public manner, and vindicated by the most authentic evidence.

The governor, having now laid aside all thoughts of saving Jesus, gave him up to the will of his enemies, and commanded the soldiers to prepare for his execution. The soldiers obeyed, and led Jesus away, after they had clothed him in his own garments. It is not said that they took the crown of thorns off his head; probably, he died wearing it, that the title which was written over him might be the better understood. According to custom, Jesus walked to the place of execution bearing his cross, that is, the transverse beam to which he was to be nailed.

the other being at the place already. But the fatigue of the preceding night spent without sleep, the sufferings he had undergone in the garden, his having been hurried from place to place, and obliged to stand the whole time of his trials, the want of food, and loss of blood which he had sustained, and not his want of courage on this occasion, concurred to make him so faint, that he was not long able to bear his cross. The soldiers, therefore, laid it on one Simon, a native of Cyrene in Egypt, the father of Alexander and Rufus, two noted men among the first christians at the time Mark wrote his gospel, and forced him to bear it after Jesus. This they did, however, not out of compassion to Jesus, but for fear he had died with fatigue, and by that means have eluded his punishment.

As Jesus went along, he was followed by a great crowd, particularly of women, who sighed, shed tears, beat their breasts, and bitterly lamented the severity of his lot. Jesus, who ever felt the woes of others more than he did his own, forgetting his distress at the very time that it lay heaviest upon him, turned about, and, with a benevolence and tenderness truly divine, said to them, "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, fall on us; and to the hills, cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?" If the Romans are permitted by heaven to inflict such heavy punishments on me, who am innocent, how dreadful must the vengeance be which they shall inflict on the nation whose sins cry aloud to heaven, hastening the pace of the divine judgments, and rendering the perpetrators as fit for punishment as dry wood is for burning.

"And there were also two other malefactors (or rather, 'two others, who were malefactors, were') led with him to be put to death." [Matt. xxvii. 33.] "And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, the place of a skull, they gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall, (Mark, they gave him wine mingled with myrrh.) and when he had tasted thereof he would not drink." When Jesus refused the potion, the soldiers, according to custom, stripped him quite naked, and, in that condition, began to fasten him to the tree. But while they were piercing his hands and his feet with the nails, instead of crying out through the acuteness of his pain, he calmly, though fervently, prayed for them, and for all who had any hand in his death, beseeching God to forgive them, and excusing them by the only circumstance that could alleviate their guilt—their ignorance. This was infinite mockery and goodness, truly worthy of God's only-begotten Son; an example of forgiveness, which, though it never can be equalled by any, is fit to be imitated by all. Thus was the only-begotten Son of God, who

came down to save the world, crucified by his own creatures. "Hear, O heavens! O earth, earth, earth, hear! The Lord hath nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against him."

As usual, the governor put up a title, or writing, on the cross, signifying the crime for which Jesus was condemned. This writing was in black characters on a whitened board; and in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin languages, that foreigners, as well as natives, might be able to read it. All the evangelists have given an account of the title; but the words of it are different in each, which may seem strange, considering that it is an inscription they have undertaken to relate, the propriety whereof lieth in the precise words. But the difference may easily have arisen from the languages in which the title was wrote; for one of the evangelists may have transcribed the words of the Greek inscription; a second might translate the Hebrew; a third, the Latin; and a fourth may have given a different translation of the Hebrew or Latin. Thus the inscription of the title may be exactly given by each of the evangelists, though the words they have mentioned be different, especially as they all agree in the meaning of it: **JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.** When the priests read this title they were exceedingly displeased, because, as it represented the crime for which Jesus was condemned, it insinuated that he had been acknowledged for Messiah. Besides, being placed over the head of one who was dying by the most infamous punishment, it implied, that all who attempted to deliver the Jews should come to the same end. Wherefore, the faith and hope of the nation being thus publicly ridiculed, the priests thought themselves highly affronted, and came to Pilate in great concern, begging that the writing might be altered. But he would not hear them, having intended the affront, because they had constrained him to crucify Jesus, contrary both to his judgment and inclination.

When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, i. e. erected his cross, they divided his garments, and cast lots for the shares. His coat was excepted out of this division, because, being without a seam, they agreed to cast lots for it by itself. The evangelists observe, that all this was done agreeably to ancient prophecy, wherein these circumstances of Messiah's sufferings were mentioned to show that he was to be crucified naked, and consequently that he was to suffer a most ignominious as well as a most painful death. "And it was the third hour, and they crucified him;" or rather, it was the third hour when they crucified him. The evangelist means that it was the third Jewish hour when the cross was erected, and the clothes divided; for he had mentioned our Lord's being nailed to the cross in the preceding verse. "Then were two thieves crucified with him; one on the right hand, and the other on the left." They placed Jesus in the middle by way of mock honour, because he had

called himself a king, and was now crowned with thorns: or, if the priests had any hand in this, they might design thereby to impress the spectators the more strongly with the thought of his being an impostor, and to make them look on him as the chief malefactor. This passage is reconciled with Luke xxiii. 33, by supposing that Luke speaks of the nailing of the three to their crosses, whereas, Matthew and Mark speak of the erection of the crosses. [Mark xv. 28.] "And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors." In giving the history of our Lord's sufferings, the evangelists make their readers sensible, that all the circumstances of them were fore-ordained of God. Their design was to prevent the offence which might otherwise have been taken at Christ's sufferings.

The common people, whom the priests had incensed against our Lord by the malicious lies which they spread concerning him, and which they pretended to found on the evidence of the witnesses, seeing him hang as a malefactor on the cross, and reading the superscription that was placed over his head, expressed their indignation against him by railing on him. The rulers, having, as they imagined, wholly overturned our Lord's pretensions as Messiah, ridiculed him on that head: and, with a meanness of soul which will render them for ever infamous, mocked him while in the agonies of death. They scoffed at the miracles of healing by which he demonstrated himself Messiah, and promised faith, on condition he would prove his pretensions by coming down from the cross. In the mean time, nothing could be more false and hypocritical; for they continued in their unbelief, notwithstanding Jesus raised himself from the dead, which was a much greater miracle than his coming down from the cross would have been; a miracle, also, that was attested by witnesses, whose veracity they could not call in question. "He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him and offering him vinegar, and saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself." The insult did not lie in the offering our Lord vinegar, for that was the soldiers' common drink when mixed with water; but it lay in what they said to him when they offered it, which showed that they did him the office, not out of compassion, but purely with a view to keep him alive, either that they might torment him the longer, or see him descend from the cross. Or, if they did it from compassion, they accompanied their kindness with a gibe. "The thieves, also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth." Luke says, that only one of them did so, and that the other exercised a most extraordinary faith when our Lord was deserted by God, mocked by men, and hanged upon the cross as one of the vilest malefactors. There is no contradiction between the evangelists, as in scrip-

ture a single thing is often expressed in the plural, especially when it is not the writer's intention to be more particular. See, for examples, Judges xii. 7; Matt. xxi. 7; Luke xxiv. 6, 33; and I Samuel xviii. 21. [Luke xxiii. 39—43.] "And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus answered, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

When we call to mind the perfect innocence of our Lord Jesus, the uncommon love he bare to mankind, and the many substantial good offices which he did to multitudes groaning under the burden of their afflictions; when we think of the esteem in which the common people held him all along, how cheerfully they followed him to the remotest corners of the country, and with what pleasure they heard his discourses; it cannot but be matter of the greatest surprise, to find them, at the conclusion, rushing all of a sudden into the opposite extremes, and every body, as it were combined to treat him with the most barbarous cruelty. When Pilate asked the people if they inclined to have Jesus released, his disciples, though they were very numerous, and might have made a great appearance in his behalf, remained quite silent: the Roman soldiers, notwithstanding their general had declared him an innocent person most inhumanly insulted him; the scribes and Pharisees ridiculed him: the common people, who had received him with hosannas a few days before, wagged their heads at him as they passed by, and railed on him as a deceiver: nay, the very thief on the cross reviled him. This sudden revolution in the humours of the nation may seem unaccountable. Yet, if we could assign a proper reason for the silence of the disciples, the principles which influenced the rest might be discovered in their several speeches. Christ's followers had attached themselves to him in expectation of being raised to great wealth and power in his kingdom: but seeing no appearance of what they looked for, they permitted him to be condemned, perhaps, because they thought it would have obliged him to save his life by a miracle, which would have broken the Roman yoke. With respect to the soldiers, they were angry that any one should have pretended to royalty in Judea, where Cæsar had established his authority. Hence they insulted him with the title of king, and paid him mock honours. The common people seemed to have lost their opinion of him, because he had neither convinced the council, nor rescued himself when they condemned him. They began, therefore, to look upon the story that was industriously reported of him, viz. his having boasted

that he could destroy and build the temple in three days, as a kind of blasphemy, because it required divine power to execute such an undertaking. Accordingly, in derision, they saluted him by the title of the destroyer and builder of the temple in three days; and, with a malicious sneer, bade him save himself and come down from the cross, insinuating that the one was a much easier matter than the other. The priests and scribes were filled with the most implacable hatred of him, because he had torn off their masks, and showed them to the people in their true colours. Wherefore, they ridiculed his miracles from whence he drew his reputation, by pretending to acknowledge them; but, at the same time, adding a reflection, which they thought entirely confuted them. "He saved others; himself he cannot save." To conclude: the thief also fancied that he must have delivered both himself and them if he had been the Messiah: but as no sign of such a deliverance appeared, he upbraided him for making pretensions to that high character, saying, "If thou be the Christ, save thyself and us."

During the last three hours that our Lord hanged on the cross, a darkness covered the face of the earth, to the great terror and amazement of the people present at his execution. This extraordinary alteration in the face of nature was peculiarly proper whilst the Sun of Righteousness was withdrawing his beams from the land of Israel, and from the world; not only because it was a miraculous testimony borne by God himself to his innocence, but also because it was a fit emblem of his departure, and its effects, at least, till his light shone out anew, with additional splendour, in the ministry of his apostles. The darkness which now covered Judea, together with the neighbouring countries, beginning about noon, and continuing till Jesus expired, was not the effect of an ordinary eclipse of the sun, for that can never happen, except when the moon is about the change; whereas, now it was full moon; not to mention that total darkneses occasioned by eclipses of the sun never continue above twelve or fifteen minutes. Wherefore, it must have been produced by the divine power, in a manner we are not able to explain. Accordingly, Luke, after relating that "there was darkness over all the earth," adds, "and the sun was darkened," which, perhaps, may imply that the darkness of the sun did not occasion, but proceeded from the darkness that was over all the land. [Luke xxiii. 44.]

Farther; the christian writers, in their most ancient apologies to the heathens, affirm, that as it was full moon at the passover when Christ was crucified, no such eclipse could happen by the course of nature. They observe, also, that it was taken notice of as a prodigy by the heathens themselves. To this purpose, we have still remaining the words of Phlegon, the astronomer and freed-man of Adrian, cited by Origen from his book, at a time when it was in the hands of the public. The

heathen author, in treating of the fourth year of the two hundred and second Olympiad, which is the nineteenth of Tiberius, and supposed to be the year in which our Lord was crucified, tells us, 'that the greatest eclipse of the sun that ever was, happened then; for the day was so turned into night, that the stars in the heaven were seen.' If Phlegon, as christians generally suppose, is speaking of the darkness which accompanied our Lord's crucifixion, it was not circumscribed within the land of Judea, but must have been universal. This many learned men have believed, particularly Huet, Grotius, Gusset, Reland, and Alphen. Josephus, it is true, takes no notice of this wonderful phenomenon; but the reason may be, that he was unwilling to mention any circumstance favourable to christianity, of which he was no friend. Luke mentions the eclipse immediately after the repentance of the thief, and connects the two in the following manner: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise. And it was about the sixth hour, and there was darkness," &c. Perhaps this may imply that the note of time mentioned must be referred both to the thief and to the eclipse. It was about the sixth hour when the thief expressed his repentance, and at the same time the eclipse came on, about three hours before Jesus expired.

When the darkness began, the disciples would naturally look on it as a prelude to their Master's deliverance: for, though the chief priests, elders, and people, in mockery, desired him to come down, his friends could not help thinking that he who had delivered so many from incurable diseases, who had created limbs for the maimed, and eyes for the blind, and had raised the dead to life, might easily save himself, even from the cross. When, therefore, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary Magdalene, and the beloved disciple, observed the heavens beginning to grow black, they drew near, probably in expectation that he was going to shake the frame of nature, [Hag. ii. 6, 7.] and unloose himself from the cross, and take due vengeance on his enemies. [John xix. 25.] "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene." Jesus was now in the depth of his own sufferings; yet, when he saw his mother and her companions, their grief affected him to a great degree, particularly the distress of his mother. Wherefore, though he was almost at the point of death, he spake a few words, in which he expressed the most affectionate regard both to her and to them. For, that she might have some consolation under the greatness of her sorrows, he told her the disciple whom he loved would, for the sake of that love, perform to her, after he was gone, the office of a son. He, therefore, enjoined upon them both henceforth to consider each other in the endearing relation of parent and child. The favourite disciple gladly undertook the office assigned him; for he carried Mary

home with him, her husband Joseph, it seems, being dead. Thus in the midst of the heaviest sufferings that ever human nature sustained, Jesus demonstrated a strength of benevolence perfectly unexampled and divine.

A little before he expired, Jesus exclaimed, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" thus repeating the first verse of the twenty-second Psalm, pronouncing it in the Syriac dialect, which was either the common language of the country, or nearly resembled it; and speaking with a loud voice, that all who stood round might hear him distinctly, and know that he was the person whose complaint was expressed by David. It was, certainly, not the agony resulting from his wounds which impelled the Son of God to pour forth this bitter lamentation, but a sense of his Father's displeasure with the sins of his people; for he was now drinking the dregs of that cup of which he had begun to taste in the garden of Gethsemane. "And some of them that stood by," either misunderstanding what he said, or intending to turn it into ridicule, "when they heard it, said, Behold, he calleth Elias." Jesus knowing that he had now accomplished every thing required by God of the Messiah, and foretold by the prophets, excepting that circumstance of his sufferings which was predicted, Psalm lxxix. 21, "In my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink," in order to give occasion to the accomplishment of this likewise, he said aloud, "I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar." The Roman soldiers always drank their water mixed with vinegar; for which purpose, they usually carried vinegar with them in vessels when on duty. "And straightway one of them ran and took a sponge, and put it on a reed," a stalk of the hyssop, "and gave him to drink." This office they did to Jesus, not so much from pity as to preserve him alive, that they might enjoy his sufferings, or in hopes of seeing the miracle of Elijah's descent from heaven. "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished;" the predictions of the prophets are fulfilled, and the great end of my mission, the redemption of lost sinners, is accomplished. He then, directing his speech to his Father, said, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit; and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost."

While Jesus breathed his last, the veil of the temple was miraculously rent from top to bottom, probably, in presence of the priest who burnt the incense in the holy place at the evening sacrifice, and who, no doubt, gave an account of it when he came out; for the ninth hour, at which Jesus expired, was the hour of the evening sacrifice. "And the graves in the rocks were opened, and many bodies of saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city Jerusalem, and appeared unto many." It would seem that these saints were disciples who had died but lately; for

when they went into the city, they were known to be saints by the persons who saw them, which could not well have happened had they not been their contemporaries. And as the rending of the veil of the temple intimated that the entrance into the holy place, the type of heaven, was now laid open to all nations; so the resurrection of a number of saints from the dead demonstrated the power of death and the grave was broken; the sting was taken from death, and the victory wrested from the grave. In short, our Lord's conquests over the enemies of mankind were showed to be complete, and an earnest was given of a general resurrection from the dead.

“And when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, and also saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God,” the Messiah; or, as others interpret it, a Son of God, a divine personage. The spectators in general were also now deeply affected. They had been instant, with loud voices, to have him crucified; but now that they saw the face of the creation darkened with a sudden gloom during his crucifixion, and found his death accompanied with an earthquake, as if nature had been in an agony when he died, they rightly interpreted these prodigies to be so many testimonies from God of his innocence; and their passions, which had been inflamed and exasperated against him, became quite calm, or moved them in his behalf. Some, however, could not forgive themselves for neglecting to accept his life when the governor offered to release him; others were stung with remorse for having had an active hand, both in his death, and in the insults that were offered to him; others felt the deepest grief at the thought of his lot, which was undeservedly severe; and these various passions appeared in their countenances; for they came away from the cruel execution, pensive and silent, with downcast eyes, and hearts ready to burst: or, groaning deeply within themselves, they shed tears, smote their breasts, and wailed greatly. The grief which they now felt for Jesus was distinguished from their former rage against him, by this remarkable character, that their rage was produced entirely by the craft of the priests, who had wickedly incensed them; whereas their grief was the genuine feeling of their own hearts, greatly affected with the truth and innocence of him that was the object of their commiseration. Wherefore, as in this mourning flattery had no share, the expression of their sorrow was such as became a real and unfeigned passion. Nor was this the temper only of a few who may be thought to have been Christ's particular friends. It was the general condition of the people who had come in such numbers to look on, that when they parted after the execution, they covered the roads, and, as it were, darkened the whole fields around. The three first evangelists

inform us that Mary the mother of our Lord, Mary Magdalene, and Salome the mother of Zebedee's children, stood afar off looking on. Yet this is not inconsistent with John xix. 25, where our Lord's mother, and her sister Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene, are said to have stood beside the cross. They were kept at a distance awhile, perhaps by the guards, or they were afraid to approach. But when the greatest part of the soldiers were drawn off, and the eclipse was begun, they gathered courage, and came so near, that Jesus had an opportunity to speak to them a little before he expired.

The law expressly prohibited the bodies of those who were hanged to remain all night on the tree [Deut. xxi. 22.]; for that reason, as well as because the sabbath was at hand, the Jews begged the favour of Pilate that the legs of the three crucified persons might be broken to hasten their death. Pilate consented, and gave the order they desired; but the soldiers appointed to execute it, perceiving that Jesus was dead already, did not take the trouble of breaking his legs, one of them only thrust a spear into his side. The spear thrust into our Lord's side is thought to have reached his heart; for the water issuing from the wound seems to show that the pericardium was pierced, and that Jesus had been some time dead. If, however, there had remained any life, this wound must have instantly killed him. It is therefore, in every respect, proper, that this fact should be recorded; and it is accordingly attested by John with the utmost solemnity. "These things were done, that the scripture," concerning the paschal lamb, "should be fulfilled, a bone of him should not be broken. And again another scripture [Zech. xii. 10.] saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced."

Among the disciples of Jesus was one named Joseph of Arimathea, a man remarkable for his fortune and office, as he was a rich man, and member of the Jewish sanhedrim. He had nothing to fear from the governor, who had all along laboured to release Jesus; but had reason to apprehend the ill-will of the Jews, for the pious action he was going to perform. Nevertheless, the regard he had for his Master overcame all other considerations, and he asked leave to take his body down; because, if no friend had obtained it, it would have been ignominiously cast out among the executed malefactors. "And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead:" for, though he had given orders to break the legs of the crucified persons, he knew they might live some hours in that condition. "And calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead: and when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph." In discharging what he supposed to be the last duty to his Master, he was assisted by Nicodemus, who, though he once came to Jesus by night, for fear of the Jews, now showed superior courage to any of the

apostles, bringing with him spices for the funeral of our Lord. These two, therefore, taking down the naked body, wrapped it in linen with the spices, and laid it in a new sepulchre, which Joseph had caused to be erected for himself in his garden. This sepulchre, in which they laid our Lord, was, probably, unfinished, and had not yet got a lock on its door; therefore they fastened the door by rolling a great stone to it.

The Galilean women, who had waited on Jesus in his last moments, and accompanied him to the sepulchre, observing that his funeral rites were performed in a hurry, agreed among themselves to come, when the sabbath was past, and embalm their dead Lord, by anointing and swathing him in a proper manner. Accordingly, when he was laid in the sepulchre, they returned to the city, and brought what other spices were necessary for that purpose; Nicodemus having furnished a mixture only of myrrh and aloes.

“Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation,” that is, in the evening of the crucifixion, after the sun was set, “the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate, saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead; so the last error shall be worse than the first.” Pilate, thinking their request reasonable, allowed them to take a sufficient number of soldiers out of the cohort, which, at the feast, came from the castle Antonia, and kept guard in the porticoes of the temple; the priests going along with this party, placed them in their post, and sealed the stone that was rolled to the door of the sepulchre, to hinder the guards from combining with the disciples in carrying on any fraud. Thus, while the priests cautiously proposed to prevent our Lord’s resurrection from being palmed upon the world, resolving, no doubt, to show his body publicly after the third day as that of an impostor, they put the truth of Christ’s resurrection beyond all question, by furnishing a number of unexceptionable witnesses to attest the fact.

CHAPTER XV.

Christ's several interviews with his Disciples, from his Resurrection to his Ascension into Heaven.

The hypothesis which is followed in this chapter—Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James go out to see the sepulchre, but are terrified by an earthquake—an angel descends and Jesus arises—on the morning of the first day of the week all the women go to the sepulchre—they enter, but cannot find the body—Mary Magdalene returns to inform the disciples of this—the women who stay behind see a vision of angels in the sepulchre, upon which they likewise run into the city—Peter and John visit the sepulchre—Mary Magdalene follows them thither, where, after they are gone, she sees first a vision of angels, and next Jesus himself; then runs a second time into the city, to inform the rest—the company of women set out for the sepulchre a second time in quest of Peter and John—Jesus meets them, and bids them tell his disciples to go into Galilee, promising to show himself unto them there—the guards inform the priests of Christ's resurrection—Mary Magdalene and the company of women return from their several interviews with Jesus—Peter returns to the sepulchre a second time, and as he returns sees the Lord—Jesus appears to two of his disciples on the road to Emmaus—he appears to his apostles on the evening of the day whereon he arose, Thomas being absent—he appears to the apostles, and removes the unbelief of Thomas—miraculous draught of fishes—Jesus appears to five hundred of the brethren in Galilee, and after that to the apostle James alone—the ascension.

THE concluding part of the evangelical history, as it is the most interesting, so it is usually reckoned the most difficult of the whole. We do not, therefore, deem it safe to advance any hypothesis of our own, but conceive it will be more for the satisfaction, as well as benefit of the reader, to give that of Mr. West, the celebrated translator of Pindar, alleging the principal arguments by which it is supported, and the most important objections that are made against it.

He sets out by endeavouring to ascertain the time when the first visit was attempted to be made to the sepulchre. [Matt. xxviii. 1.] "In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn towards the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre;" to see if the stone was still at the door; because by that they would know whether the body was within; for, from John xix. 42, ("There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews' preparation day, for the sepulchre was nigh at hand,") it would appear, that the friends of Jesus intended to carry him somewhere else; perhaps, because Joseph's sepulchre was not yet finished, being a new one. The women knowing this, had reason to think that Joseph

would remove the body as soon as the sabbath was ended. Accordingly, they bought the spices; they judged it proper to send two of their number to see if Jesus was still in the sepulchre, and if he was not, to inquire of the gardener where he was laid, [John xx. 15.] that when the spices were prepared, that is, pounded, mixed, and melted into an ointment, they might go directly to the place and embalm him.'

In support of this opinion, it is alleged that the word translated *dawn*, ought rather to be rendered *draw on*, as the first day of the week, according to the Jewish reckoning, began, not at midnight, but at sun-set on the Saturday evening; and that, understanding the expression thus, it expressly affirms the time of this first attempt to visit the sepulchre to have been on that day.

'For these reasons, I think it probable, that the two Marys attempted to visit the sepulchre in the end of the Jewish sabbath, or about the setting of the sun on our Saturday evening. I say, attempted to visit the sepulchre, because it does not appear that they actually went thither. While they were going, there was a great earthquake, viz. that which preceded the most memorable event which ever happened among men, the resurrection of the Son of God from the dead. This earthquake, I suppose, frightened the women to such a degree, that they immediately turned back: or their return may have been rendered necessary by a storm, if this earthquake was attended with a storm: or we may espouse the opinion of Hammond and Le Clerc, who interpret the original words in this passage of a tempest only. As the tempest, therefore, or earthquake, which preceded our Lord's resurrection, was a great one, it could hardly fail to lay the women under a necessity of returning. The guards, it is true, remained at the sepulchre all the while; but there was a great difference between the tempers of the persons, not to mention that the men being soldiers, duty obliged them to keep their post as long as possible. The whole of this account acquires a further degree of probability from the following remark: that on supposition our Lord's resurrection was preceded by a tempest or earthquake, or both, which frightened the two Marys as they went to the sepulchre, and made them turn back, we can see the reason why the women did not go out with the spices till the morning, notwithstanding, according to Luke, they had bought and prepared, at least, the greatest part of them, the evening on which Jesus was buried; and notwithstanding the nature of embalming required that they should make as much despatch as possible.

'After the two Marys returned, they went with their companions, and bought what spices were necessary to complete the preparation. So Mark says, xvi. 1, "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, bought sweet spices, that they might come and

anoint him." Having set out for the sepulchre, in the end of the Jewish sabbath, when the first day of the week was drawing on, by the time that they returned, they found their companions going to buy more spices, the sabbath being ended, and so went along with them, as Mark affirms. For though the storm had hindered them from proceeding to the sepulchre, they might attend their companions without much inconveniency, especially if the spices were to be had in any shop hard by. While the women were making these preparations for embalming Jesus, he arose from the dead; his resurrection being preceded by the descent of an angel, whose appearance at the sepulchre was ushered in with a great earthquake, and a storm which lasted several hours. [Matt. xxviii. 2.] "And, behold, there was a great earthquake; for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." The angel who now descended, assuming a very awful and majestic form, the guards were exceedingly affrighted. [3, 4.] "His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." Probably, they fainted away. It is not said at what particular instant Jesus arose, whether it was before the guards fell into the swoon, or after they recovered themselves and fled. Mark, indeed, by observing that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene, may be thought to insinuate that the guards did not see him when he arose; yet the evangelist's words do not necessarily imply this; for his meaning may be, that he appeared to Mary Magdalene first of all the disciples only. Besides, though the guards saw him arise, it was, properly speaking, no appearance of Christ to them. However, be this as it will, it is certain that Jesus was arisen and gone before any of the women arrived at the sepulchre. Probably, also, the angel had left the stone on which he sat at first, and had entered into the sepulchre; for, as we shall see immediately, when he showed himself to the women, he invited them, not to go, but to come, and see the place where the Lord lay. Besides, when the women observed the stone rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, they saw no angel sitting on the stone, as is evident from their going so briskly forward.

"On the morning of the first day of the week, according to our form of the day, when the weather was become calm, and every thing was made ready, all the women went out together very early, carrying the spices which they had prepared, to the sepulchre, at which they arrived about the rising of the sun. [Luke xxiv. 1.] "Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them." [Mark xvi. 2.] "And very early in the morning, the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the

rising of the sun." [John xx. 1.] "The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre."

That the journey of the women to the sepulchre in the morning, described by Mark and Luke, was made by all of them in one company, at one time, is highly probable, since the women said to have gone to the sepulchre are the same in the three evangelists, and the time fixed for their journey by each is the same.

[Mark xvi. 3.] "And, (now while the women were going along,) they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? for it was very great." It seems, they knew not what had happened: for those of them who had set out the preceding evening had not got to the sepulchre. At length, drawing near, they had their uneasiness removed; the stone was rolled away, and the door open. "And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away. [Luke xxiv. 3.] And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus." Though they felt all round the sepulchre they could not find the body. Being, therefore, in great perplexity, it is natural to imagine that they would consult among themselves about the steps they were next to take. The issue of their deliberation seems to have been, that Mary Magdalene, whose zeal disposed her cheerfully to undertake the office, should go immediately to the apostles, and inquire of them whether the body had been removed with their knowledge, and where they had directed it to be laid: and that, in the mean time, the rest were to search the garden carefully, in order to find it. Coming out of the sepulchre, therefore, Mary Magdalene departed and ran into the city, where she found the apostles, and told them that the body was taken away. [John xx. 2.] "Then she runneth and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." Peter and John only are mentioned in this relation; but the circumstances taken notice of by the other evangelists, show that the apostles lodged all together in one house, as they used to do while their Master was alive. If so, it is reasonable to believe that they all heard Mary Magdalene's report, and were anxious to know the truth of it. But, in their present situation, they would judge it imprudent to go out in a body to examine the matter, and would rather depute two of their number for that purpose. Accordingly, I suppose, that Peter and John went to the sepulchre by the advice and appointment of the rest. "Peter, therefore, went forth, and that other disciple, and came (or rather, went) to the sepulchre," as is plain from the following verse, 4, "so they ran both together."

' While these things were doing in the city, the women at

the sepulchre, having searched the garden to no purpose, resolved, now they had more light, to examine the sepulchre a second time; when, to their great surprise, just as they entered, they saw a beautiful young man in shining raiment, very glorious to behold, sitting on the right side. [Mark xvi. 5.] “And entering into the sepulchre, (a second time, namely, after Magdalene was gone, and after they had searched awhile for the body in the garden,) they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment.” Matthew, verses 4, 5, says, that it was the angel who had rolled away the stone, and frightened the guards from the sepulchre. It seems, he had now laid aside the terrors in which he was arrayed, and assumed the form and dress of a human being, in order that, when the women saw him, they might be as little terrified as possible. [Mark xvi. 5.] “And they were affrighted.” So affrighted, we may suppose, that they were on the point of turning back: but the angel, to banish their fears, told them, with a gentle accent, that he knew their errand. [Matt. xxviii. 5.] “And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye; (Mark, be not affrighted) for I know that ye seek Jesus (Mark, of Nazareth,) which was crucified. [6.] He is not here, for he is risen, as he said:”—then he invited them to come down, and see the place where he had lain, i. e. to look on the linen rollers and the napkin which had been about his body, but which he had left behind when he arose; for to look at the place in any other view, would not have been a confirmation of their faith in his resurrection. “Come see (Mark, behold) the place where the Lord lay (Mark, where they laid him).” This is the appearance of the one angel which Matthew and Mark have described. The women, much encouraged by the agreeable news, as well as by the sweet accent with which the heavenly being spake, went down into the sepulchre, and, lo, another angel appeared. Probably, the one sat at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain; the situation in which they showed themselves by-and-by to Mary Magdalene. [John xx. 12.] This latter is the vision of two angels, which Luke, who wrote his gospel first, has described as the principal vision. [xxiv. 3, 4.]

[Luke xxiv. 3, 4.] “And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments.” From this account, indeed, it is generally inferred, that the angels appeared to the women on their first entering into the sepulchre. But the conclusion is by no means certain; for the evangelist does not tell us where the angels appeared, whether in the sepulchre, or out of it. In his account, therefore, of the matter, there is nothing forbidding us to suppose that the women, after missing the body, came out and searched for it up and down the garden, then went in a second

time, and discovered the angels as they entered; for they were still in perplexity when the heavenly messengers spake to them, which is all that Luke affirms. And as there is nothing in Luke's narration forbidding us to make the supposition just now mentioned, so the circumstance taken notice of by John, that Magdalene told the apostles they had taken away the Lord's body, obliges us to make it: for if, when she entered into the sepulchre with her companions, the angel had appeared to them and told them that Jesus was risen, she could not have spoken in this manner to the apostles. Luke, indeed, joins the appearance of the two angels with the account which he gives of the women's perplexity, occasioned by their not finding the body, because he did not judge it worth while to distinguish the appearance of the one angel, while the women were on the top of the stairs, from the appearance of both the angels after they were come down, as they happened in close succession. Matthew and Mark have supplied this defect, by informing us, that immediately upon their entering, the women saw an angel, who told them Jesus was risen, and desired them to come down and see the place where the Lord lay. Because the women were exceedingly afraid when the first angel appeared, he spake to them with much mildness. [Matt. xxviii. 5.] But now that their terror was a little abated, and they were come down into the sepulchre, he chid them gently for seeking the living among the dead; by which we are not to understand their coming down in obedience to his invitation, but their having brought spices to the sepulchre, with an intention to do their Master an office that belonged only unto the dead; for that was a clear proof of their not entertaining the least thought of his resurrection; accordingly, he found fault with them also, for not believing the things which Jesus had spoken to them in Galilee, concerning his rising from the dead on the third day; or rather, for not remembering them so as to have had some hopes of his reviving again. [Luke xxiv. 5, 6, 7.] "And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? he is not here, but is risen; remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again." This evangelist, having no intention to tell which of the angels spake, attributes to them both, words which, in the nature of the thing, could be spoken only by one of them, perhaps, the one mentioned by Matthew and Mark.

Farther: as it is the custom of the sacred historians to mention one person or thing only, even in cases where more were concerned, the difficulty arising from Luke's speaking of two angels, and the rest but one, would have been nothing; because we might have supposed that all the women went into the sepulchre together, as Luke tells us; and that when they

did not find the body, they despatched Mary Magdalene immediately into the city with an account of the matter; and that when she was gone, the angels appeared unto the rest while they were yet in the sepulchre. But as Luke affirms that they had searched the sepulchre, and were in perplexity on account of the body being taken away, before the angels appeared; and Matthew intimates that they were out of the sepulchre when they saw the vision he speaks of, chapter xxviii. 6; we are obliged to make the suppositions mentioned above.

• When the women had satisfied their curiosity by looking at the place where the Lord had lain, and where nothing was to be found but the linen clothes in which he had been swathed, the angel who first appeared to them bade them go and tell his disciples, particularly Peter, the glad news of his resurrection from the dead, that he was going before them to Galilee, and that they should have the pleasure of seeing him there. [Matt. xxviii. 7.] “And go quickly, and tell his disciples, (Mark, and Peter,) that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee, there shall ye see him, (Mark, as he said unto you,) lo, I have told you.” This message, as well as that from Jesus himself, [Matt. xxviii. 9, 10.] was sent to all the disciples, and not to the apostles in particular. The reason may have been this: Our Lord intending to visit his apostles that very evening, there was no occasion to order them into Galilee to see him. But, as most of his disciples were now in Jerusalem celebrating the passover, it may easily be imagined, that, on receiving the news of their Master’s resurrection, many of them would resolve to tarry, in expectation of meeting with him; a thing which must have been very inconvenient for them at that time of the year, when the harvest was about to begin, the sheaf of first-fruits being always offered on the second day of the passover week. Wherefore, to prevent their being so long from home, the messages mentioned were sent, directing them to return into Galilee, well assured that they should have the pleasure of seeing their Lord there; and, by that means, be happily relieved from the suspicion of his being an impostor, which, no doubt, had arisen in their minds when they saw him expire on the cross. Accordingly, he appeared, as we shall see by-and-by, to more than five hundred of them at once, who, in consequence of this appointment, gathered together to see him. The women, highly elated with the news of their Lord’s resurrection, and of his intending to show himself publicly in Galilee, went out of the sepulchre immediately, and ran to bring the disciples word, [Luke xxiv. 8.] “And they remembered his words. [Matt. xxviii. 8.] And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, (Mark, they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre, for they trembled, and were amazed,) And did run to bring his disciples word. [Mark xvi. 8.] Neither said they any thing to any man; for they were

afraid. [Luke xxiv. 9.] And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven." The eleven were not all present when the women came, for Peter and John were gone to the sepulchre. Yet, as it was not Luke's intention to mention every circumstance minutely, he speaks of their informing the eleven in general, though from Matthew it appears that the women did not tell these things to Peter and John till afterwards: "and to all the rest," namely, at different times. [10.] "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles." When the women came to the apostles the first time, Mary Magdalene was at the sepulchre with Peter and John: but her report, though made separately, is fitly joined by Luke with that of her companions for various reasons. [Luke xxiv. 11.] "And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not." Their Master's crucifixion gave such a severe blow to their faith, that they laid aside all the thoughts that they had entertained of his being the Messiah: and, therefore, they had not the least expectation of his resurrection, notwithstanding he had often predicted it to them; nay, they looked upon the story which the women told them about it as a mere chimera, the delusion of a disordered imagination.

While the women were running into the city to impart the glad tidings of the Lord's resurrection, which they had received from the angels, Peter and John were on the road to the sepulchre, having set out to examine the truth of what Mary Magdalene had told them: but, happening to go by a different street, or, perhaps, entering the garden of the sepulchre by a different door from that through which the company of women had departed, they did not meet with them. The two disciples made all the haste they could: for they were anxious to have their doubts cleared up; but John, being the younger man, outran Peter, and got to the sepulchre first. He did not, however, go in; he only stooped down, and saw the rollers which had been about the body. [John xx. 4.] "So they ran both together; and the other disciple did out-run Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. [5.] And he stooping down," and looking in, "saw the linen clothes lying, yet went he not in." As Christ's feet had lain in the farthest right corner of the sepulchre, it is natural to think, that when he revived, stood up, and put off his grave-clothes, he would leave them in that corner where they might easily be seen by John, though he did not enter, just as the women saw the angel who sat in that corner before they descended. [6.] "Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie: [7.] And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself." After Jesus revived, it was necessary that he should strip him-

self of the rollers, in order to his being clothed with garments fit for motion and action. Some think that he folded up the napkin to show the perfect calmness and composure with which he arose, as out of an ordinary sleep. But whatever be in this, certain it is that he left the grave-clothes in the sepulchre, to show that his body was not stolen away by his disciples, who, in such a case, would not have taken time to strip it. Besides, the circumstance of the grave-clothes disposed the disciples themselves to believe, when the resurrection was related to them. The garments which Jesus formed for himself seem to have been but mean, such as he used in his life-time: for when Mary Magdalene first saw him, she took him for the gardener; and the disciples going to Emmaus, thought him a person in rank not superior to themselves. [8.] "Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed." Finding nothing in the sepulchre but the clothes, he believed the body was taken away, as Mary Magdalene had told him. This, as I take it, is all that John means, when he tells us that Peter and he, after searching the sepulchre, saw and believed. Mary Magdalene, it would appear, had told them, not only that the body was taken away, but that the clothes were left behind; a circumstance which filled them with wonder. They saw them, however, with their own eyes, and believed her report. Perhaps they imagined that Joseph or Nicodemus had removed it, after having embalmed it anew, and swathed it with other rollers than those they left behind: for that they had not the least suspicion of Christ's resurrection, is evident from the apology which John himself makes for the stupidity of the disciples in this matter. [9.] "For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must arise again from the dead." And as they did not know from the scripture, nor from our Lord's own predictions, that he was to rise again, so neither could they collect it from any thing Mary Magdalene had told them; for she herself had not the least notion of it, even when Jesus appeared to her, as is plain from what he says in the thirteenth and fifteenth verses.

[10.] "Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping." It seems, she had followed Peter and John to the sepulchre, but did not return home with them, being anxious to find the body. Accordingly, stepping down into the sepulchre to examine it again, she saw two angels sitting, the one at the head, the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. From her seeing both the angels, it is probable that she was on the second step of the stair, with an intention to descend; or if, from her turning about and seeing Jesus, who stood without the sepulchre, it is thought she was on the threshold or first step only, with a design to look in, she may be supposed to have bowed her body so as to have had the whole cavity of the sepulchre under her

eye at once. Thus she could see the two angels, who, a little before, had appeared in the same position to the women with the spices, [Luke xxiv. 4.] but had kept themselves invisible all the while that Peter and John were in the sepulchre. "And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, [12.] And seeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. [13.] And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. [14.] And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, (probably being affrighted,) and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus." The tears in her eyes, and the new garment wherewith Jesus was clad, made her at a loss to know him, till he called her by her name with his usual tone of voice. [15.] "Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." She thought they had removed him, because he was troublesome in the sepulchre, [16.] "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turneth herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master." She knew him by his voice and countenance. Wherefore, falling down, she would have embraced his knees, [see Matt. xxviii. 9.] according to that modesty and reverence with which the women of the east saluted the men, especially those who were their superiors in station. [2 Kings ix. 27; Luke vii. 38; Matt. xxviii. 9.] But Jesus refused this compliment, telling her that he was not going immediately into heaven. He was to show himself often to his disciples before he ascended; so that she should have frequent opportunities of testifying her regard to him.

Moreover, by ordering her to carry the news of his resurrection to his disciples, he insinuated that it was altogether improper to waste the time in paying him the compliments of salutation. [17.] "Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." The manner in which Jesus notified his resurrection to his disciples deserves attention. He sent them a message of such a nature as to put them in mind of what he had, in his life-time, told them concerning his ascension into heaven: go unto my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father. Do not barely tell my disciples that I am risen from the dead, but that I am about to fulfil the promise I made them of ascending where I was before; and that I am going to my Father's house to prepare mansions for them; and that they can no longer doubt of these things, seeing I am risen from the dead, and thus far on my way to heaven. Thus Jesus, having finished the work of our redemp-

tion, contemplated the effects of it with singular pleasure. The blessed relation between God and man, which had been long cancelled by sin, was now happily renewed. God, who had disowned them on account of their rebellion, was again reconciled to them; he was become their God and Father; they were exalted to the honourable relation of Christ's brethren and God's children; and their Father loved them with an affection greatly superior to that of the most tender-hearted parent. The kindness of this message will appear above all praise, if we call to mind the late behaviour of the persons to whom it was sent. They had every one of them forsaken Jesus in his greatest extremity; but he graciously forgave them; and to assure them of their pardon, called them by the endearing name of his brethren: "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Thus Mark xvi. 9, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."

'There is something very remarkable in this passage of the history. None of the apostles or male disciples were honoured with the first visions of the angels, or with the immediate news of Christ's resurrection, far less with the first appearance of Jesus himself. The angels in the sepulchre kept themselves invisible all the while Peter and John were there. Perhaps the male disciples in general had this mark of disrespect put on them, both because they had, with shameful cowardice, forsaken their Master when he fell into the hands of his enemies, and because their faith was so weak, that they had absolutely despaired of his being Messiah when they saw him expire on the cross. [Luke xxiv. 21.] How different was the conduct of the women! Laying aside the weakness and timidity natural to their sex, they showed an uncommon magnanimity on this melancholy occasion. For, in contradiction to the whole nation, who with loud voices required that Jesus should be crucified as a deceiver, they proclaimed his innocence by their tears and cries, when they saw him led out to be crucified; accompanied him to the cross, the most infamous of all punishments; kindly waited on him in the dolorous moment; gave him what consolation was in their power, though at the same time they could not look on him without being pierced to the very heart; and when he expired, and was carried off, they went with him to his grave, not despairing, though they found he had not delivered himself, but to appearance was conquered by death, the universal enemy of mankind. Perhaps, the women entertained some faint hopes still, that he would revive; or, if they did not entertain expectations of that kind, they, at least, cherished a strong degree of love to their Lord, and resolved to do him all the honour in their power. This incomparable strength of faith, and love, and fortitude, expressed by the women, was distin-

guished with very high marks of the divine approbation. In preference to the male disciples, they were honoured with the news of Christ's resurrection, and had their eyes gladdened with the first sight of their beloved Lord after he arose; so that they preached the joyful tidings of his resurrection to the apostles themselves. There may have been other reasons, also, for Christ's showing himself first to the women. The thoughts of the apostles, or male disciples, having run perpetually on a temporal kingdom, they had wrested all his words into an agreement with that notion; and what they could not make consistent therewith, they seem either to have disbelieved or to have wholly overlooked. Hence, notwithstanding Jesus had foretold his sufferings many different times, they were exceedingly astonished when they saw him expire. Immortality and terrestrial dominion were, in their opinion, the characteristics of Messiah; for which reason, when they found that, instead of establishing himself in the possession of universal empire, he had not delivered himself from a handful of enemies, nor from death, they gave up all their hopes at once. [Luke xxiv. 21.] And as for his resurrection, they seem to have had no expectation of it at all, insomuch that, when the news of it was first brought them, they looked on it as an idle tale. It was not so with the women. They were more submissive to their Master's instructions, [John xi. 26, 27.] and consequently were better prepared for seeing him after his resurrection, than the apostles and other male disciples. For, though they were not expecting his resurrection, they had no prejudice against it. This cannot be said of the apostles, who not only rejected the matter absolutely at first, as a thing incredible, but even after the accounts the soldiers had given; nay, after they had seen Jesus himself, some of them were so unreasonable as to doubt still. How much, rather, would their incredulity have led them to suspect his appearing as an illusion, had he showed himself to them before the reports mentioned led him to recollect the arguments proper for disposing them to believe, particularly the prophecies that had been so often delivered in their own hearing concerning his resurrection. Hence the angels, when they told this event to the women, and desired them to carry the news of it to the disciples, they put them in mind of Christ's own prediction, as a confirmation of it. Hence, also, before Jesus made himself known to the disciples at Emmaus, he prepared them for the discovery, by expounding to them on the road the several prophecies concerning Messiah contained in the Old Testament.

‘While Peter and John, with Mary Magdalene, were at the sepulchre, the company of women returned to the city, and told as many of the disciples as they could find, that at the sepulchre they had seen a vision of angels, who assured them that Jesus was risen. This new information astonished the disciples exceedingly. Wherefore, as they had sent out Peter and

John to examine the truth of what Mary Magdalene had told them concerning the body being taken away, they would judge it more proper to send some of their own number to see the angels, and hear from them the joyful tidings of which the women had given them an account. This is no conjecture; for the disciples going to Emmaus affirm expressly, that when the women came, saying they had seen a vision of angels, who said that Jesus was alive, certain of their number went to the sepulchre, and found it even as the women had said, but him they saw not. [Luke xxiv. 22.] This second deputation from the apostles did not go alone: for as Mary Magdalene returned to the sepulchre with Peter and John, who were sent to examine the truth of her information, so the women who brought word of the vision might return with those who were sent to be witnesses to the truth of their report. Besides curiosity, they had an errand thither. The angels had ordered them to tell the news to Peter in particular; for which cause, when they understood that he was gone to the sepulchre with John, it is natural to think they would return with the disciples in quest of him. About the time that these disciples and the women set out for the sepulchre, Peter and John seem to have reached the city: but, coming in by a different street, they did not meet their brethren. The disciples, being eager to get to the sepulchre, soon left the women behind: and, just as they arrived, Mary Magdalene, having seen the Lord, was coming away. But they did not meet with her, perhaps because they entered the garden at one door, while she was coming out by another. When they came to the sepulchre they saw the angels, and received from them the news of Christ's resurrection; for [Luke xxiv. 24.] they found it even as the women had said. Highly elated, therefore, with their success, they departed and ran back to the city so quickly, that they had given an account of what had happened to them, in the hearing of the two disciples who were going to Emmaus, before Mary Magdalene arrived. Nor will their speed appear incredible, if Mary Magdalene came up with her companions after their interview with Jesus; for, in that case, it is natural to think they would all stand still a little, and relate to one another what they had seen. Or, though Mary Magdalene did not overtake the women, yet, considering the nature of the tidings which the male disciples had to carry, we may believe that they would exert their utmost speed in running; and that, neglecting the high road, they would make the nearest way through the fields. Besides, it ought to be remembered, that Mary Magdalene, however eager she might be to carry the joyful news, was, by reason of her sex, not so fit for running as the male disciples, and that her dress might retard her; not to mention that she was tired, having watched all night, and been at the sepulchre once before.

‘ In the mean time, the company of women who followed the disciples, happening not to meet Peter and John, who were now on the road home, went forward in quest of them. But the women did not go on to the sepulchre ; for somewhere on the road Jesus himself met them. [Matt. xxviii. 9.] “ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.” This favour of embracing his knees Jesus had refused to Mary Magdalene, because it was not necessary ; but he granted it to the women, because the angel’s words having strongly impressed their minds with the notion of his resurrection, they might have taken his appearing as an illusion of their own imagination, had he not permitted them to handle him, and convince themselves by the united reports of their senses. Besides, if our Lord intended Mary Magdalene should go away as fast as possible, and publish the news, he might hinder her from embracing his knees, to prevent her losing time, as was observed above. [10.] “ Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid ; go tell my brethren, that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.” ’

That the company of women were returning from the city to the sepulchre when Jesus met them is highly probable, for the following reasons : 1. On supposition that he met them as they went into the city to give an account of the vision of angels ; it is inconceivable how they came to omit telling that they had seen the Lord himself ; for that they did not speak a word of this is evident from Luke xxiv. 9—11, compared with verse 23. 2. That Mary and Salome, with their companions, were returning to the sepulchre when Jesus met them, is probable, not only because the supposition of this circumstance entirely removes all the difficulties which arise upon comparing the several accounts that are given of our Lord’s resurrection, but also because the Greek word, wherewith his appearance unto them is introduced, implies it. “ And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them.” The evangelist could not have expressed himself in this manner with any propriety, had our Lord, after showing himself to Mary Magdalene at the sepulchre, followed the women, and overtaken them as they were going into the town. The words made use of by Luke, [xxiv. 15.] to express his overtaking the disciples on the road to Emmaus, would, in that case, have been much more proper. 3. That the women were returning to the sepulchre when Jesus met them will appear highly probable, if the things that happened between their leaving the sepulchre and Christ’s appearing to them are considered. In that period, John first came to the sepulchre and looked in, but did not go down : then Peter came, and, descending, examined the rollers ; upon this, John likewise went down and viewed them. The two, having thus satisfied their curiosity, departed, leaving Mary Magdalene there

weeping. After the apostles were gone, she saw first two angels, who conversed with her; and then Jesus himself, who gave her a message to his disciples. But as such a variety of incidents must have taken up some considerable time, is it reasonable to suppose the women spent it all in going part of the road between the sepulchre and the city, notwithstanding the angel ordered them to go quickly, and they are said to have run to bring his disciples word. The improbability of such a supposition is heightened by the circumstance taken notice of, John xix. 20, that the sepulchre was nigh to the city. It seems, they had but a little way to travel. Wherefore, it is much more natural to believe that the women had delivered the angel's message before Jesus appeared to them, and were going to the sepulchre a second time when he met them. The words, [Matt. xxviii. 9.] "as they went to tell his disciples," are not in the least contrary to this supposition; for the women were still in quest of Peter and John, to give them the news; consequently the evangelist might very properly say that Jesus met them as they went to tell his disciples, notwithstanding they had spoken of the vision before to such of them as they found in the town.

The women thus ordered by Jesus himself to carry the tidings of his resurrection into the city, went no farther in quest of Peter; but being now charged with a more important message, turned back immediately to publish the glad tidings of their having seen the Lord. [Matt. xxviii. 11.] "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done," that is, gave them an account of the earthquake, the vision, the rolling away of the stone. Moreover, they assured them that Jesus was actually risen from the dead. The chief priests having received this report, called the whole senate together, and consulted among themselves what they were to do. The deliberations, however, of the meeting were not kept secret. They were reported to the disciples, perhaps by Joseph and Nicodemus, two members of the council, who were our Lord's friends. That the soldiers informed the priests of Christ's resurrection cannot be doubted by any one who considers the measure which they took after deliberating upon the affair. [12.] "And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money (i. e. a great bribe) unto the soldiers, [13.] saying, Say ye his disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept." It is true, Mark xvi. 9, is generally interpreted in such a manner, as to make us think the soldiers did not see Jesus arise. Yet, if I mistake not, that interpretation is without foundation. Mark's words are, "Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene." Our Lord's first appearance, therefore, after his resurrection, was to Mary.

This might be said consistently enough with the soldiers seeing him arise : for that was no appearance after his resurrection ; it was his resurrection itself in the mean time, though the soldiers did not see him rise, they were able to bear witness unto his resurrection. The storm, the earthquake, and the vision, that accompanied this astonishing event, had driven them away from the sepulchre. Impelled therefore by their fears and the weather, they would take shelter in the first house they could find : and as they fled away about the time that Jesus arose, they would probably sleep till morning. Or, though the terror they were in hindered them from sleeping, they would stay nevertheless, having no inclination to go out in such a stormy night, especially as they knew that the gates of the city were shut, and that they could not have access to the chief priests at so unseasonable an hour. When the day advanced, and their fears were a little abated, we may suppose they began to deliberate among themselves what they were to do. They had been placed at the sepulchre to see if Jesus would arise according to his prediction, and to prevent any fraud, by which his resurrection might be imposed upon the world. Wherefore, if they did not see him arise, they could not but be curious to know whether he was really risen, as the terrible things they had been witnesses to the preceding evening seemed to presage ; and, for this purpose, they might go straightway to the sepulchre in the morning ; but not finding the body, they concluded, with reason, that Jesus was risen, and went to tell the priests the strange news. Thus the soldiers were qualified to bear witness unto the resurrection of Jesus, although they did not see him arise ; and their testimony is unquestionable, being the testimony of enemies. Accordingly, the priests did not offer to contradict them, as they would certainly have done had it been in their power. But by an obstinacy almost incredible, rooted in their pride, they stiffly resisted what their own mind told them was true ; and, to save their reputation, bribed the soldiers to tell every where, that while they slept in the night, his disciples came and stole him away. The priests, certainly, could not but foresee what judgment reasonable persons would form of this report. At best, it was nothing but the soldiers' own conjecture, who, by their own confession, being asleep when the thing happened, could tell no more of the matter than other people, or, if they pretended to more, it was absurd ; for how could they know what was doing, and by whom, while they were asleep ? or, knowing it, why did they not awake and prevent it ? But the absurdity of this lie was so glaring, that it is a wonder the priests did not rather hire the soldiers to say the disciples made them so drunk, that they fell into a dead sleep ; this, at least, would have rendered it probable that they stole him away. But even this form of the lie was obnoxious to insuperable objections ; for though a single person or two may

be seduced to betray their trust, a great number are not so easily drawn astray. Among such a number of men as the watch consisted of, some will always be found tinctured with a sense of duty. Moreover, the numerousness of the guard prevented the priests from turning the falsehood into any other shape. The soldiers could not, with any probability, say that the disciples took the body from them by force; for though a handful of people may be so overpowered by a multitude, that they cannot possibly make any resistance, a number of people well armed may fight a superior force; and though they should overcome, still there will be visible proofs of the attack that was made upon them; lives will be lost, or, at least, wounds received. In the case of the guards at the sepulchre nothing of this kind was to be seen, whereby it could be made appear that they were attacked; and therefore, an assault from the disciples could not be pretended. Nor would the soldiers be prevailed with to spread a report which demonstrated them to have been arrant cowards. In short, the disciples' stealing away the body while the guards slept, absurd as it might seem to persons of discernment, was the best colour the priests could put on this affair. Unluckily, however, for the cause of infidelity, it was only some of the watch who came to the chief priests to be tutored, the rest had gone to their garrison, where, no doubt, they told their comrades what had happened; and even those who came to the high-priest had tarried by the way. Part of the night was spent in the house where they had taken shelter, and to the people of that house they had told the true matter of fact. None can doubt this, who attends to the nature and operation of human passions. Nor would they be silent as they passed through the streets, if they chanced to meet any of their acquaintance; far less would they conceal the matter in the high-priest's palace, while they waited to be called in. It does not appear that the soldiers, either on the score of conscience, or on account of the palpable falsehood of the story they were to propagate, refused the bribe that was offered them by the chief priests. Their love of money, as is common with wicked men, pushed them on headlong. They did not mind the improbability of a numerous guard of soldiers all fast asleep at once, nor the horrid iniquity of the lie. And though they had been greatly confounded with the vision of angels, the panic was by this time worn off. Besides, they did not consider the vision as connected with morality; or, if they did, the priests would endeavour to persuade them that it was nothing real, but the mere effect of their own imagination, terrified by seeing one rise from the dead. The only objection made by the soldiers to the proposal of the priests was, that, by publishing such a story, they acknowledged the grossest neglect of duty; for which, if the story reached the governor's ears, he would punish them severely. But to make them easy on this head, the priests

promised to give such a representation of the matter to Pilate, that no harm should befall them. This only obstacle, therefore, being removed, the soldiers did as they were desired. They told every where the lie which the priests had put into their mouth; a lie the most impudent and barefaced that could be contrived, but which the senate was anxious to have propagated, because they hoped it would be swallowed by many without examination: nor were they deceived in their expectation; for, improbable as the story was, it gained general credit among the enemies of Jesus, and was currently reported at the time Matthew wrote his gospel. [Matt. xxviii. 14.] It is evident, that, as matters stood, the day must have been pretty far advanced before the soldiers could come into the city. And, therefore, though they fled from the sepulchre about eleven or twelve o'clock the preceding night, we have a better reason for their coming so late in the morning as is affirmed by Matthew, than if we suppose that Jesus arose when the women went out in a body to the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

The company of women having tarried awhile with Jesus on the road, by the time that they got back to the apostles, not only Peter and John, but the other disciples, were returned from the sepulchre. Perhaps Mary Magdalene likewise was come; for she might easily pass by the women if she travelled in another road. Besides, it is natural to think that she would make all the haste possible, especially as Jesus, for this very purpose, had not permitted her to embrace his knees, as was observed above. Or we may suppose that Mary Magdalene overtook the women on the road, and brought them up with her after spending a little time in relating to one another what they had seen. It is not material, however, which of them came first, only arriving about the same time, they confirmed each other's accounts. [John xxviii. 18.] "Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples (Mark, as they mourned and wept) that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her." But if the things which the women formerly told concerning the vision of angels appeared, in the eyes of the disconsolate disciples, as idle tales, what they now said was reckoned much more so. [Mark xvi. 11.] "And they, when they heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not." Only Peter, to whom they repeated the angel's message, because he had been absent when they first came with it, was disposed, by his sanguine temper, to give a little more credit to their words than the rest seem to have done: for, in hearing that the heavenly beings had named him in particular as one to whom the news should be told, he was much elated with the honour they had done him. And though he was but just come from the sepulchre, he thought proper to go thither a second time, hoping, perhaps, to see Jesus, or, at least, the angel who had distinguished him by making mention of his

name. [Luke xxiv. 12.] "Then arose Peter and ran unto the sepulchre; and, stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass."

Luke relates Peter's second visit immediately after the account which he has given of the women's first report. But it does not follow from hence that this visit was made immediately after that report, or in consequence thereof, as those who are acquainted with the manner of writing peculiar to the evangelists very well know. Peter, indeed, made a visit to the sepulchre in consequence of Mary Magdalene's first information concerning the body being taken away, the history of which John has given. But it was different from this: 1. Because he then had heard of nothing but the taking away of the body; whereas, now the women had told him of the vision of angels, which said that Jesus was risen. 2. Because, at the visit mentioned by John, he went down into the sepulchre and searched it; whereas, at this, he only looked in, knowing that if the angels had been visible, they would have appeared immediately. And as for the body, he had fully satisfied his curiosity at the first visit, and was confirmed in the belief of its being away, by seeing the clothes in the same situation as before. 3. Because, in returning from this second visit, he is represented as wondering at that which was come to pass; a circumstance which might more naturally be expected to happen now than formerly. The reason is, when he made the first visit, he had no thought of the resurrection, and so considered the taking away of the body only as an ordinary occurrence; but now that the women had told of their having seen angels, who assured them that Jesus was alive, he viewed the absence of the body, and the posture of the clothes, in quite a different light, and was struck with wonder. Our Lord's appearance to Peter, mentioned, 1 Cor. xv. 5, may have happened as he was returning from the sepulchre this second time; for we are certain that the favour was vouchsafed to him on the day of the resurrection. See Luke xxiv. 33, 34.

'The same day on which Jesus arose, one of his disciples, named Cleophas, or Alpheus, the husband of Mary who was sister to our Lord's mother, and who, in the history of his resurrection, is called Mary the mother of James, was travelling to Emmaus, a village about seven miles distant from Jerusalem, in company with another disciple, whose name is not mentioned; and who, for that reason, is, by some, supposed to have been Luke himself. The two were in the utmost dejection on account of their Master's death, inasmuch that their grief appeared visible in their countenances. [Luke xxiv. 17.] Moreover, as they went along, they talked of the things that sat heaviest on their spirits. [Luke xxiv. 13, 14, 15.] "And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which

was from Jerusalem about threescore furlongs. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. And it came to pass, that while they communed together, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them." He overtook them as coming himself from Jerusalem, see verse 18. Probably, the disciples had just left the city when Jesus came up with them; for, on any other supposition, he could not have had time to deliver all the things which the evangelist tells us he spake to them, see verse 27. It seems, he showed himself to them immediately after he left the company of the women. [16.] "But their eyes were holden that they should not know him." They were held by his miraculous power; or they mistook him by reason of his appearing to them in an unusual dress. Mark seems to intimate this circumstance in the account which he gives of the matter. [Mark xvi. 12.] "After that he appeared in another form unto two of them as they walked and went into the country." Or the phrase in Luke, according to the force of the Hebrew idiom, may denote the effect without any intimation of the cause at all. By the alteration which Jesus could easily make in the tone of his voice while speaking; and, by his new dress, he might be concealed from them, especially as they still believed he was dead, and had no expectation of his resurrection. Besides, their thoughts were so swallowed up in the depth of their grief, that as they took little notice of any thing without them, so they did not narrowly examine the features of their fellow-traveller. Jesus, therefore, spake to them in the character of a stranger, making free, as travellers might do with one another, to ask what the subject of their conversation was, and why they looked so sad. [Luke xxiv. 17.] "And he said unto them, What manner of communications are these that ye have to one another as ye walk, and are sad? [18.] And one of them, whose name was Cleophas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast thou not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?" Cleophas was surprised that any one who had come from Jerusalem should have been ignorant of the extraordinary things which had lately happened there. [19.] "And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people. [20.] And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him." Having thus given an account of Christ's character, miracles, and sufferings, Cleophas was so ingenuous as to acknowledge that they once believed him to be the deliverer of Israel, and, in that faith, had been his disciples; but that they now began to think themselves mistaken, because he had been dead three days. [21.] "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel; and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things

were done." Cleophas added, that some women of their acquaintance, who had been that morning at the sepulchre, astonished them with the news of his resurrection, affirming that they had seen a vision of angels, which told them he was alive. It seems, his companion and he had left the city before any of the women came with the news of Christ's personal appearance.

The smallest attention will show, that Cleophas and his companion do not here speak of Mary Magdalene's second information, given after she had seen the angels; because Jesus himself having appeared to her before she stirred from the spot, it is by no means probable that she would tell the lesser, and omit the greater event. Neither do they speak of the information which the company of women, Mary Magdalene's companions, gave the apostles after they had seen Jesus; because they, in like manner, must have related that much rather than any thing else. But the report of which they speak was either made by a company of women different from that which Mary the mother of James and Salome were, who saw Jesus as they went to tell his disciples concerning the vision of angels, or it was made by that company before they saw the Lord. That it was not made by any company different from that in which Mary and Salome were, is certain; because Luke says expressly, that Mary, Salome, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and the rest, concurred in giving it. [chap. xxiv. 10.] Wherefore, it must have been the report which Mary Magdalene made alone, after having been with the women at the sepulchre the first time, and which they confirmed before they saw the Lord. According to this account of the matter, indeed, the report which Mary Magdalene made alone is not distinguished from that of her companions, Mary, Salome, and Joanna; yet there seems to be a hint given of it in the first clause of the verse under consideration: for the words, "and when they found not his body," may refer to Mary Magdalene's first information, as the subsequent words, "they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels," describe the information given by her companions. In the mean time, though it should be allowed that Mary Magdalene's report is not distinguished from that of her companions, either by Luke, in his history of the resurrection, or by the disciples going to Emmaus, it will not follow that her report was made at the same time with theirs, or that the evangelist meant to say so: for though they were distinct in point of time, they might fitly be joined together for four reasons: 1. Because the persons who made them had gone out in one company to the sepulchre. 2. Because they were made soon after each other. 3. Because the subject of both was the same. Mary Magdalene first brought word that the stone was rolled back, that the door was open, and the body gone. The other women came immediately after her, and told the same things; adding, that they had seen a

vision of angels, which affirmed that Jesus was alive. 4. In telling their story to this supposed stranger, the two disciples would think it needless to make the distinction more particularly. But if the disciples, in their accounts of these reports, joined them together for the reasons mentioned, the evangelist Luke might, for the same reasons, speak of them as one, in his history of Christ's resurrection, agreeably to the brevity which he has studied throughout the whole of his work.

‘[Luke xxiv. 24.] “And certain of them which were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found it even so as the women had said; but him they saw not.” When the women who had been at the sepulchre told us that they had seen angels, who assured them that Jesus was risen, some of our number went thither in great haste, hoping to see these angels, as the women told them they were in the sepulchre when they came away. On their arrival, they found it even as the women had said; for they were favoured with a sight of the angels, but had not the pleasure of seeing Jesus.’

This is generally understood of the journey which Peter and John made to the sepulchre immediately after Mary Magdalene's first report; but with what truth may be questioned. The reason is, at that journey, Peter and John had heard nothing of the vision of angels, which the disciples here mentioned are said expressly to have been informed of. Luke, indeed, tells us of a second journey which Peter made to the sepulchre; and this some have supposed to be the journey which the disciples going to Emmaus had in their eye, because it is related immediately after the report of the women concerning the angels, as if it had happened in consequence of that report. Nevertheless, the series of the history discovers the fallacy of this supposition: for when the women came into the city after having seen the angels, both Peter and John were at the sepulchre, and did not return before the women set out the second time. If so, neither Peter nor John had any opportunity of hearing from the women's own mouth what they had to say concerning the vision, till the latter were able to add the still more welcome news of their having seen the Lord. Wherefore, since the disciples, of whom Cleophas and his companion speak, had heard nothing of Christ's appearing to the women, Peter could not be one of them. It may be said, indeed, that immediately on his return from the sepulchre, he went back again with John, or some other of the disciples, in consequence of the women's report delivered to him at second hand by his brethren. Yet this is not very probable; because the disciples in question must have ran so fast, as to return from the sepulchre and make their report, before either Mary Magdalene or the company of women came from their several interviews with Jesus. Of this, no doubt can be made, since Cleophas, who left the city before the women arrived, tells us he had heard that report.

‘[Luke xxiv. 25.] “Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken! [26.] Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?” From this reproof, it would appear, that Cleophas and his companion were of the number of those who gave little credit to the tidings which the women had brought of their Master’s resurrection. His crucifixion and death, as they themselves acknowledged, having almost convinced them that he was not the Messiah, they had little faith in his resurrection. Wherefore, to show them their error, Jesus reproved them sharply for not understanding and believing the prophecies, which, said he, declare it to be the decree of heaven, that before Messiah enters into his glory, that is, before he receives his kingdom, he must suffer such things as you say your Master has suffered.

‘Moreover, that his reproof might appear well founded, that their drooping spirits might be supported, and that they might be prepared for the discovery he was about to make of himself, he explained the whole types and prophecies of the Old Testament which relate to Messiah’s sufferings, such as the Mosaical sacrifices, the lifting up of the brazen serpent, the twenty-second Psalm, the fifty-third of Isaiah, &c. [27.] “And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.” Thus did Jesus demonstrate to his desponding disciples, from the scriptures, that their despair was without cause, and the suspicion without foundation, which they had taken up of his being a deceiver, because the priests had put him to death. His discourse made a deep impression on them, [32.] and engrossed their attention to such a degree, that they neither thought of the length of their journey, nor considered the countenance of him who spake to them; so that ere they were aware they arrived at the village whither they went. And now the disciples turned aside from the road to go to their lodging, Jesus, in the mean time, travelling on. But they, loth to part with a person whose conversation charmed them so much, begged him to go no further, but to abide with them, because the day was far spent. [Luke xxiv. 28.] “And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went, and he made as though he would have gone further. [29.] But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.” By their hearty invitations, the disciples prevailed with their fellow-traveller to turn in with them; and their humanity met with an abundant recompense; for Jesus made himself known to them at table, in the action of giving God thanks for their food. [30.] “And it came to pass as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.” Because it is said, that “as he sat at meat, he took bread, and blessed it,” &c.

some have thought that our Lord gave his two disciples the sacrament on this occasion, adding it to the ordinary meal they were eating, as at the first institution of the rite, and that they knew him thereby to be Jesus. But in the Greek there is no foundation for the conjecture, the words signifying properly, "and it came to pass, that when he sat down to table with them, he took bread, and blessed it," &c. Among the Jews, the giving thanks at table for their food, and the distributing of it to the guests, was the head of the family's office; but in mixed companies, he whose rank and character rendered him most worthy of the honours of the table, obtained them. The actions, therefore, of blessing, breaking, and dividing the meat, happened, of course, at every meal; and at this, were fitly yielded to their Master by the disciples, although they did not know him; because the singular skill in sacred writings, which he had discovered on the road, made them conceive a very high opinion of his piety and learning. Jesus, being thus desired by his disciples to address God in their behalf, he discovered himself, either by pronouncing a form of prayer which they had often heard him use, and which, when repeated by this stranger, awakened their attention; so that, considering his features more narrowly, they knew him to be the Lord. This is Calvin's account. Or they might be led to the discovery, if, in his prayer, Jesus uttered such things as made him known. [3.] "And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight." Though our Lord's departure is mentioned immediately after we are told how he discovered himself, it does not follow that he went away immediately upon the discovery. This is the manner of the sacred historians. We may therefore suppose that he staid some time conversing with the two disciples, and proving to them the reality of his resurrection.

'The reflection which the disciples made on this affair is natural and beautiful. [Luke xxiv. 32.] "And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" We were extremely stupid not to know him, when we found his discourses have that effect upon us, which was peculiar to his teaching.

'As soon as Jesus departed, the two disciples made all the haste they could to Jerusalem, that they might have the pleasure of acquainting their brethren with the agreeable news. But they were in some measure prevented. For immediately on their arrival, the eleven, with the women, accosted them, giving them the news of their Master's resurrection. [33.] "And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, [34.] Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." The apostles had given little credit to

the reports of the women, supposing they were occasioned more by imagination than reality: but when a person of Simon's capacity and gravity declared that he had seen the Lord, they began to think that he was risen indeed. Their belief, therefore, was not a little confirmed by the arrival of the disciples, who declared that the Lord had appeared to them also. [35.] "And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread;" that is, by his prayer before meat. Mark, however, represents the reception which their report met with somewhat differently. [xvi. 12.] "After that he appeared in another form," i. e. in another dress, the dress of a traveller, "unto two of them, as they walked and went into the country. [13.] And they went and told it unto the residue, neither believed they them." But there is no inconsistency between the evangelists; for though the greatest part of the apostles believed that Jesus was arisen, as Luke affirms, some, who had not given credit either to the women or to Simon, continued obstinately to disbelieve, in spite of all that the two disciples or the rest could say. This seems to be a better method of reconciling Mark and Luke, than to suppose that, on Peter's information, the apostles believed that Jesus was risen, but did not believe that he had appeared to the two disciples; because, according to their own account of the matter, they did not know him at first, and because, at parting, he had vanished out of their sight: for I ask the reader whether it is not natural to think that the disciples, who, on this occasion, were more than twenty in number, would not divide in their opinions upon such a subject as the resurrection of their Master from the dead; some believing it; others rejecting it. We know from Luke himself, that a few did not believe, even after they had seen Jesus with their own eyes. [chap. xxiv. 41. See also Matt. xxviii. 17.] It is therefore no straining of the text to suppose, that by the eleven saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Peter," Luke means only some of the eleven, perhaps the greatest part of them said so. Besides, we must understand the evangelist's words in a limited sense, because Peter, of whom he speaks, was himself one of the eleven.

'While the disciples from Emmaus were giving their brethren an account of the Lord's appearing to them, and offering arguments to convince those who doubted the truth of it, Jesus himself came in, and put an end to their debate, by showing them his hands and his feet. [Luke xxiv. 36.] "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them." The expression, stood in the midst of them, signifies that he stood among them, without intimating whether they saw him come forward, or did not observe him till he was near them. John, however, mentions a circumstance, which, compared with Luke's account, seems to prove that they saw him enter the room, and

come forward. [John xx. 19.] "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus, and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. [Luke xxiv. 37.] But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." The disciples had secured the doors of the house by locks and bolts, as well as they could, for fear of the Jews. But Jesus, before he entered, opened the locks and drew the bolts by his miraculous power, without the knowledge of any in the house. Wherefore, as the whole company knew that the doors had been secured, it is no wonder that they supposed they saw a spectre; and were exceedingly affrighted, when something in a human form, whose features they could not easily discern by the evening light, entered the room. Thus the circumstance of the doors being shut is very happily mentioned by John, because it suggests the reason why the disciples took Jesus for a spirit, as Luke tells us, notwithstanding the greatest part of them believed that he was risen, and were conversing about his resurrection at that very instant. To dispel their fears and doubts, Jesus came forward and spake to them, and showed them his hands and feet, desiring them to handle him, and be convinced, by the united report of their senses, that it was he. [38.] "And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? [39.] Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. [40.] And when he had thus spoken, he showed them his hands and his feet. (John, and his side.)" The disciples beholding these infallible proofs of their Master's resurrection, received him with exultation and rapture. But their joy and wonder so wrought upon their minds, that some of them, sensible of the commotion they were in, suspended their belief till they had considered the matter more calmly. Jesus, therefore, knowing their thoughts, called for meat, and did eat with them, to prove more fully the certain truth of his resurrection from the dead, and the reality of his presence with them on this occasion. [Luke xxiv. 41.] "And while they yet believed not for joy, (John, then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord,) and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? [42.] And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. [43.] And he took it, and did eat before them." He tarried so long with them, that they had time to make ready some fish for supper, which he took a share of.

"[John xx. 21.] "Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." I send you to preach the gospel, and teach men the way of salvation; for which purpose I honour you with an authority and commission from God, and bestow on you power to con-

firm your doctrine and mission by miracles. [22.] "And when he had said thus, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Luke, verse thirty-five, informs us, that the disciples from Emmaus told the brethren, on this occasion, what things were done in the way. Among the rest, no doubt, they repeated the interpretations which Jesus gave of the prophecies concerning his own sufferings and death. But such a sense of the scriptures being diametrically opposite to the notions which the Jews in general entertained, a peculiar illumination of the Spirit was necessary to enable the apostles to discern it. This illumination they now received from Jesus, who, in token that he bestowed it, breathed upon them, and bade them receive it. The effect of this illumination was, that by perceiving the agreeableness of the things which had befallen him, with the ancient prophecies concerning Messiah, their minds were quieted, and they were fitted to judge of the present appearance, and of the other appearances, which Jesus was to make before his ascension.

'Further: the expression, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost," may have a relation, not only to the illumination of the Spirit which they now received, but to those which they were to receive afterwards, and in greater measure. Accordingly, it is added, [23.] "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." This may refer to the temporal pardon and punishment of men's sins. Or the meaning may be, ye are soon to receive the Holy Ghost in the fulness of his communications, whereby you shall understand the will of God for men's salvation in the most comprehensive manner, and so be qualified to declare the only terms on which men's sins are to be pardoned. Some, indeed, carry the matter higher, supposing that this is the power of what they call "authoritative absolution;" yet the only foundation on which the apostles themselves could claim such a power, must either have been the gift of discerning spirits, which they enjoyed after the effusion of the Holy Ghost, [1 Cor. xii. 10.] and by which they knew the secret thoughts of men's hearts, consequently the reality of their repentance; or it must have been some infallible communication of the will of God concerning men's future state that was made to them: for, properly speaking, they neither forgave nor retained sins, they only declared a matter of fact infallibly made known to them by God. In the mean time, to render this interpretation feasible, the general expressions, "whose soever sins ye remit," &c. must be very much limited, since it was but a single individual here and there, whose condition in the life to come can be supposed to have been made known to the apostles by revelation.

'[John xx. 24.] "But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, (i. e. the twin,) was not with them when Jesus came."

It is said, [Luke xxiv. 33.] that the disciples from Emmaus told their story to the eleven, and to them that were with them. The eleven was the name by which the apostles went after the death of Judas, whether they were precisely that number, or fewer. Wherefore, we are under no necessity, from this name, of supposing that Thomas was present when the disciples came in. We are sure that he was not present in this meeting when Jesus showed himself. Yet, if Luke's expression is thought to imply that Thomas was with his brethren at the arrival of the disciples, we may suppose that he was one of those who would not believe, and that he went away before they had finished their relation. [25.] "The other disciples, therefore, said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side;" except I have the fullest evidence arising from the testimony of my own seeing and feeling him, "I will not believe" that he is risen.'

Thus ended the transactions of the day on which our Lord arose from the dead; a day much to be remembered by men throughout all generations, because it brought fully into act the conceptions which had lodged in the breast of infinite wisdom from eternity, even those thoughts of love and mercy on which the salvation of lost men depended. Christians, therefore, have the highest reason to solemnize this day with gladness each returning week, by ceasing from labour, and giving themselves up to holy meditations, and other exercises of devotion. The redemption of sinners, which they commemorate thereon, in its finishing stroke, affords matter for eternal thought, being such a subject as no other, how great soever, can equal, and whose lustre neither length of time nor frequent reviewing can ever diminish. For as by often beholding the sun, we do not find him less glorious or luminous than before, so this benefit, which we celebrate after so many ages, is as fresh and beautiful as ever, and will continue to be so flourishing in the memories of all reasonable beings through the endless revolutions of eternity.

'Eight days after his resurrection, our Lord showed himself again to the eleven while Thomas was with them. [Mark xvi. 14.] "Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen." It was Thomas whom Jesus now upbraided, as is evident from the more full account which John has given us of this affair. For, condescending to bear with the stubbornness of his unbelieving apostles, he desired Thomas in particular to put his finger into the print of the nails, and to thrust his hand into his side, that he might convince himself by the only proofs which he had declared should convince him. [John

xx. 27.] Thus Jesus demonstrated, not only that he was risen, but that he was possessed of divine knowledge, being conscious of the thoughts and actions of men. Accordingly, Thomas, exceedingly struck with the proof, cried out in a great amazement, "My Lord, and my God." Though the nominative often occurs for the vocative, it is the former case that is used here, the words, thou art, being understood. To this the context agrees; for we are told that these words were addressed to Jesus. [28.] "And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." Wherefore, they cannot be taken merely as an exclamation of surprise, which is the Socinian gloss; but their meaning is, thou art really he whom I lately followed as my Lord; and I acknowledge thee to be possessed of infinite knowledge, and worship thee as my God. [29.] "Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." Thou hast believed my resurrection, because thou hast had it confirmed to thee by the united testimony of all thy senses: they are persons of a better disposition, who, without the evidence of sense, are so candid as to yield to the proofs which the divine wisdom has thought sufficient for convincing the world. From this, it would appear, that Thomas's speech, on the evening of the resurrection day, was a kind of boasting in the strength of his own understanding, and a praising of himself on that account. He would not believe that his Master was risen on such trivial evidence as the reports of the women; nothing would convince him but the evidence of his own senses. [John xx. 30.] "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book; [31.] But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life through his name." He appeared on several other occasions to his disciples after his resurrection; and by many infallible proofs, which are not written in this book, convinced them that he was alive after his passion. The appearances mentioned by the evangelists are nine in number. The apostle Paul speaks of one to James, and one to himself, which they have omitted. Accordingly, this passage leads us to think that Jesus showed himself much oftener than there is any account of upon record.

Our Lord having, first by the angels, and then in person, ordered his disciples to go home to Galilee, with a promise that they should see him there, it is reasonable to think that they would depart as soon as possible. Wherefore, when they were come to their respective homes, they followed their occupations as usual; and particularly the apostles, who pursued their old trade of fishing on the lake. Here, as they were plying their nets one morning early, [verse 4.] Jesus showed himself to them. [John xxi. 1—4.] "After these things Jesus showed

himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise showed he himself. There were gathered together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathaniel of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus," for it was somewhat dark, and they were at a distance from him. He called to them, and asked if they had caught any thing, They answered, They had got nothing. He desired them to let down their nets on the right side of the boat. The disciples, imagining that he might be acquainted with the places proper for fishing, did as he directed them, and caught a multitude of fishes. [5.] "Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No." He asked this question that he might have an opportunity to give them the following direction. [6.] "And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast, therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." Such marvellous success, after having toiled all the preceding night to no purpose, could not fail to make them form various conjectures about the stranger who had given them the happy advice. Some could not tell who he was; others said he was the Lord. Simon Peter, who was of this latter opinion, entertaining no doubt of it, girt on his fisher's coat, and cast himself into the sea, not to swim, but to walk ashore; for to have clothed himself had been a very improper preparation for swimming. He knew that the lake was shallow thereabouts, and would not wait till the boat dragged the net full of fishes ashore. Wherefore, he leaped out hastily, and walked as fast as he could to the land, which was only about sixty paces off. All the inconvenience he sustained by this was but the wetting of his sandals, provided he had them on; for the ancients wore neither breeches nor stockings. [John xxi. 7.] "Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea. [8.] And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes." When the disciples came ashore, they found a fire burning, on which there was a fish broiling. At hand, also, was some bread. But neither being sufficient for the company, or, perhaps, to show them the reality of the miracle by making them attend to the number and largeness of the fish which they had caught, and to the nets not being broken, Jesus bade them bring some of their own, then invited them to dine, that is, to eat with him:

for the Greek word, as Keuchenius has showed, signifies sometimes to take meat in the morning, which is the meaning of it here: see verse 4. By this time they were all so fully convinced that it was the Lord, that none of them durst ask who he was. [9.] "As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread. [10.] Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. [11.] Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken. [12.] Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of his disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. [13.] Jesus then cometh and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise." It is not said, indeed, that Jesus now ate with them; but his invitation to them, verse 12, implies it. Besides, Peter testifies, [Acts x. 41.] that his apostles did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead; meaning to tell Cornelius, that that was one of the many infallible proofs by which he showed himself alive after his passion. It is reasonable, therefore, to think, that he ate with his apostles on this occasion. Thus Jesus proved to his disciples anew the reality of his resurrection, not only by eating with them, but by working a miracle like that which, at the beginning of his ministry, had made such an impression upon them, as disposed them to be his constant followers.

'[14.] "This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples after that he was risen from the dead." The evangelist does not say that it was the third time Jesus appeared, but the third time he appeared to his disciples, i. e. to his apostles in a body; for, in reality, it was his seventh appearance. Besides, John himself has taken notice of three appearances before this.

'[15.] "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" more than thy brethren apostles love me? in allusion to the high professions of love and fidelity which Peter had formerly made to him. "He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee." Being taught modesty and diffidence by his late fall, Peter would not now compare himself with others, but humbly appealed to his Master's omniscience for the sincerity of his regard to him. Upon this, Jesus first desired him to feed his lambs, i. e. to exhort and comfort the young and tender part of the flock, those who were to be converted. "He saith unto him, Feed my lambs." Then, to give him an opportunity of renewing his professions, [John xxi. 16, 17.] "He saith unto him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved

because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? and he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." From our Lord's asking Peter if he loved him before he gave him commission to feed his lambs and his sheep, it is justly inferred, that to render men duly qualified for the ministerial function, they must prefer the interest and honour of Christ to every other consideration whatever. This is the great qualification by which alone a minister can be animated to go through the labours and difficulties of his office, and be fortified against the dangers which may attend it. Moreover, Christ's exhortation to Peter to feed his lambs and sheep being the reply which he made to Peter's declaration that he loved him, shows us, that ministers best testify their love to Christ by their singular care and diligence in feeding his flock. To conclude: the repetition of this commission three times, may have been in allusion to Peter's three denials. In it, the Papists would have us to believe, that supreme dominion over the whole church, clergy as well as laity, was granted to Peter. However, it has quite a different meaning; for Peter, by his late cowardice and perfidy, having, as it were, abdicated the apostleship, was hereby no more than formally restored to his office, through the indulgence of his kind and merciful Master.

‘Peter being thus restored to the apostolical office and dignity, from which he had fallen by openly denying his Master three several times, Jesus proceeded to forewarn him of the persecutions to which he in particular would be exposed in the execution of his office, intending thereby to inspire him with courage and constancy. [John xxi. 18.] “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, when thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest;” alluding to the strength and activity which he had now showed in wading ashore after he had girded his fisher's coat upon him: “but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.” Instead of that liberty which, in thy youth thou enjoyedst, thou shalt, in thine old age, be a prisoner; for thou shalt be bound and carried whither thou wouldest not; carried to prison and to death. Accordingly, the evangelist tells us, [19.] “This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God.” The above words imply only that Peter should glorify God by suffering a violent death. But what Jesus added is understood to signify that Peter was to follow him in the kind of his death. “And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me:” follow me to the cross. Agreeably to this, the unanimous testimony of antiquity assures us that Peter was crucified.

‘[20.] “Then Peter turning about, (namely, as he followed Jesus,) seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following, which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he

that betrayeth thee? [21.] Peter, seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?" Peter, it seems, understanding what Jesus meant when he ordered him to follow him, asked what would happen to his fellow-disciple John, who was now coming after them. [22.] "Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me." If I incline that he should live till my coming, what is that to thee? so the Greek word signifies, being elliptical for, remain in the flesh. We have the elliptical and the complete phrase, Philip. i. 24, 25. [23.] "Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die." The brethren, it seems, understood by Christ's coming his coming to judgment; and that they interpreted the phrase rightly, is evident from what the evangelist adds: "Yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, if I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" [24.] This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true." From this verse, Grotius and others infer, that the Ephesian bishops added this whole chapter to John's gospel after his death. But it evidently proves the contrary; for the verse assures us that John wrote the things contained in this chapter: "this is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things."

'Farther, though the evangelist seems to conclude his gospel, chap. xx. 31, it is no unusual thing with the sacred writers to add new matter after such conclusions. See the epistle to the Romans and Hebrews at the end. Moreover, though the writer of this gospel is here spoken of in the third person, it is agreeable to John's manner, [see chap. xix. 35.] who likewise speaks of himself in the plural number, I epist. v. 18. To conclude: the verse under consideration is showed to be genuine, by a similar passage in the conclusion of the third epistle, verse 12: "yea, and we also bear record, and ye know that our record is true." Wherefore, the chapter being genuine, this verse is no addition of the Ephesian bishops, as some critics would have us believe, who propose that it should be read in parenthesis. [25.] "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

'And now the time approached when Jesus was to shew himself publicly in Galilee. This was the most remarkable of all his appearances. He promised it to the apostles before his death. [Matt. xxvi. 32.] The angels who attended at his resurrection spake of it to the women who came to the sepulchre, and represented it as promised to them also. [Mark xvi. 7.] Nay, Jesus himself, after his resurrection, desired the company of women to tell his brethren to go into Galilee, where they should see him; as if the appearances he was to make that day,

and on the eighth day thereafter, were of small importance in comparison. Moreover, the place where he was to appear in Galilee was mentioned by him. So Matthew informs us, xxviii. 16, "Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them." Whether there were more present at this appearance than the eleven, the evangelist does not say; nevertheless, the circumstances of the case direct us to believe that it had many witnesses. This appearance was known before-hand; the place where it was to happen was pointed out by Jesus himself. The report, therefore, of his being to appear, must have spread abroad, and brought many to the place at the appointed time. In short, it is reasonable to think that most of the disciples now enjoyed the happiness of beholding personally their Master raised from the dead. What confirms this supposition is, that Paul says expressly, Jesus, after his resurrection, was seen of above five hundred brethren at one time. [1 Cor. xv. 6.] "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." For the number of witnesses mentioned by Paul agrees better to the appearance on the mountain in Galilee described by Matthew, than to any other. Galilee having been the principal scene of Christ's ministry, the greatest part of his followers lived there: for which reason, he chose to make what may be called his most solemn and public appearance after his resurrection on a mountain in that country; an appearance to which a general meeting of all his disciples was summoned, not only by the angels who attended his resurrection, but by our Lord himself, the very day on which he arose.

'[17.] "And when they saw him, they worshipped him; but some doubted." The greatest part were so fully convinced that the person they saw was their Master, that they worshipped him. But with respect to a few, their joy on seeing the Lord put them into a kind of perturbation; and their desire that it might be him, made them afraid it was not. This reason is assigned by Luke for the unbelief of some on a former occasion, chap. xxiv. 41; and therefore it may fitly be offered to account for the unbelief of others on this: besides, the thing is agreeable to nature; men being commonly afraid to believe what they vehemently wish, lest they should indulge themselves in false joys, which they must soon lose. Probably, at this appearance, the apostles received orders to return to Jerusalem; for from Acts i. 3—12, compared with Luke xxiv. 50, it is plain that our Lord's discourses before his ascension, related, Mark xvi. 15, and Luke xxiv. 44, were delivered in or near to the city. Besides, he ascended from the mount of Olives, as we shall see immediately. Wherefore, if the orders for the apostles to repair to Jerusalem were not given at this appearance, Jesus must have showed himself again, which, indeed, is not impossible; as it is

evident from 1 Cor. xv. that he showed himself somewhere to the apostle James alone, though none of the evangelists have given the least hint of that appearance. [7.] "After that (viz. his appearance to the five hundred brethren) he was seen of James." In the college of the apostles there were two persons of this name; one, the brother of John, who was killed by Herod; another, the brother or cousin of Jesus. Perhaps it was to James the brother of John that our Lord appeared after his resurrection. His being to suffer martyrdom so early, might make this special favour necessary.

'Thus Jesus, [Acts i. 3.] "showed himself alive (to the apostles whom he had chosen, and to his other disciples) after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." It seems, he continued on earth forty days after he arose; and, in several interviews which he had with his disciples during that period, he gave them many infallible proofs of his resurrection, and discoursed to them concerning the new dispensation of religion which he was going to erect in the world by their ministry; and so, having accomplished all the purposes of his coming, nothing remained but that he should ascend into heaven in the presence of his apostles. These men were now gone up to Jerusalem to prepare themselves for the feast of Pentecost. Thither Jesus went, and showed himself to them for the last time; and because they were still in deep dejection on account of the afflictions of his life, and the ignominy of his death, he, on this memorable occasion, introduced that subject; putting them in mind that, during his abode with them in Galilee, he had often told them, that all the things written in the law, prophets, and Psalms, concerning him, were to be fulfilled. Luke xxiv. 44, 45, "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures." By the operation of his Spirit, he removed their prejudices, cleared their doubts, enlarged their memories, strengthened their judgments, and enabled them to discern the true meaning of the scriptures. Having thus qualified them for receiving the truth, he assured them that Moses and the prophets had foretold that Messiah was to suffer in the very manner he had suffered; that he was to rise from the dead on the third day, as he had done; that repentance and remission of sins were to be preached in Messiah's name among all nations, beginning with the Jews; and that the first offers of these blessings were to be made to such of them as dwelt in Jerusalem. Then he told them, that in him they had beheld the exact accomplishment of all the prophecies concerning the sufferings and resurrection of Messiah, and that they were chosen by God as the witnesses of these things, in order that they might certify them to the world. Luke xxiv. 48, "And ye are witnesses of these things." Withal, to fit them for this

great and important work, he told them that he would send upon them miraculous gifts of the Spirit, which he called "the promise of the Father;" because God had promised them by the prophets. At the same time, he commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem till they had received those gifts. The season of their receiving the gifts of the Spirit was so near, and the work for which they were to be bestowed was so urgent, that the apostles could not leave Jerusalem, even on pretence of going home, especially as it was determined by the prophets, that in Jerusalem the preaching of repentance and remission of sins should begin, to qualify them for which, the gift of miracles was to be bestowed upon them. To conclude: he told them that the dignity of his character, who was their Master, and the efficacy of his ministry, should be demonstrated to be greater than John's, by the miraculous gifts to be bestowed on them. For whereas John only baptized his disciples with water, he would baptize both them and their converts with the Holy Ghost. Acts i. 5, "For John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

Having thus spoken, he led them out of the town to the mount of Olives; and being come to that part of the mountain which was above Bethany, the apostles, whose minds were still full of the temporal monarchy, asked him if he would now restore the kingdom to Israel. Luke xxiv. 50, "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." It will not be of any use to you in your work to know the times or the seasons of the restoration of the kingdom to Israel. Besides, this is one of the things which the Father hath thought fit to conceal from mortals in the abyss of his omniscience. This only is of importance to you to know, that you shall receive miraculous powers after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and that by these powers you shall bear witness unto me with great success, not only at Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, but unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts i. 8, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." Moreover, he told them that he was now raised to the government of heaven and earth; for which reason, they might go courageously through the whole world, and preach the gospel to every reasonable creature, well assured that affairs, in all countries, should be so ordered, as to dispose the inhabitants for the reception of the gospel. Matt. xxviii. 18, 19, "And he spake unto them, saying, All power is given me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations—(Mark, preach the gospel to every creature,)" withal, those who believed in consequence of their preaching, he appointed to be received

into his church by the rite of baptism, and be taught to obey all the precepts he had enjoined them—"baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. [20.] Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Such baptized believers, he assured them, should receive the pardon of their sins, together with eternal life; but those who did not believe and obey the gospel when preached to them, should be damned. Mark xvi. 16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." And to encourage them in the great and difficult work which he now assigned to them, he promised that, while they were employed in it, he would be with them and their successors in the ministry to the end of the world, to guide them by his counsel, to assist them by his Spirit, and to protect them by his providence. [Matt. xxviii. 20.] "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Finally, that those who through their preaching were induced to believe, should themselves work most astonishing miracles; a circumstance which should contribute greatly towards the spreading of the gospel. Nay he mentioned the particular miracles which they should be enabled to perform. Mark xvi. 17, "And these signs shall follow them that believe: in my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; [18.] They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

"When he had spoken these things, he lift up his hands, and blessed them; and, in the action of blessing them, he was parted from them in open day-light, perhaps about mid-day, a bright cloud receiving him out of their sight, that is, covering him about, and carrying him into heaven, not suddenly, but at leisure, that they might behold him departing, and see the proof of his having come down from heaven, which he promised them, John xvi. 28. Two angels stood by them, who, though they had assumed the form and garb of men, were, by the majesty and splendour of their appearance, known of the apostles to be angels: for, as Christ's resurrection had been honoured with the appearance of angels, it was natural to think that his ascension into heaven would be so likewise. [Acts i. 11.] "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? (it seems, they looked up stedfastly after he was gone out of sight, expecting, perhaps, to see him come down again immediately;) this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." He shall come in the same glorious manner in which you have now seen him ascend. The angels spake of his coming to judge the world at the last day, a description of which Jesus in his life-time had given. Matt.

xvi. 27, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels." Wherefore, the cloud whereon the Lord now ascended, being the same with that in which he is to come again, was more bright and pure than the clearest lambent flame; for it was the glory of the Father, that is, the Shechinah, or visible symbol of the divine presence, which appeared to the patriarchs in ancient times, which filled the temple at its dedication, [2 Chron. vii. 3.] and which, in its greatest splendour, cannot be beheld with mortal eyes; so, for that reason, is called the light inaccessible, in which God dwells. [1 Tim. vi. 16.] It was on this occasion, probably, that our Lord's body was changed, acquiring the glories of immortality, perhaps in the view of the disciples, who looked at their Master all the time he was mounting. [Acts i. 10.] As he ascended up into the skies, the flaming cloud which surrounded him, leaving a track of light behind it, marked his passage through the air, but gradually lost its magnitude in the eyes of them who stood below; till, soaring high, he and it vanished out of their sight; for he was received up where the Deity manifests himself in a peculiar manner. Mark xvi. 19, "And sat on the right hand of God;" that is, in his human nature, was advanced in dignity next to the divine Majesty, all power in heaven and earth being given him: and this universal government he will hold till he fully establishes the dominion of righteousness, when he will deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, that God may be all in all.

In this illustrious manner did the Saviour depart, after having finished the grand work which he came down upon earth to execute; a work which God himself, in the remotest eternity, contemplated with pleasure; which angels and superior natures, with joy, desiried as to happen; which through all eternity to come, shall, at periods the most immensely distant from the time of its execution, be looked back upon with inexpressible delight by every inhabitant of heaven. For though the little affairs of time may vanish altogether, and be lost, when they are removed far back by the endless progression of duration, this object is such, that no distance, however great, can lessen it. The kingdom of God is erected upon the incarnation and sufferings of the Son of God, the kingdom and city of God comprehending all the virtuous beings that are in the universe, made happy by goodness and love; and therefore none of them can ever forget the foundation on which their happiness stands firmly established. In particular, the human species, recovered by this labour of the Son of God, will view their deliverer, and look back on his stupendous undertaking with high rapture, while they are feasting without interruption on its sweet fruits, ever growing more delicious.

CHAPTER XVI.

The History of the Christian Church, from the Ascension of our Lord, to the death of Herod Agrippa.

The date of our Lord's crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension—the apostles return to Jerusalem—how they employed their time—Matthias chosen apostle—the design of the feast of Pentecost—the Holy Spirit descends like tongues of fire—a concourse of strangers at Jerusalem—Peter's first sermon; three thousand converted—the community of goods—prosperity of the church—the healing of a lame man occasions the imprisonment of Peter and John, who are threatened and dismissed—increasing strength of the church—death of Ananias and Sapphira—the apostles having been imprisoned and examined before the council, Gamahel gives advice tending to moderation, and the apostles are beaten and dismissed—seven deacons chosen—Stephen persecuted—his defence and death—the gospel preached in Samaria—Simon Magus—the eunuch of Ethiopia—Saul's miraculous conversion—the churches enjoy peace—Eneas healed—Dorcus raised—Cornelius is converted, receives the Holy Spirit, and is admitted into the christian church without circumcision—Peter defends his conduct—the gospel preached at Antioch—Barnabas sent forth—Agabus prophecies—Herod persecutes the christians, slays James the Greater, imprisons Peter, is smitten of God, and dies—observations on the faith and order of the primitive churches.

SO little attentive were the ancient historians to fix the dates of the transactions they record, and so great was the inconvenience which they experienced for want of popular and established eras, that, in chronological inquiries, we must generally rest contented, if, instead of arriving at certainty, we are enabled to decide upon the most probable opinion. The precise year of the creation of the world, of the beginning and termination of the flood, of the call of Abraham, of the building of Solomon's temple, of the laying the foundation of Rome, of the return from the Babylonian captivity, of the birth of our Saviour, of the commencement and duration of his ministry, are all of them subjects of dispute. It is, however, pretty generally admitted, that the great sacrifice was offered upon mount Calvary, on Friday, the third of April, in the year A. D. 33, in the four thousand, seven hundred, and forty-sixth year of the Julian period; in the four thousand and fortieth year from the creation of the world; in the two thousand, three hundred, and eighty-fourth from the commencement of the deluge; in the two thousand and thirty-second from the birth of Abraham; in the fifteen hundred and twenty-fourth from the publication of the ten commandments; in the ten hundred and forty-fifth

from the erecting of Solomon's temple; in the seven hundred and eighty-fifth from the building of Rome; in the six hundred and thirty-ninth from the first Babylonish captivity; in the three hundred and fifty-sixth from the death of Alexander the Great; in the seventy-third from the beginning of the reign of the first Herod; in the thirty-seventh from the birth of Christ; in the thirty-sixth from the death of Herod; in the twenty-second of the reign of Tiberius with Augustus; in the nineteenth of the reign of that emperor alone; and in the seventh year from the commencement of the ministry of John the Baptist. On these principles, it appears, that the resurrection took place late on Saturday, the fourth, or early on Sunday, the fifth of April; and that our Lord ascended into his glory, either on Wednesday, the thirteenth, or, as is more generally supposed, on Thursday, the fourteenth, of May.

The apostles, having witnessed the ascension of our Lord, returned with great joy to Jerusalem, a walk of about seven furlongs. Here they divided their time between the temple, which they regularly attended at the stated hours of public devotion, and a large upper room, where they assembled together for the purpose of offering up unto God continual supplications and prayers. Among the most regular attendants at this place of sacred retirement, were the eleven apostles, Mary the mother of our Lord, and those near relations of his who are denominated his brethren; and who, though they were formerly noted as not believing in his mission, appear to have since been converted to the truth.

In one of those days which they thus spent in waiting for the promise of the Father, an hundred and twenty of them being collected together in this upper room, Peter arose, and, standing in the midst of the disciples, addressed them to the following effect: Men and brethren, equally united by the ties of religion and of friendship, it was necessary that this passage of scripture should receive a fulfilment, which David, moved by the prophetic Spirit of God, delivered in the sixty-ninth and hundred and ninth Psalms, concerning Judas, who betrayed his Master with a kiss, and was guide to those who led him away to judgment and to death. His dreadful crime and calamitous end must be fresh in the recollection of every hearer; for he was formerly numbered among us, the apostles, and obtained a lot in this holy and important ministry. This man, as you all recollect, occasioned the purchase of a field with the reward of his iniquity, by casting it down in the temple, and refusing to take it again; and, by some accident, after having hanged himself, fell violently with his face on the ground, burst asunder in the midst, and poured forth his bowels on the spot. This fact, the historian observes, could not be reasonably doubted, since it was well known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and they, in memory of the shocking event, denominated

the piece of land which was thus purchased, "Aceldama, or the field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein;" which was admirably fulfilled by the purchasing with the wages of his iniquity, not a garden, or dwelling-place for the living, but a burying-ground for the dead; and it is added in another passage, "and his bishoprick let another take:" his office of overseer in the kingdom of God. Wherefore, of these men who are now present among us, and have associated with us during the whole of our Lord's ministry, including that of his forerunner, must one be chosen to bear witness, in the apostolic character, to the resurrection of the Son of God from the dead. The assembly consented to the proposal; and, after mature deliberation, fixed upon two candidates for this office; Joseph, who was denominated Justus, from the integrity of his life; and a person no less eminent for his piety, who was named Matthias. They then solemnly addressed the all-seeing God, and entreated him that, being acquainted with the secrets of all hearts, he would indicate who was most fit for the apostolic office, by regulating the fall of that lot which they were then going to cast. Having, therefore, given forth the lot, it fell upon Matthias, who was immediately added to the number of the eleven apostles.

Nothing further of sufficient importance to be recorded occurred till the arrival of the feast of Pentecost. This solemnity derives its name from the Greek word *πεντηκοστος*, *fiftieth*, because held fifty days after the passover. It was observed by the Jews in commemoration of the enunciation of the law to Moses, fifty days after the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt. This was the second of the three grand festivals in the ecclesiastical year, at which all the males were enjoined to appear before the Lord at the national altar. It is called by several names in the Old Testament; as the feast of weeks, because it was celebrated seven weeks, or a week of weeks, after the passover, or rather, after the first day of unleavened bread; the feast of harvest, according to Mede and Bochart, because, as the harvest begun at the passover, it ended at Pentecost; or, according to others, because at this feast the first-fruits of their wheat-harvest were brought and offered to God; and, for the same reason, it was denominated the feast of first-fruits.

When the day of Pentecost was fully come, or, as the Syriac renders it, when the days of Pentecost were fulfilled, on the morning of the fiftieth day after the passover, which corresponded to Sunday, the twenty-fourth of May, they, that is, probably, the hundred and twenty disciples, with the women, were all, in the unity of the Spirit, met together in the same place, the large upper room to which they had been accustomed to resort. While they were sitting here, a sound was

heard from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, which filled the whole room with its astonishing effects. While they were filled with wonder at this supernatural event, bright flames of a pyramidal form, which were so divided at the points as to present the appearance of cloven tongues, were seen to rest one upon each of their heads who were at this time assembled together. Immediately they felt themselves filled with the inspiration of God, and enabled to speak with languages which they had never acquired by human education. Beginning to exercise these miraculous gifts, the room appeared agitated with an unaccountable confusion; and, being overheard by their neighbours, a report was soon spread, that something very extraordinary had happened to the sectaries of Galilee.

There were at this time sojourning at Jerusalem, either as fixed inhabitants of the city, or as strangers, collected for the purpose of celebrating the annual feasts, devout men from almost every region of the habitable globe. These, having heard the report, ran together with the rest of the multitude, and were confounded; because that every one in the assembly heard some one or other of the disciples speaking, not only in his own language, but in that particular dialect of it which he had learnt from his infancy. Astonished beyond measure at this miracle, as all must be who consider its extent, they inquired eagerly one of another, whether all these that spake were not Galileans as well by country as by religion. How then, said they, does every one of us hear them speaking in our native languages the wonderful works of God? In this multitude of strangers, there were Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, nations inhabiting different provinces of modern Persia; the dwellers between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, whom some suppose to be of the remnant of those Israelites who were carried away captive by the kings of Assyria, and are usually denominated the nine tribes and a half. Here were also natives of Judea, where the dialect was so different from that of Galilee, that Peter was charged, on that ground, with being a disciple of Jesus Christ. To these are to be added the natives of Cappadocia, and Pontus, and of the country more properly called the proconsular Asia, as well as the inhabitants of the neighbouring provinces of Phrygia, and Pamphylia, of Egypt, and the parts of Africa which are about Cyrene, together with strangers, both Jews and proselytes, who had arrived from the capital of the Roman empire; and lastly, the inhabitants of the island of Crete, and such as ordinarily resided in different parts of Arabia. These were all amazed, and inquired to what these things would proceed; while others, who were ignorant of the languages which were spoken, turned the whole into derision; alleging that the orators who had excited such general attention were only miserable fanatics, who had increased their fervour to a remarkable pitch by the free use of new and sweet wine.

Desirous to vindicate the character of his brethren, but still more desirous of the conversion of his enemies, Peter now stood up with the eleven, and thus addressed the multitude with an elevated voice: Ye men of the Jewish nation, from whatever part of the world ye have arrived, and all you who are the stated inhabitants of Jerusalem, let this be known unto you, and do you diligently hearken unto my words; for these men, whom some of you have condemned as drunken and dissolute wretches, are very far from being in a state of intoxication, seeing this is but the third hour of the day, (nine o'clock in the morning,) the hour of morning sacrifice, before which you know that none, who have any regard for their character, will allow themselves so much as to taste wine, and much less to drink any large quantity of it, whereby they would be rendered incapable of attending the service of the temple on this solemn festival. But this which occasions so much admiration, is that great event which was foretold by the prophet Joel, [chap. ii. 28—32.] “And it shall come to pass in the last days, the times of the Messiah, saith God, I will pour out an extraordinary effusion of my Spirit upon all orders and nations of men; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream prophetic dreams. And on my servants and my handmaidens, who seem to be the meanest members of my family, I will pour out largely of my Spirit; and they shall not only proclaim the riches of my grace, but announce the awful judgments which shall fall on the heads of their enemies. Nor shall it be long before they have a public confirmation of their testimony. For I will exhibit wonders in heaven above, and prodigies upon the earth beneath, blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke. Yea, so great shall be the confusion both in church and state, that the sun shall, as it were, be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and terrible day of the Lord comes, (when he shall take vengeance of his enemies by the destruction of the city of Jerusalem.) And it shall come to pass, that at this time my gospel shall be freely preached, and every one that calleth on the name of the Lord shall receive salvation.” Men of Israel, hear these words with becoming attention: Jesus, the despised Nazarene, whose mission God hath attested by miraculous powers, and wonders, and signs, which God wrought by him in your most public places and assemblies, as you yourselves also know; him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. Whom God hath raised up from the dead, having loosed the pains of death, forasmuch as it was impossible that he should be finally holden of it. For David, speaking in the person of the Messiah, saith, [Psalm xvi. 8, &c.] “I have regarded the Lord as always before me; because I know that he is at my right-hand, that I might not

be tossed and agitated by any of my sufferings. Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue, the glory of my frame, was glad. Moreover, also, my flesh, while it lodges in the sepulchre, shall rest in a joyful and assured hope: because thou wilt not leave my soul in the world of separated spirits, nor even permit my body to experience corruption in the grave. By making me the first-fruits of them that slept, thou hast appointed me to go before in the untrodden paths which lead from the grave back again to vital air; and thou wilt also so manifest thyself unto me, as to fill me with joy by the light of thy countenance." Men and brethren, whom I esteem as members of the house of Israel, permit me to speak to you freely concerning the patriarch David, who delivered this valuable prediction, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre remains among us in Jerusalem, even to this day. He, therefore, could not speak this of himself; but being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn to him with an oath, that of his posterity he would raise up the promised Messiah to sit on his throne, as the king of God's covenant people, he spake this of Christ, that his soul should not be left in the unseen world, nor his flesh be suffered to see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, of whose resurrection we are all witnesses. And though he appeared in this world as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, he is now exalted by the right-hand of God; and having, as the great anointed of the Lord, received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, he hath shed forth this miraculous effusion, the effects of which ye now see and hear. For David is not himself, in this sense, ascended into heaven; but he saith himself, [Psalm cx. 1.] "The Lord saith unto my Lord, sit thou at my right-hand, until I lay thine enemies prostrate at thy feet." Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made this same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, that Lord and Messiah, whose kingdom you profess so earnestly to desire.

When Peter had delivered this admirable discourse, a large number of the multitude were pricked to the heart with a conviction of their enormous guilt, and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Then Peter said unto them, Repent, renounce your former principles and practices, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, that you may enjoy the remission of your sins; and ye shall not only receive that blessing, but also experience the miraculous assistance of God's most Holy Spirit. For the promise, as is evident from the forecited passage of Joel, is made unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, as well in distance from Jerusalem as in alienation from God, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he bear his testimony to these important truths, exhorting them to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they might

thus be saved from the awful calamities which were about to punish that perverse generation. Then they who heard the word of Peter, with readiness immediately submitted to baptism, thus announcing their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The number of those who were thus added to the society of the faithful, were about "three thousand souls." These persevered in their profession, and continued stedfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in social prayer. And a reverential fear fell upon every soul, and many miracles were performed by the apostles in the name of Jesus; and all that believed were as much as possible together, and had all things common. And sold their possessions and effects, and divided the price of them to all their brethren, as every one had particular necessity. And they continued unanimously in the temple at the appointed hours of worship every day, and breaking bread from house to house, eating their meat with gladness and singleness of heart. Praising God, and having favour among all the people. And the Lord added daily to the church such as had been made partakers of his pardoning mercy.

Of what nature was that community of goods which was established at the church in Jerusalem, has occasioned much dispute. Dr. Doddridge, who appears to have entertained the generally received opinion, that all the produce of their houses and lands was brought into a common fund, has the following note on Acts ii. 44.

' Peculiar reasons made this community of goods eligible at that time, not only as so many sojourners, who had come from other parts, would justly be desirous to continue at Jerusalem much longer than they intended when they came up to the feast, that they might get a thorough knowledge of the gospel, but as the prospect, likewise, of the Roman conquests, which, according to Christ's known prediction, were soon to swallow up all Jewish property, would, of course, dispose many more readily to sell their lands. But the New Testament abounds with passages which plainly show this was never intended for a general practice. None can reasonably imagine, that the number of christian converts, even then at Jerusalem, is to be accounted for, by a desire to share in these divided goods; for it is evident, that as the portion each could have would be very small, so the hardships to be endured for a christian profession would soon counterbalance such advantages; and accordingly we find the converts at Jerusalem were soon reduced to such necessitous circumstances, as to need relief by the contributions of their Gentile brethren. Candour would rather lead men to argue the incontestable evidence of the gospel, from its prevailing on the professors of it to part with their estates to relieve persons who, excepting the community of their faith, had no particular claim to their regards. If such instances

were numerous, this argument is strengthened in proportion : and if they be supposed few, the objection is proportionably weakened.

Mr. Haldane, after quoting Acts iv. 32, 34, 35, makes the following pertinent observations: ' This may either express, that the whole property of the members who had all sold their houses and lands was put into a common stock, from which the necessities of each were supplied ; or the words may with equal propriety be understood to mean, that there existed so much love in this church, that each was ready to communicate to the wants of their brethren to the utmost of his power ; that to testify their affection, and to supply the wants of the poor, some who had houses and lands sold their possessions, and laid the price at the apostles' feet, who superintended the distribution to those who had need. If the words may be taken in either sense, it remains to endeavour to ascertain the true meaning. It is no slight argument for the latter, that it represents matters in a point of view much more natural and easy, corresponding both with the practice of other churches, and the precepts delivered to them by the apostles. The former teaches us to view the church of Jerusalem as singular, in adopting a custom which must necessarily have been attended with very great confusion and inconvenience, and which, while it savoured more of ostentation, does not seem so well calculated to answer the end. In supplying a great number from a common stock, some would be in greater danger of being overlooked, than if their fellow-disciples, after taking what was necessary for their own families, liberally distributed to the support of their brethren. Besides, some would require almost, or altogether all that they could earn. Did such bring their earnings to the treasury, and then take them away ? this must have been the case, if the communion be understood in its common sense, unless we are also to understand that they gave up the working altogether, and that every one was supported from the common stock. But the complaint of the Grecians plainly shows us who were supplied out of the public fund. They complain of their widows being neglected ; on the common supposition, each individual was to be supplied ; and probably, in this case, there would have been a general complaint that the Grecians were neglected, in place of their widows only being mentioned.

' Now we find other churches directed to supply widows, and this affords a strong presumption that the poor alone were supplied from the public fund raised by the voluntary and liberal contributions of the brethren. But if we are to take the words strictly, then, not only all the lands, but all the houses, were sold ; so that, not only public tables must have been necessary, but houses also must have been purchased by the church for the use of the brethren. On the other supposi-

tion, all is plain and easy ; and in the conduct of the church of Jerusalem, every church of Christ has a beautiful example, which they are bound to follow, by liberally supplying the wants of the poor, and to the utmost of their power relieving their necessities.

The precept given by Paul to the Corinthians will illustrate this subject. In exhorting them to make a contribution for the saints, he says, "I mean not that other men be eased, and you burdened, but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want; as it is written, He that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack." [2 Cor. viii. 13—15.] The meaning of this is very obvious. Paul exhorts the brethren at Corinth to contribute to the necessity of the poor saints in Judea ; but to prevent their imagining that this arose from partiality for his countrymen, he tells them, if they stood in need of it, he would be equally ready to exhort the Jewish brethren to assist them ; that believers in Jesus ought by this mutual communication of their worldly goods to resemble the Israelites in the wilderness, who received an homer of manna whether they gathered much or little. [Ex. xvi. 18.] But by interpreting the equality in this passage with the same strictness as we generally do the communion of goods in Jerusalem, we may understand the apostle as enjoining a levelling system, and an absolute communion, and equality of property, between the brethren at Corinth and Jerusalem.

Mosheim quotes a saying of Socrates, All things are common among friends ; but no one understands this in the same way in which the words of Luke [Acts iv. 32.] are generally understood. He quotes many testimonies of the same kind from other ancient writers, where they speak in the same manner, and yet evidently mean only to express the extensive liberality which real friendship produces. He observes, that we cannot gather from the writings of any author of the first and second century, that such a communion as that mentioned by Luke did not every where exist among christians. He quotes a number of other testimonies which mention, in the same language which Luke uses, a community of goods among christians, in circumstances where all confess that nothing more than great liberality is meant. If, then, the communion of goods mentioned by them is consistent with each one remaining master of his own property, is it not most natural to understand Luke as meaning the same ? He says, it was not till the fourth century was far advanced, that this passage in the Acts was thought to express that the church of Jerusalem had their goods in common in the same way as the monks ; so that, probably, the true origin of this interpretation of the communion of goods, was a desire to find countenance in scripture for the absurdities of monkery. He concludes by giving the sense of the passage under consi-

deration, as follows: 'There was truly great harmony amongst all the disciples of Christ. None of them preferred their wealth or their property above the love they bore to the brethren; but wherever there was occasion, most willingly assisted the indigent. None regarded his riches, as if the use of them was to be confined to himself, but each considered himself bound to share them with the poor. This sacred love went even farther; so that a sort of public treasury was established, from whence the sick, widows, orphans, and others who were in poverty, were supplied. To this, each contributed according to his earnings; and when this was not sufficient to support so great a number of poor persons, some, who were rich, or who had lands either without the city, or houses within it, besides what they themselves inhabited, sold these possessions, and devoted the price of them to the public good; and this they did the more willingly, as they were assured that the destruction of Palestine and of the Jewish state was approaching.'

It appears, then, that the communion of goods at Jerusalem, so far from being an argument against following the example of the apostolic churches, is an example worthy of imitation in every church of Christ, which is, doubtless, bound in the strongest manner to provide for the poor of the flock.

The principal objection to this interpretation appears to be, that it does not completely meet that expression of the evangelist, as many as were possessors, &c. If this objection could be removed, it is a solution with which many would be inclined to concur.

While the number of converts was thus rapidly increasing, an event took place which threatened the infant church with persecution. A certain man, who was lame from his birth, had been daily brought and laid at the eastern gate of the temple, that he might receive alms of such as entered the temple in that direction. This gate, which was added by Herod to the court of the Gentiles, was thirty cubits high, and fifteen broad, made of Corinthian brass, and more splendid in its workmanship and general appearance, than even those that were covered with silver and gold. It is disputed among the learned, whether it was the outward gate of the court of the Gentiles, or an inner gate between the court of the Gentiles and that of Israel. Seeing Peter and John about to enter the sacred edifice, directed his attention to them among the rest, and requested that they would make him a subject of their benevolent assistance. Peter, filled with pity, and conscious of the presence of the Almighty's Spirit to further his designs, "said, Look on us," a command which he readily obeyed, expecting to receive a gift. "Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." Then, taking him by the right hand, he raised him up, and his feet and ankle bones being miraculously

strengthened, he readily placed himself in an erect posture, and entered the temple, "walking, and leaping, and praising God." The people who saw him thus walking, and heard his exultations, ran together to Peter and John, whom he was embracing as his benefactors and deliverers, till a great number of them were collected in Solomon's porch, which is said to have been a part of the old temple not destroyed by the Chaldeans.

Peter, finding himself suddenly surrounded by a numerous auditory, began, as the Spirit gave him utterance, to proclaim to them the great truths of the gospel, in the following discourse: Ye men of Israel, why do ye so much wonder at this miracle, or look so stedfastly at us, as if we, by our own power or holiness, had enabled this cripple to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, even he whom we reverence as the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up to the Roman power, and refused to accept him in the presence of Pilate, when that magistrate was determined to let him go. But let me inform you, that, in rejecting him, you rejected the holy and righteous Messiah; and aggravated your crime, desiring that Barabbas, a most notorious villain, should be set at liberty. Ye have killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, as we, his apostles, can attest. But God, resolving to honour him whom ye have rejected, hath strengthened this poor man through our faith in the name of Jesus; for it is his name, and the faith which is centred in him, that has given him this perfect strength and soundness, which he now manifests before you all. This, however, I am ready to acknowledge in extenuation of your fault, that both you and your rulers perpetrated this great crime, in consequence of your ignorance of the real character of him whom you were persecuting. But these things have been permitted by the providence of God, in order that the predictions might be fulfilled which had been delivered by the prophets concerning the Messiah. Repent ye, therefore, and turn to the true religion of God, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord. And he shall send Jesus Christ, who before was preached unto you by the prophets, that he may appear a second time without sin unto salvation. For this event shall certainly take place, although the heavens must receive him for a season, till that important day shall arrive, when all the apparent irregularities of God's providential system shall be fully cleared, his prophecies fulfilled, and the majesty of his truth and excellency displayed in consummate glory. For Moses informed our fathers, [Dent. xviii. 15, 18.] "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among

the people." Yea, and all the prophets down from the time of Samuel, as many as have spoken any thing largely, have also foretold these important days, which, by the singular favour of God to you, ye are now so happy as to see. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God, in ancient times, made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, "And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed." Unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in the turning away every one from his iniquities, who seeks his instruction.

The increasing prosperity of the church of Christ could not fail to awaken the opposition of the Jewish priests and rulers, who must know, that in proportion as the name of Jesus became honoured, they would become the objects of reproach, as the betrayers and murderers of a person who was not only innocent, but divine. They, therefore, suddenly attacked Peter and John as they were employed in addressing the people; and, having apprehended them, imprisoned them till the next day, as the evening was now too far advanced to permit them immediately to proceed to their trial. In the mean time, however, it became evident that Peter had not preached in vain; for many who had heard the word believed, and the number of them who were the baptized followers of Jesus amounted to above five thousand men.

The night passed away with considerable anxiety: and, when the morning approached, the rulers, elders, and scribes, headed by Annas, who had been formerly high-priest, Caiaphas, who now sustained that dignity, together with John and Alexander, distinguished members of the pontifical family, held a solemn assembly in Jerusalem, in order to determine what was to be done upon this pressing occasion. When they had placed the apostles in the midst of their assembly, they asked them, By what power or by what name have ye done this? do you ascribe it to medicine or magic, or do you make pretensions to any prophetic mission? Then Peter, filled by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, boldly replied, Rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, by whom we are this day arraigned, if that which you have stated be, indeed, the object of your inquiry, our answer is easy. Be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that it is by the name of Jesus, who is, indeed, the Christ, but whom you rather call the Nazarene, whom you crucified a few weeks since with all the circumstances of ignominy and contempt, but whom God hath acknowledged as his Son, by raising him from the dead, this man stands here restored to a perfect soundness. "This," as it is expressed in the book of Psalms, [cxviii. 22.] "is the stone which is set at nought of you builders, which is become the chief stone of the corner, by which the heaviest pressure of the building is sustained. Neither is there salvation temporal or

eternal, to be found in any other ; for there is none other name under heaven, published by God among men, whereby we must be saved." When the council had heard this speech, and considered both the boldness with which it was delivered, and the disadvantages under which the speakers of it were placed ; when they had recollected that these men had been long acquainted with Jesus, and witnesses of his last sufferings on the cross, but were not prevented by the death of their leader from still adhering to his cause ; lastly, when they beheld the man who had been healed standing with them, as a witness to the truth of the miracle, they were in extreme difficulty to furnish a suitable reply. Having, therefore, ordered the apostles to retire, they debated among themselves what course it was most expedient for them to pursue. After weighing the dangers which appeared to threaten them alike, whether they remained quiet or made an active opposition, they, at length, took measures which seemed of a middle kind. They called in the apostles, and commanded them to preach no more in the name of Jesus, lest they should be involved in the same sufferings as they had seen him endure. Peter and John replied, Whether it be right before God, the judge of all, that we should obey you in preference to him, you yourselves can easily decide. For though we wish to yield you all that obedience which is due to rulers, we cannot but declare those things which we have seen and heard, and which are of such vast importance to the best interests of mankind. So when they had further threatened them, they dismissed them unhurt, having nothing whereof they might accuse them, sufficient to turn the bulk of the people against them, for all men glorified God on account of the miracle which was performed ; for the man who was thus recovered had been in his former state of decrepitude more than forty years.

The apostles were no sooner dismissed, than they resorted to the place where they expected to find a number of their brethren assembled, and reported to them the transactions of the chief priests and rulers. When they had delivered their account, a remarkable effusion of the Holy Spirit took place upon them, so that they all with one heart and voice glorified God, committed themselves and their cause to his holy keeping, and entreated him that he would give them boldness to declare his word in the midst of dangers, and confirm their testimony by such miracles as might increase the number of their converts, animate their friends, and confound their enemies. Their request was heard ; for the place of their assembly was shaken, as on the day of Pentecost ; they were afresh filled with the Holy Ghost ; and declared the word wherever they came with the greatest freedom. The utmost unanimity prevailed among the whole body of the disciples ; they who possessed houses and lands selling them, and placing their price in the public

stock, distributed to every one that was in urgent necessity. Among those who thus resigned their property for the public good, particular mention is made of Joseph, a Levite of Cyprus, who was surnamed, on account of his benevolence and usefulness, Barnabas, the Son of consolation.

They who consider, that even among our Lord's twelve disciples there was found a Judas, will not be surprised, that out of five thousand professed converts, some should have been influenced by unworthy motives. A certain person, named Ananias, with the concurrence of his wife Sapphira, sold an estate; and, keeping back part of the price, brought the remainder to the apostles, pretending to devote the whole to the sacred treasury. But Peter, whom the Spirit of God had miraculously informed of this fraudulent transaction, thus remonstrated with him on the enormity of his crime: Why hath Satan filled thine heart with such detestable boldness, that thou shouldst audaciously attempt to impose on the Holy Spirit? While the land remained unsold, was it not perfectly thine own, notwithstanding thy profession of faith in Jesus? and when it was sold, was not the price of it at thine own disposal, to have given or not given it as thou shouldst think proper? Why, then, hast thou conceived this wickedness in thy heart? thou hast not lied merely to men, but also unto God. And Ananias, hearing these words, fell down, and immediately expired. Terror and amazement filled the assembly; and, after an interval of suspense, when it appeared he was evidently dead, some young men that were present wrapped him up in his mantle, and carried him out, and buried him, without any ceremony of mourning or delay, as a person who had been evidently struck dead by the interposition of God. And after an interval of about three hours, Sapphira, who had been absent, and, from some strange combination of circumstances, hitherto remained ignorant of her husband's death, entered the room; and, upon being questioned by Peter, declared they had sold the land for that precise sum which Ananias had mentioned. Then Peter, moved by the Spirit of God, said unto her again, How is it that ye have thus wickedly conspired together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of those who have just been burying thy husband are now at the door on their return, and shall immediately carry thee out.

These awful events were found to produce the most salutary effects to the infant church; deterring such as might have wished to join them from improper motives, and adding to the veneration in which the apostles were held. Multitudes of true believers were added to the congregation of the faithful, and the utmost harmony continued to prevail. The Spirit of God so mightily favoured the apostles, that people brought their sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that, at the least, the shadow of Peter, as he was passing by, might

overshadow some of them. There came also a multitude out of the neighbouring cities and towns, who brought their sick and possessed relatives, and had the satisfaction to see them universally healed.

The more the church of Christ prospered, the more fiercely were its enemies incensed. The high-priest therefore, and his companions, again apprehended the apostles, and cast them into the common prison, where the vilest malefactors were lodged. But God, to show the impotence of their rage, sent his angel by night to deliver them. Their prison doors were now miraculously opened; and, being brought forth, they were exhorted by the celestial messenger to take their stations as soon as possible in the temple, and there publicly declare the words of that gospel, which may be properly denominated, the glad tidings of eternal life. They were not disobedient to this divine admonition; but were early in the temple, diligently teaching the people. But in the mean time, the high-priest and his associates being come into the room where the council was usually held, they called together all the members of the sanhedrim; and, when they were convened, sent proper officers to the common prison to take charge of the apostles, and have them brought into their presence, that the court might proceed to their examination and punishment. When the officers came thither, to their great surprise, they found them not in the prison; and yet, upon the most diligent inquiry, could not discover any way in which they could have made their escape. The doors were shut and bolted, and the keepers standing, as sentinels, without; but when they had entered the place in which the apostles had been confined, not one of them could be found. When these things were communicated to the high-priest and the other members of the council, they were filled with a perplexity, which was increased, when they were further informed that the apostles had not only escaped, but were teaching the people in the temple with as much boldness as ever. They immediately deputed the captain of the temple, with the officers who attended him, to bring them without violence, lest it should excite a tumult among the people, who were still somewhat inclinable to favour the christian cause. Being produced before the council, they were questioned by the high priest, how they dared to disobey the commandments they had received from the rulers, and fill Jerusalem with their doctrine, so as to bring upon them the odium of crucifying an innocent person, and expose them to the danger of being stoned or torn in pieces by the populace. The apostles, in their answer, which appears to have been chiefly delivered by Peter, alleged what they had before declared, that they ought to obey God rather than men: that God had himself cast upon them the odium of the death of Jesus, by having raised him from the sepulchre, and exalted him with the right hand of his power,

that he may be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and the remission of sins. Of these truths, they declared themselves the witnesses; and appealed to the testimony of that eternal Spirit, who only could have enabled them to perform such wonderful works. This noble defence so much enraged the high-priest and his Sadducean company, that, forgetting all bounds of decency, they gnashed upon the apostles with their teeth, and determined, upon some pretext or other, immediately to take away their lives. Then arose Gamaliel a celebrated doctor of the law, and commanded the apostles to be put forth for a little time. When, directing himself to his brethren and the other members of the court, he said, Ye men of Israel, whom God has raised up as the guardians of his people, I think it my duty, on this important occasion, seriously to advise you to take heed to yourselves as to what you are about to do to these men. If they are mere pretenders, you need be in no great anxiety; for they will soon bring upon them the sword of the Romans, as was the case with Theudas, and with Judas of Galilee. Refrain, therefore, from these men, and leave them to themselves; for if this undertaking be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; and to attempt it is dangerous, lest, peradventure, you should be found fighters against the power and providence of the Almighty.

Here it is proper to make three historical observations. 1. This Gamaliel is much celebrated among the Jews, who assert that the honour of the law failed with him: and that Onkelos, the author of the Targum, burnt seventy pounds weight of perfumes at his funeral. He is said to have been the author of the prayers against the christians which are used in the synagogues, but is better known as the preceptor of the apostle Paul. 2. The Theudas who is here mentioned is not the same as he whose history is recorded by Josephus, since that impostor did not make his appearance till, at least, ten years afterwards. He was, probably, one of the rebellious leaders who arose about the time of the taxing, or perhaps he might make his appearance a little earlier. That two impostors of the same name should arise, is not wonderful, since Theudas, or Judas, was a very common name among the Jews. 3. The history of Judas the Galilean is better known. It is recorded by Josephus, and will be noticed by us in that chapter which contains a relation of the destruction of Jerusalem.

The speech of Gamaliel so far moderated the assembly, that when they had called in the apostles, and ordered them to be scourged in their presence, they charged them not to preach any more in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Thus dismissed, they departed, rejoicing in the persecution they had been called to suffer. They immediately resumed their work of teaching in the temple, which they continued whenever it

was opened for purposes of worship ; and going at other times from house to house, ceased not to instruct their brethren in the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Such are the imperfections which attend us in this state of existence, that it is not in the power of the wisest and best of men long to preserve an uninterrupted tranquillity in societies over which they may preside, especially if the members be numerous and educated in different habits. “The number of the disciples being multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows had been neglected in the daily ministration.” That these Grecians, as Dr. Campbell observes, were Jews, is evident from the history ; for this happened before Peter was specially called to preach the gospel to Cornelius and his family, who were the first-fruits of the Gentiles to Christ. Besides, though the word Grecian, made use of in our translation, is synonymous with Greek, yet the term employed in the original is never applied in the New Testament to pagan Greeks, but solely to those Jews who had resided always or mostly in Grecian cities, and, consequently, whose tongue was Greek. Great numbers of these lived in Egypt, where they made that translation of the Old Testament which is commonly called the Septuagint, or that of the Seventy. They are said to have read the Greek Bible in their synagogues, and to have used the Greek language in sacred things ; and thus they were opposed to the Hebrew Jews, who performed their public worship in the Hebrew tongue ; and in this sense Paul speaks of himself as a Hebrew of the Hebrews. [Phil. iii. 5.] i. e. a Hebrew both by nation and language. The complaint of these Grecians appears to have been just, and was, as such, acknowledged by the apostles themselves. How then, it may be asked, could those holy men, on whom the Spirit of God so abundantly rested, be guilty of either fraud or neglect ? To this, we reply, that there is no reason to suppose that either of these accusations could be fixed upon them ; but as so few must be insufficient for the care of such a vast number of disciples, they were obliged to trust to the management of other men, and from their neglect the evil complained of originated. This might easily have been prevented, had they been enabled to discern the spirits of their brethren ; but it was wisely permitted of God, that thus a temporary inconvenience might be the occasion of a lasting blessing to the churches of Christ.

The twelve apostles, under the direction of God, called together, in one general assembly, the multitude of the disciples, and intimated to them, that it was by no means proper that they who were appointed to the apostolic office, should forsake the ministry of the word, which required their utmost diligence, to attend to the tables of the poor, and see that they were duly supplied with provisions. They therefore requested that seven men of honest report, whose characters are well attested among

them, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, might be put over this business, that so the apostles might, with less interruption, devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. The multitude, therefore, chose seven men, who, by their names, appear to have belonged to the Grecians, and who could not, therefore, be justly suspected of neglecting their widows; and, having presented them before the apostles, they were by them set apart for their office, by prayer and the laying on of hands. The names of these seven deacons were these: "Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch." The wisdom of this measure appeared; for the word of God grew, and the number of the disciples in Jerusalem was greatly multiplied; a great multitude of priests became obedient to the faith, notwithstanding all those prejudices which they had imbibed against this new doctrine, from the scorn with which the great and the noble generally treated it, and the loss of those temporal advantages which they might be called to resign out of a regard to it.

Stephen, one of the newly elected deacons, being full of the Holy Ghost and power, wrought many miracles among the people. His increasing usefulness attracted the opposition of the persecuting Jews. There, therefore, arose some of the "synagogue of the Libertines, (probably, the children of Roman freed-men,) and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephen." These, finding themselves unable to resist the force of his arguments, determined to call in the aid of the council. For this purpose, they suborned men, who should falsely accuse him of having spoken blasphemous words against Moses and against God, saying that Jesus of Nazareth should destroy the temple, and change the usages of the Jewish nation. Being called upon by the high-priest to reply to this charge, he, in a long and able speech, proved the perverseness of the Jewish nation; and, at length, showed that the present generation inherited the same spirit as their fathers, and manifested it by the betraying and murdering the Messiah of God. They now became so extremely irritated, that they gnashed upon him with their teeth, as if they had been wild beasts ready to devour him. But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, was comforted by a miraculous vision; for, looking up into heaven, he saw the glory of God, and Christ standing on his right hand. Announcing this discovery to his persecutors, their enmity was roused to its utmost pitch; so that, crying with a loud voice, that they might drown that of Stephen, and stopping their ears, lest they should hear what they deemed such abominable blasphemy, they ran upon him with one consent, dragged him out of the city, and, in a tumultuous manner, stoned him to death. During this furious assault, his mind was admirably supported, committing his soul

into the hands of Jesus, and praying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." Such was the death of Stephen, the first martyr, Christ only excepted, under the new dispensation.

However rapidly the cause of God had spread, no attempts, that we read of, had been hitherto made to convey the glad tidings of the gospel beyond the bounds of Jerusalem: but God now saw it proper to make the enemies of his church the means of diffusing the influence of religion more extensively in the earth. The persecution continuing to rage after the death of Stephen, and a great number of the christians being committed to prison, almost all the men of eminence among them, except the apostles, sought their safety agreeably to the command of our Saviour, when they were persecuted in one city to flee to another. They were not, however, upon this account, idle in their Master's cause, but went every where preaching the word, and, in many instances, with considerable success.

Among the rest, Philip, who was newly elected deacon, and who appears, also, to have sustained the office of an evangelist, went down to a city of Samaria, probably, the same where Christ had the conversation with the woman; and, knowing that all the distinction between the people of that country and the Jews was now removed, freely preached Christ unto them, and proclaimed him as the promised Messiah. And the people who inhabited that city, notwithstanding their natural prejudices against the Jews, unanimously attended to the things which were spoken by Philip, rejoicing both at the doctrine which he preached, and the benevolent miracles which he wrought for its confirmation. There resided in this city a remarkable man, whose name has been delivered down in the annals of infamy, Simon, the sorcerer, a pretended philosopher or prophet, who, by means of certain juggling tricks, found means to persuade the ignorant that he was miraculously favoured with an extraordinary power. When, however, Philip came, the difference between his real miracles and the delusions of Simon was so great, that great numbers of the Samaritans were baptized, and Simon himself embraced the profession of the christian faith. His insincerity or ignorance was, however, soon detected. When the apostles, who were preserved through the peculiar providence of God amidst the violent persecution which continued to rage at Jerusalem, had been informed of the conversion of a great number of the Samaritans, they determined to send to them Peter and John for their further instruction and confirmation in the doctrines of Christ. On their arrival at Samaria, the Holy Spirit was given to many converts, being communicated through their prayers and the imposition of their hands. When Simon saw this, he offered money to the apostles, that they might give him the same power of communicating miraculous gifts as they themselves had now exercised, hoping, no doubt, that it would greatly contribute to his temporal advancement, especially if he

could thus instantaneously instruct persons in the knowledge of languages which they never had learnt. But when Peter heard so infamous an offer, he was not able to conceal his indignation : and therefore said to him in his own name and that of John, Let thy money go with thee to the destruction to which thou art thyself hastening, since thou hast thought so vilely of the free and invaluable gift of the blessed God, as to imagine it might be purchased with money. It is very evident, from such a detestable proposal, that, notwithstanding the profession thou hast made, thou art, indeed, an utter stranger to the efficacy of the gospel, and hast no part nor lot in this matter, nor any interest in the important spiritual blessings to which all these extraordinary gifts are subservient ; for thine heart is not upright in the sight of God, otherwise thou wouldest think far more honourably of this Spirit of his, than to form a mercenary scheme to traffic in it in this scandalous manner. Repent, therefore, immediately, of this thy enormous wickedness, and beg of God, with the deepest humiliation and the most fervent prayer, if, perhaps, his infinite mercy may yet be extended to such a wretch, and the blasphemous thought of thy corrupt heart may be forgiven thee: for though thou wast so lately washed with the water of baptism, I plainly perceive that thou art still in the very gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity ; plunged in that hateful bitterness and poison in the latter end, and held in the chains of thine own covetousness and carnality, and consequently in a servitude utterly inconsistent with that state of glorious liberty into which the children of God are brought ; so that thou art on the borders of dreadful and aggravated destruction if immediate repentance does not prevent. And Simon, as he could not but be very much alarmed by such a solemn admonition, answered and said to the apostles, If you indeed conceive my case to be so bad, at least extend your charity so far as to make your supplications to the Lord on my account, that none of these terrible things which ye have often spoken of as the fatal consequence of sin may come upon me : for I am far from disbelieving the truth of the gospel, how improper soever my proposal might be, or however derogatory from the honour of it. Thus did the two apostles, Peter and John, perform the errand they were sent upon, and executed their commission ; when, therefore, they had borne their testimony to the truth of the gospel, and had spoken the word of the Lord Jesus Christ to many who had not received it from the mouth of Philip, they returned to the other ten at Jerusalem ; and as they went along, they preached the gospel in many other towns and villages of the Samaritans which lay in their way.

When these important affairs at Samaria were despatched, an angel of the Lord spake to Philip, commanding him to arise and go towards the south, by the road which leads from Jerusalem to Gaza across the desert or wilderness of Judea. With-

out presuming to inquire into the end of the errand on which he was sent, he set forward on his journey as the angel had directed him. And, behold, a certain Ethiopian eunuch, the treasurer of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, being either of Jewish extraction, or proselyted to the religion of Moses, had lately come to worship at Jerusalem at one of the great feasts. This man was then returning home; and his mind being deeply impressed with devout and religious sentiments, in consequence of those solemnities which had passed in that sacred place, as he pursued his journey, while he sat in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah, that he might thus fill up that vacant space of time which his journey allowed him to valuable purpose, and so might be better prepared to pass with safety through those busy scenes which would lie before him when he arrived at home. And the Spirit, by that secret suggestion which inspired men could certainly distinguish as a divine revelation, said to Philip, Approach, and join thyself to this chariot, and enter into conversation with the person who sitteth in it, without fear of offending him, or exposing thyself to any inconvenience.

And Philip, running up to the chariot, heard him reading the Scriptures; for he read aloud, that his own mind might be more deeply impressed with it, and that his servants, who were near him, might receive some benefit by it. And Philip, being well acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, easily perceived that it was the book of the prophet Isaiah which was then before him, and that the passage would give him a very proper opportunity for entering into discourse with him concerning Christ, and delivering to him that evangelical message with which he was charged. He therefore took occasion to begin the conversation from this circumstance, and said to the eunuch, Dost thou understand the true sense of those sublime and important things which thou art reading? And the eunuch was so far from being offended at the freedom he took, that he mildly and respectfully said in reply, How can it be, that I should fully understand such obscure oracles as these, unless some one, who is better acquainted with the contents of them, should guide me, and throw that light upon them which I, who am so much a stranger to the Jewish affairs, must necessarily want? And concluding from the question he put, besides what he might conjecture from his habit, that he was better acquainted with these things than himself, he requested Philip that he would come up and sit with him in his chariot, where there was room conveniently to receive him, that so he might be farther informed in matters of so great importance. Now the period or passage of scripture which he was reading at that time was this: [Isa. liii. 7, 8.] "He was brought to the slaughter as a sheep, and as a lamb before his shearer is dumb, so opened he not his mouth. In his deep humiliation, his judgment was taken

away, and who shall declare or describe his generation? for, innocent as he was, his life is cut off from the earth." The Syriac renders the passage in a way which seems better to agree with the prophecy as standing in the Old Testament, and our ideas of propriety, speaking of the lamb as led to the slaughter, and of the sheep as standing silent before its shearer. The passage, however rendered, expressly refers to the meekness with which the blessed Jesus should endure all his sufferings; while ungrateful sinners, in contempt of all laws both human and divine, persecuted him, even to the death. And the eunuch answering to Philip, said, I beseech thee to inform me of whom did the prophet say this? of himself, or some other person? Was Isaiah thus inhumanly put to death by the Jews? or did he foretell the sufferings of some future and greater person? Then Philip, secretly adoring the divine providence in giving him so fair an opportunity, opened his mouth with an air of solemnity, and, beginning from this very scripture in which he was so plainly delineated, preached to him the glad tidings of that Jesus of whom not Isaiah alone, but so many of the other prophets spoke. And, after he had laid before him the predictions recorded in scripture concerning him, he bore witness to the glorious accomplishment of them, and gave him the history of those extraordinary facts which had lately happened in confirmation of that gospel he taught. His noble hearer, in the mean time, listened attentively; and though he saw no miracle performed in evidence of the truth of Philip's doctrine, he found such a light breaking in upon his mind from the view of the prophecies, and such an inward conviction wrought in his spirit by the divine influence, that he became a sincere convert to the gospel. And, having for some time discoursed together of the person and the sufferings of Christ, and of the method of salvation by him, as they went by the way, they came to a certain water, there being, in that place, some pool or stream adjoining to the road; and the eunuch, having learnt what was the rite of initiation, which the great prophet and sovereign of the church had appointed, was willing to embrace the first opportunity that providence offered of making a surrender of himself to Christ, and being received into the number of his people, upon which he said unto Philip, Behold, here is water, what should hinder my being baptized, and becoming from this hour one of your body? And Philip said unto him, If thou believest with all thine heart this gospel which I have taught thee, it may lawfully be done. And he, answering, said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Saviour of perishing sinners. And, upon Philip's declaring his satisfaction in this profession of his faith in Christ and subjection to him, and readily consenting to receive him as a fellow christian, he ordered the chariot to stop; "and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch,

and there he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord," which, according to some manuscripts, fell upon the eunuch, immediately snatched away Philip in a miraculous manner, "and the eunuch saw him no more;" for, as it thus appeared that providence designed they should be separated, he did not attempt to search for him in the neighbouring parts, or to go any where to follow him, how much soever he esteemed his conversation; but, getting up again into his chariot, he went on his way rejoicing, with an heart full of thankfulness, that he had been favoured with the privilege of so important an interview with him; and that, after having received the gospel from his lips, he had seen such a miraculous confirmation of its truth, in the sudden manner in which this divinely-commissioned teacher was removed from his sight, to which all his attendants were witnesses. It is generally believed, that this new convert was the means of introducing the knowledge of Christ into the empire of Abyssinia. But Philip, quickly after he was separated from the eunuch, was found at Azotus, or Ashdod, a city that was more than thirty miles from Gaza, in the southern part of the country which had been formerly one of the five governments belonging to the Philistines; [1 Sam. vi. 17.] and, going on from thence, he preached the gospel with great success in Joppa, Lydda, Saron, and all the other cities along the coast of the Mediterranean sea, till he came to Caesarea, where providence directed him to settle for a considerable time.

There resided at this time in Jerusalem a young man of some note, whose name was Saul. He was born at Tarsus, an ancient city in Cilicia, and had been educated by the celebrated Gamaliel in the knowledge of the Jewish law. His privileges as a Jew, and the advantages of his early life, are thus described by himself; [Phil. iii. 5, 6.] "Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin; an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." Of these last qualifications he gave ample proof, testifying his consent to the murder of Stephen, by keeping the clothes of the witnesses, who, agreeably to the Jewish law, were the most active in his execution. After the death of that martyr, Saul had a principal hand in the persecution which ensued; and, seizing upon both men and women, dragged them to prison, and sought by every means in his power to accomplish their death. With all this, however, his zeal was not satisfied; but as his heart was set upon extirpating the followers of Jesus, he applied to the chief priests for letters to the rulers of the Jewish synagogues at Damascus, that if any were found in that city (which was very fully inhabited by Jews) who had embraced the christian profession, they might be brought bound into Jerusalem, to be proceeded

against, in the severest manner, by the saubedrim. And as he was proceeding on his journey, and was now come near to Damascus, it being just about the middle of the day, a wonderful event happened, which turned the whole course of his life into a different channel, and was attended with the most important consequences both to him and the church: on a sudden, a great light from heaven shone around him, exceeding the lustre of the meridian sun. And such was the effect this wonderful appearance had upon him, that he fell to the ground, being struck from the beast on which he rode, as all that travelled with him likewise were; and, to his great astonishment, he heard a loud and distinct voice, saying unto him in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? And as he saw, at the same time, the bright appearance of some glorious person in a human form, he was filled with awe, and said, Who art thou, Lord? and what is it that I have done against thee? And the Lord Jesus (for it was he who had condescended to appear to him on this occasion) said, I am that Jesus, the Nazarene, whom, by the opposition thou art making to my gospel, and by thy cruelty to my disciples, thou madly persecutest; but remember, it is hard for thee to kick against the goads; and all thy fury can only wound thyself, without being able to do me or my cause any real injury. When Saul heard and saw that he who had so often been affronted and despised by him, even that Jesus of Nazareth whom he had so blasphemously and virulently opposed, was such a glorious and powerful person; and yet that, instead of destroying him immediately, as he might with ease have done, he had condescended thus compassionately to expostulate with him: his mind was almost overborne with an unutterable mixture of contending passions; so that, trembling at the thought of what he had done, and amazed at the glorious appearance of Jesus, he said, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and stand upon thy feet, and go into the city; for there it shall be told thee what thou must do, and thou shalt be instructed in all things which I have appointed concerning thee. For I have thus appeared unto thee to ordain thee a minister and servant to me in the great work of propagating my gospel, and to appoint thee a witness, both of those things which thou hast now seen, and of those in which I will hereafter manifest myself unto thee: and in the testimony thou shalt give, I will be with thee, to protect thee by my power and providence, delivering thee in the midst of a thousand dangers, from the malice of the Jewish people and of the Gentiles, to whom, as the one or the other may come in thy way, I now send thee. That I may make thee instrumental to open their blind eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may thus receive the free and full forgiveness of all their most aggravated sins, and may

have an inheritance among them that are sanctified, by means of that faith which is in me.

The men who travelled with him, upon their rising from the ground to which they had been struck upon the first appearance of the light from heaven, stood astonished and speechless, hearing, indeed, the sound of that voice which had spoken to Saul, but neither distinctly understanding what was said, nor perceiving who it was that had been speaking to him. Saul also, himself, had his nerves so strongly affected with the glory of that light which had shone from the body of Jesus, that he became blind for a season; so that, as it was not safe for him to ride in such a condition, at least, to attempt the guidance of the animal on which he had been seated, they led him by the hand to the city of Damascus. He was at his lodgings there three days without sight; and all that time he neither ate nor drank, but lay for a considerable part of it as in a trance, in which he saw some very extraordinary visions, particularly of Ananias, who was to visit him; and the remainder of it he employed in such deep humiliation and humble earnest prayer, as suited his past guilt, and his present astonishing circumstances. To this Ananias, who appears to have been a disciple of some standing in the church, the Lord spake in a vision, directing him to Saul's lodging, describing his present favourable state of mind, and informing him that he had even now seen in a vision Ananias coming to him, and restoring his sight. Ananias was so astonished at these tidings, that he appeared unwilling to believe them, even from the mouth of God himself; but replied, I have heard by many concerning this man, how cruelly he has persecuted thy saints at Jerusalem, and how he is now come on the errand of the high priest, to carry away prisoners all that call upon thine holy name. God, however, silenced these objections, by commanding him immediately to go his way; for that this man, of whom he doubted, was a chosen vessel of God, appointed faithfully to preach the gospel before, not only Jews, but Gentiles of every station; and to suffer great and accumulated afflictions on account of that Jesus whose cause he had thus violently opposed. Ananias resisted no longer; but, going to the place to which the vision had directed him, laid his hands upon him who had been so lately his enemy, and said to him, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest" hither to Damascus, "hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Spirit." For the God of our fathers hath, in his secret and mysterious counsels, fore-ordained thee to know his will, and to see that righteous person whom our ungrateful nation hath crucified, and to hear, as thou hast done, the voice from his mouth, though he be now returned to the celestial glory; for thou shalt be his faithful and successful witness, and shalt be employed to testify unto all men the truth of those things which thou hast

already seen and heard, and of those which he shall hereafter reveal unto thee. And now, why dost thou delay a moment longer? Arise, and be baptized; and thereby express thy desire to wash away thy sin, invoking the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that illustrious and divine name which thou hast formerly opposed and blasphemed. Immediately, as soon as Ananias had entered the place, and laid his hands upon him, there fell from his eyes something like *scales*; and he presently recovered his sight; and, upon this, arose, and was baptized. And presently after this he received the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, by which he was much more particularly instructed in the contents of the gospel, and fitted to communicate it with the greatest advantage to others.

Having received food after a long abstinence, he was quickly strengthened, and recovered his former health and vigour, which it was his immediate care to employ in the service of his new master. Every thing in the conformation of Saul appeared to forbid his remaining an undecided character; so that it is probable that he would have employed all his energies in the pursuit of any undertaking in which he had engaged. He was therefore qualified, both by nature and grace, for the important and dangerous station in which providence had determined to place him. Whatever his hand found to do he did it with all his might. Convinced by the strongest possible evidence that his whole former life had been spent in rebellion against God, he burst at once through all his former habits, and associated with the disciples whose lives he had so lately thought to extinguish. Dr. Wells says, that as soon as Saul had strength to go any where abroad, he retired into the desert of Arabia, where he supposes him to have been favoured with the full revelation of christianity, and to have spent some considerable time in devotion; after which, he returned to Damascus and preached, which he argues from Gal. i. 16, 17. But that seems inconsistent to Dr. Doddridge with what is here said of his preaching immediately; and he therefore imagines his going into Arabia (to which Damascus now belonged) was his making excursions from that city into the neighbouring parts of the country; and, perhaps, taking a large circuit about it, which might be his employment between the time in which he began to preach in Damascus, and his quitting it, after repeated labours there, to go to Jerusalem. However this might be, Saul soon distinguished himself by preaching Christ with great boldness in the synagogues, to the equal amazement of enemies and of friends.

About three years after, the Jews, finding it was impossible to answer his arguments or to damp his zeal, resolved to attempt another way to silence him; and that they might effectually accomplish it, conspired to kill him. But providence so ordered it, that their design was happily discovered, and made

known to Saul, who therefore kept himself concealed, and would not give them any opportunity to execute their purpose : and though they watched all the gates of the city continually, and some assassin or other was waiting at each of them day and night to attack and murder him if he should offer to retire from thence, yet they could not compass their cruel design. But as his present situation was still judged unsafe, and it was no way proper he should be thus confined, the other disciples of Jesus, anxious to preserve a life of so much value, took him by night, and let him down by the side of the wall in a basket, and so dismissed him, heartily committing him to the divine protection, by the assistance of which he escaped the hands of those blood-thirsty Jews that were lurking about the gates.

When Saul had returned to Jerusalem, he found the disciples unwilling to receive him, on account of his former character ; until Barnabas, who seems to have possessed more explicit information concerning him, related the particulars of his conversion, and his subsequent conduct. They did not then take him under their instruction ; but, finding that he was already well acquainted with the gospel of Christ, rejoiced with him on the occasion, and admitted him into their most intimate friendship. His stay, however, at Jerusalem, was short ; for, having preached boldly in the name of Jesus, and disputed with the Grecian Jews, a conspiracy was formed to take away his life. The brethren, therefore, desirous not to lose one whom God had prepared for the most valuable purposes, conducted him to Casarea, and thence sent him to Tarsus, his native city, the capital of Cilicia.

Then the several churches that were formed through all Judea, and those more lately planted in Galilee and Samaria, being greatly edified by the seals that were set to the truth of the gospel, and by the confirmation of the news of Saul's conversion, (though they could not enjoy the benefit of his personal labours,) not only advanced in christian knowledge and holiness, but had also an happy interval of external rest, as several circumstances in the civil state of the Jews at that time concurred either to appease their enemies, or to engage them to attend to what immediately concerned themselves. And as the followers of Jesus were not corrupted by this respite, but continued, with exemplary devotion and zeal, walking in the fear of the Lord, and evidently appeared to be in an extraordinary manner supported by the aids and animated by the consolation of the Holy Spirit, they were considerably multiplied by a new accession of members, whereby the damage sustained in the late persecution was abundantly repaired.

Having despatched this important history of the conversion of Saul, and of the vigour and success with which he set out in the christian ministry, let us now turn to another scene, which

opened during that peaceful interval mentioned above. Now it came to pass at this favourable juncture, that the apostle Peter, as he was making a progress through all the parts of the neighbouring country, that he might rectify any disorder that occurred, and instruct and confirm the new converts in the knowledge and faith of the gospel, among the other places that he visited, came also to the saints that dwelt at Lydda, a considerable town not far from the coast of the Mediterranean sea. And he found there a certain man whose name was Æneas, who had been long disabled by a palsy, and had kept his bed eight years, in so deplorable a state, as to be quite incapable of rising from it, or to be any way helpful to himself. And Peter seeing him, and perceiving in himself a strong intimation that the divine power would be exerted for his recovery, said to him, Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole; arise, and make thy bed; and upon this the palsy left him, and the disabled man was all at once so strengthened, that he arose immediately and did it. And the miracle appeared so extraordinary to all the inhabitants of the learned and celebrated town of Lydda, and to those of the fruitful vale of Sharon, part of which lay in the neighbourhood of it, that they no sooner saw him, and had an opportunity of being informed in the particulars of so unparalleled a fact, but they believed that he, in whose name it was done, was undoubtedly the Messiah, and so turned to the Lord, and embraced his gospel.

And the number of converts in these parts was greatly increased by another and yet more astonishing event, which happened about the same time. For there was then at Joppa, a noted sea-port in that neighbourhood, a certain female disciple, named Tabitha, who, by the interpretation of her name into the Greek language, is called Dorcas, (both of them signifying a fawn or roe,) and she was universally respected as a person of a very lovely character; for "she was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did" upon all proper occasions. And it came to pass in those days, while Peter was at Lydda, that she was sick, and died. And when they had washed her corpse, according to the custom of the place, they laid her in an upper chamber. And as Lydda was very near Joppa, being but about six miles off, the disciples at Joppa, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, entreating him that he would not by any means delay to come to them, that he might give them his advice and assistance under that great distress, which the loss of so dear and useful a friend could not but occasion. And Peter presently arose and went to Joppa with them. And when he was come to Tabitha's house, they brought him into the upper chamber where she was laid out; and all the widows stood by him weeping for the loss of such a benefactress, and showing the coats and mantles which Dorcas made for charitable purposes while she was yet continued with them. And

Peter, putting them all out, as he found in himself a powerful encouragement to hope that the petition he was about to offer was dictated from above, and therefore should certainly be heard, kneeled down and prayed with great earnestness; and then, turning to the body, he said, as with a voice of authority, in the name and presence of his great Lord, the Sovereign of life and death, Tabitha, arise. And he had no sooner spoke these words, but she opened her eyes; and, seeing Peter, she immediately sat up; and, giving her his hand, he raised her up on her feet; and, having called the saints and widows who were near the chamber, and had impatiently been waiting for the event, he presented her to them alive. And this wonderful fact was soon known throughout all the city of Joppa, and many more believed in the Lord upon the credit of so signal a miracle. And as Peter was willing to improve so favourable an opportunity of addressing them while their minds were impressed with so astonishing a miracle, "he continued many days at Joppa, in the house of one Simon a tanner," from whence he was afterwards sent for to Cæsarea, upon an extraordinary occasion, which we shall proceed to relate.

Hitherto the gospel had been preached to the Jews alone, but God was now determined to open a way for the discovery of it to the Gentiles; and that a proper decorum might be observed in the manner of doing it, he first sent it to one who, though uncircumcised, was nevertheless a worshipper of the true God. Let it therefore be observed, that while Peter continued at Joppa, there was a certain man in the neighbouring and celebrated city of Cæsarea, named Cornelius, who was a centurion or commander of an hundred men, of that which is called the Italian cohort, or band of soldiers which attended the Roman governor, who commonly kept his residence at this city. This Cornelius was a man of distinguished piety, and one that feared and worshipped the only living and true God with all his house; giving, also, much alms to the people of the Jews, though he himself was a Gentile; and praying to God continually, in secret, domestic, and public devotions, as he esteemed it an important part of his daily business and pleasure to employ himself in such sacred exercises. On a certain occasion, while thus employed, about three o'clock in the afternoon, the time of evening sacrifices, he saw the vision of an angel, who informed him that his prayers and alms had ascended up before God as an acceptable memorial; and that the Most High, wishing to communicate to him the most valuable blessings, directed him to send to Joppa for one Simon Peter, who resided with Simon the tanner, who should instruct him what to do that he might inherit eternal life. He accordingly despatched two of his domestics, with a pious soldier who constantly attended him, making them fully acquainted with the vision he had received, and giving them suitable directions how

to proceed. And as they set out too late to reach the place that night, on the next day, while they were on their journey, and drew near the city, Peter went up to the top of the house to pray, the flat open roof, with which the houses in those parts were built, affording a more convenient place of retirement than could, at that time, be found within doors; and it was now about noon, or the sixth hour of the day, and he was very hungry, and would gladly have taken a little refreshment; but while they were preparing dinner for the family, he fell into an ecstasy or trance, in which a very remarkable and instructive vision presented itself to him; for he had a strong impression made upon his mind, and apprehended, while he lay in this state, that he saw heaven opened, and something of a large extent descending to him from above, like a great sheet or wrapper, which was fastened at the four corners, and so let down to the earth by an invisible hand; in which there were all sorts of things in great variety, even four-footed animals of the earth, and wild beasts, and reptiles, or creeping things, and fowls of the air of several kinds. And while this plenty of provision was before him, there came a voice from heaven to him, saying, Rise, Peter, since thou art hungry, and take thy choice of what thou wilt out of this great variety; kill any of these animals which may be most agreeable to thee, and eat freely of what is before thee. But Peter said, with a kind of pious horror, By no means, Lord, I would much rather continue fasting a great while longer, than satisfy my hunger on such terms; for I see only unclean animals here, and thou knowest that, from a religious regard to the precepts of thy law, I have never, from the day of my birth to this hour, eaten any thing which is common or unclean. And the voice said to him again the second time, those things which God hath cleansed by such a declaration of his will in bidding thee to eat of them, do not thou any more call common. And, that it might impress his mind the more, and he might give the more particular attention to it as to a thing established by God, the vision was three times repeated, and the vessel was at length again received up into heaven.

While Peter was thinking with himself what this vision should mean, he was informed by the Spirit that three men were at the gate, who had come to visit him on the most important business. He therefore went down immediately; and, after hearing their plain narration, procured them lodging for that night, and on the morning set out with them to Cæsarea. After sleeping another night upon the road, they, on the next day, entered Cæsarea, where Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relations and most intimate friends for to hear the divine message. And as Peter was entering into his house, Cornelius met him; and, to express his reverence to one so remarkably the messenger of heaven, falling down at his

fect, paid homage to him. But Peter would by no means permit this, and therefore raised him up, saying, Arise, for I also myself am nothing more than a man as thou art, and pretend to no right to such profound respects. This happened just at the entrance of the house; and, thus discoursing with him, he went in, and found many of the friends and acquaintance of Cornelius gathered together, so that Peter, at the first sight of them, expressed some surprise. And he said to them, You cannot but know that it is looked upon among us as unlawful for a man that is a Jew to join in friendly conversation with a Gentile, or to come into the house of one of another nation, who is not, at least, naturalized by circumcision, and a full conformity to our law, which I am well aware that you are not: nevertheless, God hath lately shown me that I am to make no such distinction, and to call no man common or unclean. Wherefore, when I was sent for hither by your messengers, I came away without any contradiction or debate; I would ask, therefore, and desire to know from your own mouth, on what account you have sent for me. Then Cornelius, with the utmost frankness and sincerity, related the vision with which he had been favoured four days before, and assured Peter that it was with intent to hear his declaration of truth that they were all at that time collected together. Then Peter, opening his mouth and addressing himself to them, with a solemnity answerable to so great an occasion, said, Of a truth I perceive, whatever my former prejudices were as to the difference between the Jews and the Gentiles, that God is no respecter of persons, and accepts no man merely because he is of such a nation, nor so determines his regards as to confine his favours to the seed of Abraham alone; but that in every nation, he that, with a true filial reverence and obedience, feareth him, and, in consequence of this, worketh righteousness, whatever be the family from which he is descended, though he be none of the posterity of Abraham, is acceptable to him. And this I apprehend now to be the meaning of that message which he sent to the children of Israel, proclaiming the glad tidings of mutual peace by Jesus Christ, the great ambassador of peace, who, after all his abasement, being exalted to his kingdom, is become Lord of all, not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also; and, under that character, will manifest the riches of his mercy unto all that call upon him; and, since this is the case, far be it from me to maintain any farther reserve with regard to those whom God hath been pleased through him to receive. I shall therefore set myself with pleasure to communicate to you the method of salvation by him. You cannot but in general know something, though it be only in a confused and imperfect way, of the report there was, but a few years ago, through all Judea, which began first, and took its rise from Galilee, just in your neighbourhood, after the baptism which John preached, who went before that extraordinary

person to prepare his way : I mean the report concerning Jesus of Nazareth ; how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit, and with a power of performing the most extraordinary miracles in attestation of his divine mission, who went about doing good wherever he came, and, particularly, healing all those who were oppressed by the tyranny of the devil, dispossessing those malignant spirits with a most irresistible superiority to them ; for God himself was with him, and wrought by him to produce those astonishing effects. And we, his apostles, are witnesses of all things which he did both in the whole region of the Jews, and particularly in Jerusalem ; for we attended him in all the progress which he made, beholding his miracles, and hearing his discourses : whom, nevertheless, this ungrateful people slew, hanging upon a tree and crucifying him, as if he had been the vilest of malefactors and slaves. Yet this very person, though so injuriously treated by men, hath the ever blessed God raised up from the dead on the third day, according to repeated predictions ; and, as a demonstration of the truth of it, hath given him to become manifest after his resurrection, and evidently to appear, not indeed to all the Jewish people, nor to return to those public assemblies of them which he had often visited, but to certain witnesses who were before appointed by God for this purpose, even to us who conversed very intimately with him before his death, and were so far favoured, that we have eaten and drank together with him several times after he rose from the dead ; so that we can, and do, with the greatest certainty, bear witness to the truth of this important fact. And he hath given in charge to us to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation by him to the people ; and to testify, wherever we come, that it is he, this very Jesus of Nazareth, who is the person appointed by God to be the judge, in the great day, both of the living and the dead, who shall all be convened before his throne, and receive their final sentence from his lips. To him all the Jewish prophets bear witness ; so that, from what they foretold concerning him, it appears, that every one who believeth on him, shall receive the forgiveness of their sins by his name, though their crimes be attended with aggravations ever so heinous.

While Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Spirit, without the imposition of the apostle's hands, fell upon Cornelius, and upon all his friends that were hearing the word. And all they of the circumcision who believed, as many as came with Peter upon this occasion, were exceedingly astonished to see that the miraculous and important gift of the Holy Spirit, which they supposed peculiar to the Jewish nation, was poured out upon the Gentiles also, who, as they imagined, could not have been admitted into the church without receiving circumcision, and so subjecting themselves to the observation of the whole Mosaic law : but now they found it was incontestably

evident, that even those who were not circumcised might be partakers with them of the highest privileges ; for they heard them all speaking in divers languages which they had never learned, and glorifying God for the rich display of his grace by the gospel in such exalted sentiments and language, as abundantly proved their minds, as well as their tongues, to be immediately under a divine operation. Then Peter, yielding to the force of evidence, however contrary to his former prejudices, with great propriety answered, Can any one reasonably forbid that water should be brought, or offer to insist upon the common prejudice that has prevailed among us, that these persons should not be baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus, and solemnly received into his church, who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And as none of the brethren that came with him pretended to object any thing against it, he immediately ordered them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, choosing to make use of the ministry of his brethren in performing that rite, rather than to do it with his own hands, that by this means the expression of their consent might be the more explicit. And, being thus received into the church, they had so high a value for the conversation of this divine messenger, and for the joyful tidings which he brought them, and were so earnestly desirous to be further instructed in that faith, into the general profession of which they were baptized, that they entreated him to continue with them several days, and omitted nothing in their power to make his abode agreeable, as well as useful.

Thus Cornelius and his friends were initiated into the christian religion, as was related above ; and Peter abode with them awhile at Cæsarea, to confirm them in the faith they had embraced. But, in the mean time, the apostles and other brethren who were in Judea, heard, in the general, that the uncircumcised Gentiles also had received the word of God, and had been baptized, which very much alarmed them, as they were not informed in all the particular circumstances attending that affair. The apostle Peter, therefore, found it necessary to defend himself in a set speech, in which he related the circumstances of the vision, of the message sent by Cornelius, of the visit which he paid in consequence of that message, and especially of the descent of the Holy Spirit, which preceded the baptism of the Gentile converts. And when they heard these things, they acquiesced in them with pleasure, and glorified God for so wonderful a manifestation of his rich grace, saying, God hath then given to the poor Gentiles also repentance unto life ; and has not only made them the overtures of it, but has graciously wrought it in some of their hearts.

It is now proper to mention some other circumstances relating to the church elsewhere. We observe, therefore, that, during the transactions which have been before related, they who

were dispersed from Jerusalem by the persecution which arose about Stephen, after they had gone through Judea and Samaria, travelled as far as Phœnicia, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word of the gospel to none but the Jews, not being at all apprehensive that the Gentiles were to share the blessings of it. But some of them who bore a part in this work were men that were natives of the island of Cyprus, and of the province of Cyrene in Africa, who, having heard the story of Peter's receiving Cornelius, though a Gentile, into the communion of the church, took occasion from thence to imitate his example; and, having entered into Antioch, spake freely to the Greeks as well as to the Jews, preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus to them, and inviting them to accept of its invaluable privileges. And the hand of the Lord was remarkably with them in this pious labour; and a great number of the Gentiles were so effectually convinced and wrought upon by their discourses and miracles, that they believed and turned unto the Lord Jesus, consecrating themselves to the service of God through him, with the most humble dependance on his blood and grace. When this pleasing information was received at Jerusalem, the church in that city sent forth Barnabas, a man of most exemplary character, amiable temper, and steady faith, to visit the brethren at Antioch, and strengthen their hands in the work of the Lord. His labours were eminently successful; as not only those were confirmed in their faith who had been already converted to the knowledge of God, but many others were made partakers of divine grace, and added by baptism to the church. Finding the work increasing upon his hands: he went to Tarsus in pursuit of Saul, with whom, as we have observed, he had been previously acquainted, and introduced him among the brethren at Antioch, as one who was likely to be eminently useful in that city. And it came to pass that they continued there, and assembled at proper times in the church for a whole year, and taught considerable numbers of people. And the disciples were, as some suppose by divine appointment, first named Christians at Antioch; a title that was really an honour to them, and was very well adapted to signify their relation to Christ as their common Lord, and their expectations from him as their Saviour.

The church at Antioch was about this time visited by certain prophets from Jerusalem, among whom Agabus was the most distinguished. He, standing up in their assemblies, signified, by the immediate direction of the Spirit, that there should shortly be a great famine over all the land of Israel; a prediction which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar. The brethren, therefore, determined on making a contribution; which they did, and sent it to the elders of the church at Jerusalem, by the hands of those two able ministers, Barnabas and Saul.

About this time, Herod Agrippa, a prince who was very desirous of obtaining the favour of the Jews, commenced a persecution against such of the christians as resided within his dominions. As James, the brother of John, was one of the most zealous of the apostles, he put him to death; causing him to be executed with the sword, in order that he might thus strike a terror into the rest, and induce them to desist from their attempts to propagate the gospel. Eusebius, from a book of Clemens Alexandrinus, which is now lost, tells us, that the person who had accused James, when he observed the boldness with which he gave testimony to Christ, was suddenly converted, and acknowledged himself to be a christian. As they were going to the place of execution, he requested of James some token of his forgiveness; on which, the apostle, after a moment's reflection, gave him his blessing and a kiss of peace. Thus both of them endured martyrdom at the same time, being beheaded by the same sword.

However this might be, finding that the exertions for the propagation of the gospel were as vigorous as ever, he proceeded to apprehend Peter, and put him in prison, delivering him to the custody of four quaternions of soldiers, that is, to sixteen, consisting of four in each party, who were to relieve each other by turns. This Herod ordered for the greater security of so noted a person; intending, immediately after the passover, to bring him out to the people, to be made a spectacle to them in what he should suffer, as Jesus, his Master, had been on the first day of unleavened bread. As the importance of so useful a life was well known to his christian friends, earnest and continued prayer was made to God on his account, by the whole church at Jerusalem. And the event soon showed that this, their earnest supplication, was not in vain; for when Herod was ready to have brought him out to execution, even that very night before he had designed to do it, Peter was quietly sleeping between two soldiers in full calmness and serenity of mind, though bound with two chains which joined each of his hands to one of the soldiers that lay on either side of him, in such a manner, that it was (humanly speaking) impossible he should have risen without immediately awaking them. And the other two guards, then on duty, stood sentry before the door, and were keeping the prison, that there might be no attempt of any kind made to rescue him, because he was looked upon as a person of great consequence. An astonishing deliverance was now effected; for an angel of the Lord presented himself on a sudden, and a glorious light shone in the whole prison, dark and gloomy as it was; and this heavenly messenger was no sooner come, but, giving Peter a gentle blow on the side, he awoke him, saying, *Arise quickly*. And the same moment of time both his chains fell off from his hands; yet the soldiers were, by a miraculous power, kept so fast asleep, that they were not

at all alarmed by the noise of their fall. And the angel said to him, Gird thyself presently in the clothes thou hast on, tie thine inward garment about thee, and bind on thy sandals, that thou mayest walk out; and, accordingly, he did so. And he says to him farther, Throw thy mantle round thee, and follow me out. And Peter, going out of the prison as he was guided by the angel, met with no opposition in his way, and followed him as he was ordered. And he was so astonished, that he did not know that what was done by the angel was true and real, but only supposed that he had seen a vision, as in some other instances he had done. And, passing through the first and second watch, where the guards were all asleep, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which, though it was a heavy gate, and very strongly fastened, yet was no hinderance in their way, but opened to them as of its own accord: and thus, going out into the city, they went together through one street; and immediately the angel, having done all that was requisite for his deliverance, and set him at full liberty, departed from him on a sudden, and left him alone to go where he pleased. After a little time, he recollected in what part of the city he was walking, and found his way to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where many christians were gathered together, and were spending the night in prayer for his deliverance. Presenting himself among them, he filled them with joy and surprise; and, after uniting with them in expressions of gratitude to God for this mercy, retired to another place, where, it is probable, he remained some time concealed from his enemies.

Not long, however, after this persecution, the reign of Herod was cut short, by an awful event, which we will proceed to relate. Herod went down from Judea to Cæsarea, a city which had been rebuilt by Herod the Great, and abode there for some time. The inhabitants of Tyre and Sidon, a trading people, who derived from his country a supply of corn, which their own would not produce in sufficient abundance, having incurred the resentment of the king, made to him the most humbling concessions, through the intervention of Blastus, the king's chamberlain, and were happy in regaining his friendship. In order to make this transaction as public as possible, upon a day which he had appointed for that purpose, "Herod appeared in royal apparel, seated on his throne, and made an oration to the people." The flattering multitude answered, with a shout, "It is the voice of a God, and not of a man. And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

It will not be unpleasant to compare this account of the death of Herod with that which is given us by Josephus, the celebrated Jewish historian. In the third year of his reign over

all Judea, Agrippa made a journey to Cæsarea, formerly known by the name of Straton's tower, where a great number of the nobility, and other persons of rank, assembled from all parts of the province, to be present at a solemnity of games and shows, which he instituted in honour of Cæsar. Early in the morning of the second day of this festival, Agrippa went to the theatre, habited in a silver stuff, of so rich and so singular a texture, that the eyes of the people were dazzled by the reflection, as the beams of the rising sun struck on it. The rays of light that emitted therefrom, appeared, to the vulgar, to have something divine in them, and inspired them equally with ideas of fear and veneration; and, on this occasion, a fawning crew of contemptible flatterers extolled him as a deity, and, in a formal manner, entreated him to pardon the sins arising from their ignorance, when they thought he was a mere mortal; whereas, they were now convinced that he was a being of superior rank, and something more than human.

Gratified in a high degree by this odious flattery, he sought not to suppress it, as he should have done; but while, in the pride of his heart, he was contemplating on his superior dignity, and lifting his eyes towards heaven, he beheld an owl over his head, sitting on a rope, which he considered as the forerunner of mischief, as a similar circumstance had heretofore been of good fortune; nor was he mistaken; for he instantly felt a violent pain at his heart, and convulsions in his bowels. In the extremity of his torments, he addressed his surrounding friends, saying, "Now behold your god is sentenced to death by this inevitable fate! I shall prove the absurdity and impiety of flattery; and by my death, convince the world that I am not immortal. The will of heaven be done! I have had no reason, during my life, to envy the happiness of any prince existing; but ambition has been my ruin."

He had no sooner spoken these words, than his pains increased to such a degree, that it was necessary to remove him into the palace, and a rumour immediately spread through the town that the king was at the point of death. Hereupon the people in general, men, women, and children, adopted the customary mode of clothing themselves in sackcloth, and united in prayers to God for the recovery of the king. In the interim, Agrippa, who was in an apartment at the top of the palace, could not refrain from tears on seeing his mourning subjects prostrate on the pavement below. His extreme pain continued unabated from that time to the end of five days, when he died, in the seventh year of his reign, and the fifty-fourth of his age.

Having thus far traced the history of the primitive christians, it is proper that we should here pause a little, to consider what were the doctrines in which they were instructed, and what was the discipline established among them. The former may be

collected into a few simple articles, which we shall proceed to state, enumerating, after each of them, certain passages of scripture by which they are supported.

1. The whole race of men, as descended from fallen parents, are, by nature, in a state of utter depravity, of which (not to mention innumerable other transgressions) they have given the most awful proofs: the Jews, by the crucifixion of Jesus Christ; and the Gentiles, by the substituting the worship of idols instead of that of the great Creator, who is blessed for ever. [Acts vii. xvii. 22—30; Romans i. ii. iii. 1—20; v. 12—21; Ephesians ii. 1—3.]

2. Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of God, the long expected Messiah, was given up to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of his Father, that the scriptures might be fulfilled, and a sacrifice offered to take away sin. Being delivered from the power of death, he was raised on the third day, presented himself alive to many witnesses, and was finally received up into heaven, where he sitteth at the right hand of God, to plead the cause of his people, to dispense the gifts of his Holy Spirit on his servants, and communicate the blessings of pardon and peace to all that diligently seek him. He shall come a second time to judge the world in righteousness, and render to every man according to the transactions of his life. [Acts ii. 22—36; x. 34—43; 1 Cor. xv.; 1 Thess. iv. 14—17; Heb. vii. 24—28. ix. x. 1—29; 1 John ii. 1, 2.]

3. As all men, being sinners, stand in need of salvation, so there is no other way of salvation, but by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Whosoever believes his gospel, is at peace with God, shall find all the troubles of this life tend ultimately to the augmentation of his happiness, has nothing to fear from death; but, being delivered from everlasting punishment, shall enjoy a blessed eternity in the presence of God and his holy angels. His body shall be, on the last day, raised from the grave, in a new and more glorious form, like that of the body of our Redeemer. [Acts iv. 10—12; xvi. 31; Rom. v. viii.; 1 Cor. iii. 11; Gal. ii. 14—21; iii.; 1 John iii. 1, 2.]

4. They that are sincere believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are made partakers of a new nature, disposition, or life, in consequence of which, their affections become fixed upon God, their lives are devoted to his service, and they, forsaking their former evil practices, diligently cultivate every duty. It is therefore incumbent upon husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, rulers and subjects, to conduct themselves, in every instance, as may the most effectually contribute to the benefit of each other. Yet no regard to earthly relations may tempt us to abandon the cause of Christ, though in circumstances of the greatest danger or distress, nor to violate even the least of his commands. [Rom. vi. xii. xiii.; 2 Cor. vii. 1; Gal. v. 13—26; Ephes. v. vi.; Col. iii. iv. 1—6;

1 Thess. v. ; 1 Tim. vi. ; James i. 19—27 ; 1 Pet. ii. iii. iv. ; Rev. v. 9, 10 ; vii. 14 ; xiv. 4, 5.]

Wherever the apostles went, as a respectable writer of the present day observes, they preached, and besought, and enjoined men to repent and believe it. When their preaching was successful, they directed their converts to associate, for the observance of public worship and ordinances, always on the first day of the week, and also at other times. These societies were called churches. The word, *ἐκκλησία*, church, means an assembly of any kind. It is often applied to Israel, who formed one assembly in the wilderness, as their males did afterwards, three times a year, when they went up to Jerusalem. It is sometimes applied to an assembly called by a magistrate, and sometimes to a tumultuous assembly. In Acts xix. 32, the mob is called the church ; and again, in verse 40, where we read, he dismissed the church. Verse 39, the same word is used for an assembly called by the magistrates. Dr. Campbell asserts, that it always denotes either an assembly actually meeting together, or a society united by some common tie, though not convened, perhaps not convenable, in one place. It is never used as a collected term in the singular number, for the body of christians who reside in any province or kingdom.

Though the distinction of clergy and laity did not obtain in the primitive church, there were among them certain officers who were employed in building up the churches of God. Some of these offices appear to be extraordinary, and others to be permanent. Dr. Campbell argues, that the apostles could have no successors.

1. From the indispensable qualifications for the office. An apostle must be one who had seen Christ after his resurrection [1 Cor. ix. 1 ; xv. 8.] ; for he was ordained to be a witness of Christ's resurrection. [Acts i. 22 ; x. 41, &c.] 2. The apostles were distinguished by special prerogatives, which descended to none after them ; receiving their mission from Christ, the power of conferring the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, and the knowledge, by inspiration, of the whole doctrine of Christ. 3. They were universal bishops ; the whole church was their charge ; and the whole earth their sphere. 4. We have full proof, that no idea of succession to the office was entertained in their own age, or in the times immediately succeeding ; for no one on the death of an apostle, was ever substituted in his room ; and, when the original college became extinct, the title became extinct with it. The apostles were ambassadors for Christ ; and, having delivered their message, and declared the whole counsel of God, which is contained in their writings, it was unnecessary that any successors to them should be raised up. They are the twelve foundations of the church. [Ephes. ii. 20, Rev. xxi. 14.]

We read of prophets who foretold future events, as Agabus, [Acts xxi. 10.] although, certainly, the term prophecy is not

confined to this in the New Testament. There were also prophets in the church at Antioch. [Acts xiii. 1.] Perhaps Mark and Luke, who have written a part of the New Testament, were prophets. At any rate, it was an extraordinary office, for which men were qualified, and to which they were called, by the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit; and those who held it might say, as Paul does of his apostleship, "not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ." [Gal. i. 1.] It is true, prophesying seems sometimes to be put for the mutual exhortations of the brethren. [1 Cor. xiv. 31.] "Ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted." And he who prophesieth, is said to speak to men, to edification, and exhortation, and comfort [1 Cor. xiv. 3.]; but it is also evident from the passages quoted above, as well as from others, that the term *prophet* is used in the New Testament to denote a person possessed of extraordinary gifts peculiar to that period; and they appear, by the manner in which they are classed, to have been next to the apostles.

Evangelists were assistants to the apostles. Their charge was not confined to any particular church. Philip and Timothy are expressly styled evangelists. Titus, although the name is no where given him, was evidently employed in the duties of the same office. He was left in Crete, to set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city, according to the directions of Paul. [Tit. i. 5.] Timothy was left in Ephesus, not as an elder or bishop of the church, but to charge some to teach no other doctrine than that delivered by the apostles. [1 Tim. i. 3.] He sometimes accompanied Paul; and, at other times, was sent by him to visit and confirm the churches. Both Timothy and Titus were superintendants under the apostles, and acted by a special commission; they were employed in visiting and setting in order various churches; and, to both, directions are given respecting the characters of those who are to hold stated and ordinary offices.

The stated officers, in all the churches, were elders and deacons. It is unnecessary to spend much time in proving that bishop and elder were, in apostolic times, synonymous terms. We just mention one or two passages, which must prove this to every impartial person. Paul sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus, and exhorted them to take heed to themselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost had made them bishops. [Acts xx. 17, 28.] Titus was left in Crete, to ordain elders in every city where he had appointed him. If any man, says he, be blameless, the husband of one wife; for a bishop must be blameless, &c. [Tit. i. 5, 7.] Peter exhorts the elders to feed the flock of God, doing the office of a bishop not by constraint. [1 Pet. v. 2.]

The business of an elder was to labour in word and doctrine, and also to rule in the church of God. [1 Tim. v. 17; iii. 5.]

To rule, means not merely to preside in the meetings of the church, and to take care that all things are done decently and in order, according to the will of Christ, but also to watch over the members, to admonish or reprove them, as their circumstances require. To this rule, the members were bound to submit. "Obey them," says the apostle, "that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account." [Heb. xiii. 17.] "We beseech you, brethren, to acknowledge them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake." [1 Thess. v. 12.] Here the peace of the church is immediately connected with affectionate regard, deference, honour, and submission to the elders.

It has been argued, with some degree of probability, that there was a plurality of elders in each church, who shared in the government of it, and formed a presbytery, or eldership.

We learn from the New Testament, Dr. Macknight remarks, and from the most ancient christian writers, that, even in the apostles' days, some women, remarkable for their knowledge, prudence, and piety, and of a fit age, were chosen to instruct the newly converted, and the young of their own sex; and to exhort the sick, and comfort the afflicted, who could not attend the public ministrations. These female teachers are mentioned under the appellation of widows, 1 Tim. v. 3; where, also, verse 9, their character and election are described. Farther: as the first christians were remarkable for their love to each other, they appointed, in every church, men to whom they gave the appellation of deacons, whose office it was to make collections for the poor, and to apply these collections in relieving widows and orphans, who were destitute; the sick, also, and the imprisoned for their religion, whom they visited and comforted with the greatest tenderness. In like manner, they appointed women, whom they named deaconesses, to perform the same offices to the distressed of their own sex, and whom, for that purpose, they supplied with money out of the church's funds. The character and office of these female deacons, the apostle has described, 1 Tim. v. 9, and, verse 10, orders the widows, or female presbyters, to be chosen from among them.

When the first christians met together in their public assemblies, either on the first day of the week, or at other times, they appear to have engaged in a variety of exercises, which tended either to the conviction of sinners, or the edification of saints. The glad tidings of everlasting salvation were freely proclaimed to all that chose to hear; the different branches of christian doctrine were taught; and the disciples were exhorted to show their attachment to their Lord, by denying all ungodliness and worldly lust, and living soberly, righteously, and piously, in their day and generation. Public prayers were offered up, and

hymns sung in praise of redeeming love. On these occasions, it appears evident, that not only the elders, but such other members as were possessed of suitable gifts, employed them for the public benefit, being subject to no other restraint, than that all things should be done with a suitable regard to decency and order.

The different officers in the churches appear to have been set apart for their respective work, after a due examination of their characters, by fasting and prayer, and the laying on the hands of the apostles, the evangelists, or the presbytery. Imposition of hands seems to have been a very ancient practice both among the Jews and the Greeks, when they wished to commend any one to the peculiar blessing of God.

The two standing ordinances appointed by Christ, are baptism, and the Lord's supper. The latter appears to have been administered every Lord's day. How the former was administered, and whether the infant children of believers were its subjects, is much disputed among the christians. Whether the agapæ, or love feasts, obtained in the time of the apostles, is also a matter of controversy. We shall close this chapter with the sentiments of Dr. Haweis, a candid and respectable minister of the established church, upon some of those subjects of which we have now been treating, that the reader, being made acquainted with the opinions of different writers, may be the better able to decide between them.

To sum up, in a few words, a subject which has been so fearfully abused, in order to subserve the purposes of pride, bigotry, and worldly-mindedness, I conclude—

1. That, as soon as a little society was formed of christian men, a room was opened for their assembling, and the most apt to teach appointed to minister to them in holy things.

2. He was a man of gravity, generally of the more aged, married, and having a family, approved by his fellows, and willing to devote himself to their service.

3. His appointment was signified by prayer, and imposition of hands, of the apostle Paul, or some of the itinerant evangelists, and the presbytery; and, without this, I meet with no ordination.

4. Every church exercised discipline over its own members, to admit, admonish, or expel.

5. Before these itinerant evangelists, all accusations against presbyters were brought. They, in conjunction with the congregation, regulated matters of order, and corrected abuses.

These seem not to have had any appropriate district, but went about every where, chiefly under the direction of the apostle Paul.

7. These great evangelists were usually supported by the churches; but often, like Paul, maintained themselves by their own labours. During the first ages, the ministry was not ap-

propriated to gentlemen or scholars. No man was bred to it as a profession, or went into it for a maintenance; they were pastors of a different stamp.

8. The stationary presbyters, or bishops, during the lives of the apostle and his associate evangelists, were under their superintendance. But it will appear, very early in the second century, when this first race of great itinerants departed, that one among the ministers of every place began to have the name of bishop, by way of eminence, with presbyters, his coadjutors, acting with him as one body.

9. All ecclesiastical officers, from the beginning, and for the first three hundred years, were elected by the people. Even Matthias was thus chosen to fill up the tribular number of the apostles.

10. Deacons were instituted for the care of the poor, especially the widows; and deaconesses, afterwards, appear to have been set apart for the same purposes, though their institution is not expressly marked in the sacred canon. Originally, they were ordained, not for one congregation, but for the myriads at Jerusalem, whose widows were provided for out of a common stock.

Lastly, Every member of the primitive church seems to have made it a common practice to lay aside weekly a certain portion of his income, or gains, for the poor, the persecuted, or the gospel, according to his ability; and hence, though generally the christians were of the lowest and most indigent class of the people, the riches of their liberality abounded, and their means for this arose from their christian character itself. Their industry was great, and they wasted nothing in extravagance of any kind, being, by principle, self-denied to all indulgences for themselves, that they might have to give to him that needed. And, if all real christians conscientiously observed this rule still, it is amazing what a fund might be raised for the relief of the necessitous, and the furtherance of the gospel.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Life and Writings of the Apostle Paul.

Description of the city of Antioch in Syria—state of the church there—Barnabas and Saul are sent forth to preach to the Gentiles—they perform their first journey, in which they visit Cyprus, where Elymas, the sorcerer, is struck blind, and Sergius Paulus, the proconsul, is converted—Saul takes the name of Paul—at Perga, they are forsaken by Mark—they visit Antioch in Pisidia, where, having preached to the Jews, they turn to the Gentiles, whom they convert in considerable numbers—being driven out from Antioch and Iconium, they flee to Lystra, where they heal a lame man, and reject the idolatrous homage of the people—Paul suddenly recovers, after being stoned; and returns to Antioch by the same route as he went forth, establishing discipline in the churches in the course of his journey—he resides a long time at Antioch—embassy to Jerusalem—Paul and Barnabas separate—Paul goes a second journey through Syria and Cilicia, is invited over to Macedonia, and lands at Philippi—the Pythoness virgin—the jailor converted—Paul preaches at Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth—abides in the latter city a year and six months, and writes his first and second epistles to the Thessalonians, and that to the Galatians—review of these epistles—he goes, by Ephesus and Cæsarea, to Jerusalem, where he performs his vow, and salutes the church, and then returns to Antioch in Syria—he sets out on a third journey, and visits Ephesus, where he writes the first epistle to the Corinthians, and is in danger, from a tumult on account of Diana—in the course of his journey into Macedonia, he writes the second of Corinthians, and the first of Timothy—visits different parts of Greece—writes to the Romans from Corinth—proceeds to Jerusalem by Troas and Miletus—he is assaulted by the Jews, and rescued by Lysias, the tribune—pleads before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa—his dangerous voyage to Rome—his adventures at Melita—his residence at Rome—review of his epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, to Philemon, and to the Hebrews—his fourth journey through Asia—his epistle to Titus—his second imprisonment at Rome—his second epistle to Timothy, his death and character.

ANTIOCH, the capital of Syria, was, in the times of the apostles, a large, populous, and celebrated city, being accounted, next to Rome and Alexandria, the most considerable in the empire. It was erected near the mouth of the Orontes, by Seleucus Nicator, one of the most successful captains of Alexander the Great. It was afterward denominated Tetrapolis, (i. e. four-fold city,) being divided, as it were, into four cities, each of them having its proper wall, besides the common one by which the whole was surrounded. It frequently suffered by earthquakes, but was not utterly destroyed, till it had been reduced by Bibaris, a sultan of Egypt. Its walls were flanked with four hundred square towers, strongly built, of which many remain to this day, and are remarkable for being each of them furnished with a cistern. It is reported to have been the

birth-place of Luke, the evangelist; of Theophilus, to whom he addressed his writings; and of Ignatius the martyr, its celebrated bishop.

Here, as we have related in the former chapter, a very flourishing church had been collected, through the preaching of those excellent men who had been dispersed abroad, on account of the persecution of Stephen. The christians at Antioch, experiencing in themselves that abundant consolation which the gospel of the blessed Redeemer is calculated to afford, longed to impart the benefits which they enjoyed to their neighbours, who were lying in darkness, and therefore cast a wishful eye on the countries around them. On the south, at Damascus, Caesarea, and Jerusalem, considerable bodies of christians had been collected, who were sedulously and successfully engaged in evangelizing the towns and villages which were scattered in their vicinity. On the west, at a small distance from their shores, lay the large island of Cyprus, the immense woods of which had long been sufficiently thinned, to allow room for the erecting a great number of populous cities, whose inhabitants were richly furnished with the comforts of life, and awfully disgraced by their practice of debauchery. On the east, the provinces which formerly composed the most essential parts of the Babylonian and Assyrian empires contained, probably, a much greater number of Jews, than had even returned to their native country in consequence of the decree of Cyrus. These descendants of Abraham had established synagogues for their edification in religion, to which were annexed schools for the instruction of their youth, and the formation of future rabbies; had enjoyed their principles with safety, while their brethren in Judea were bleeding beneath the tyranny of the Syrian princes; and had frequently resorted, as opportunity had occurred, to worship the God of their fathers in the temple of Jerusalem. On the north was Cilicia, which had given birth to Saul, the celebrated convert; and had, no doubt, reaped considerable benefit from his labours. Proceeding further in the same direction, and crossing that ridge of mountains which is denominated Taurus, the traveller enters upon a very considerable peninsula, which the Greeks had distinguished from the rest of the continent by the appellation of Asia Minor. It contained Cappadocia, Isauria, Lycaonia, Pamphylia, the two Phrygias, Pisidia, Caria, Lycia, the proconsular Asia, in which the seven churches were afterwards founded; Bithynia, Mysia, Paphlagonia, Pontus, and several other subdivisions, some of which changed their names, in consequence of their passing under the dominion of different conquerors. In all of these last enumerated provinces, the Greek language was familiarly known, though many of them made use of dialects, or even languages, peculiar to themselves.

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain

prophets and teachers of great note, particularly Barnabas, a generous Levite, who had given up the whole of his estate to charitable uses; and Simeon, who was also called Niger, or the Black, from his swarthy complexion; and Lucius the Cyrenian, a native of Africa; and Manaen, a person of considerable rank, who was educated with Herod the tetrarch in his father's court, yet thought it no disgrace to appear as a christian minister; and to mention no more, Saul, that remarkable convert, whose labours in the church were, as we shall further learn, so eminently useful. And, as they were ministering to the Lord in public, and joined fasting to prayer, the Holy Spirit, by immediate revelation, said, Separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the extraordinary work of preaching the gospel among the Gentiles, to which I have now expressly called them.

Being thus sent forth by the Holy Spirit, Saul and Barnabas went first to Seleucia, a considerable port in the Mediterranean sea; and from thence sailed to Salamis, the eastern port of the island of Cyprus. Here they preached in the Jewish synagogues, and were occasionally assisted by John, whose surname was Mark. And, having travelled through the whole island as far as Paphos, which lay on its western coast, they found there a certain Jew, who was a magician and false prophet, whose name was Bar-Jesus, or the son of one Jesus, or Joshua. This was a person who was much regarded, and was, at that time, in great favour with the Roman proconsul there, Sergius Paulus, a prudent man, of steady conduct and thoughtful temper, ready to inquire after truth, and capable to judge of its evidence, who, having received some general intelligence of their character and messages, sent some of those that were about him, and, calling for Barnabas and Saul, desired to hear the word of God, that he might know what was the purport of their preaching, and what regard was due to the doctrine which they taught. But Elymas, or the magician, (for that was the meaning of his name Elymas, when translated into the Greek language,) as he was sensible that he should be no more regarded if their doctrine was received, set himself, all he could, to hinder the effect of it, and withstood them in their preaching; endeavouring, in a crafty way, by a variety of false insinuations which he used, to turn away the proconsul from embracing the faith. As it was proper that this bold blasphemer should be signally arrested in his opposition to the truth of God, Saul, after having severely reproved him for his sin, informed him that, for a season, he should be deprived of the benefit of sight; and this denunciation was immediately fulfilled, to the great astonishment of all that were present, and to the conversion of the proconsul and many others.

It is in the course of this narration [Acts xiii. 9.] that Saul is first called Paul, a name which he not only sustains henceforth wherever mentioned by the historian, but also constantly

makes use of throughout his epistolary writings. Some, says Dr. Doddridge, have thought the apostle had, originally, two names; and, many others, that he changed the former for the latter, either out of deference to Sergius Paulus, or to the Gentiles among whom he now preached, so much as to be called, by way of eminence, (though not in strict appropriation,) their apostle. But Dr. Doddridge thinks Beza's account of the matter most easy and probable; that, having conversed hitherto with Jews and Syrians, to whom the name of Saul was familiar, and now coming among Romans and Greeks, they would naturally pronounce his name Paul; as one, whose Hebrew name was Jochanan, would be called, by the Greeks and Latins, Johannes; by the French, Jean; by the Dutch, Hans; and by the English, John. Beza thinks the family of this proconsul might be the first who addressed or spoke of him by the name of Paul.

Having thus performed the work of God in Cyprus, Paul and his company sailed to Perga, a town in Pamphylia, a province which joined to Cilicia along the northern coast of the Mediterranean sea. But John, surnamed Mark, perceiving that they intended a long tour in these parts, and that they were like to meet with much opposition among the idolatrous Gentiles, to whom they were carrying the gospel, could not by all the warmest remonstrances of Paul, and his own uncle Barnabas, be persuaded to share their labours and dangers in so excellent a cause; but, taking the opportunity of a vessel, which he found in that port, bound for Palestine, he withdrew himself from them, and returned to Jerusalem.

Departing from Perga, the holy missionaries proceeded to Antioch, a considerable city in the district of Pisidia, which lay north of Pamphylia, and consequently farther from the sea. And entering into the Jewish synagogue on the sabbath-day, they sat down among those that were worshipping there. And, after the customary reading of the proper section for the day out of the law, and another out of the prophets, the rulers of the synagogue, knowing, in general, the public character which the two celebrated strangers sustained, and being curious to hear from their own mouth that new doctrine which had made so much noise in other places, sent one of the inferior officers to them, saying, Men and brethren, if you have any word of exhortation to the people, or any declaration to make which may conduce to the edification of the assembly, speak it freely, as this is the proper season of doing it. Then Paul stood up, and, at considerable length, recounted the dealings of God with the Israelitish nation, from the time of their dwelling strangers in Egypt, to the exalting of David to the sovereign power. Thence he made a rapid transition to the incarnation of Jesus Christ, his death, and his resurrection, the last of which he confirmed by appealing to the prophecies of God,

He concluded with declaring the unspeakable happiness of such as, believing in him, received that justification which the law of Moses could never confer, and exhorting them to beware lest that should come upon them which was spoken by the prophets, [Isa. xxviii. 14.] "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." The Jews appear to have made no reply to this discourse; but the Gentiles, who, out of curiosity, were many of them assembled there on the fame of the arrival of such celebrated men, earnestly desired that these words might be spoken to them again the following sabbath, when they promised to attend themselves, and to bring as many of their friends as they could: and thus the assembly broke up for that time. This sermon was, however, not without success; for we find that many, both of the Jews and devout proselytes, followed Paul and Barnabas, who persuaded them to continue in the grace of God which they had now received.

The next sabbath, a large multitude of the Gentiles being gathered together to hear, the unbelieving Jews were filled with envy, and blasphemously contradicted those truths which were asserted by Paul. In consequence of this treatment, Paul and Barnabas declared their intention of turning to the Gentiles; from which time, it is probable that though they still laboured for the benefit of the Jews wherever they came, yet the conversion of the Gentiles became a peculiarly important object of their attention. In the mean time, great numbers of the Gentiles were converted; and as these united their labours with those of the apostles, the word of the Lord was borne on as with a mighty torrent throughout all that region, which, by this means, was watered as with a river of salvation. But the Jews, provoked beyond all patience at such conduct and at such success, stirred up some devout women of considerable rank, who, having been proselyted to their religion, were peculiarly zealous for it; and also applied themselves to the magistrates of the city, representing these new preachers as excitors of sedition and innovators in religion, who might occasion danger to the state; and thus they raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and drove them out of their territories with violence and infamy. But they, when they were going from the boundaries of that place, shook off the dust of their feet for a testimony against them, as their Lord had commanded his apostles to do, in token of the certain ruin which should befall such despisers of his gospel. [Mark vi. 11.] And, departing from thence, they came to the neighbouring city of Iconium, and there renewed the proclamation of those glad tidings which many of the inhabitants of Antioch had so ungratefully rejected. But the disciples who were left there were filled with great joy, that so blessed a message had reached their hearts; and as

Paul and Barnabas had laid their hands upon them, they were furnished with an abundant communication of the gifts as well as graces of the Holy Spirit; whereby they were not only confirmed in the faith which they had newly embraced, but were also rendered capable of carrying on the interests of christianity in that place, when the first planters of their church could no longer continue to cultivate and water it.

At the city of Iconium they made a long stay, and were not destitute of success, a great multitude, both of Jews and Gentiles, being converted to the faith. The hatred of the unbelieving Jews, however, gradually diffused itself among their idolatrous neighbours, till the city became divided into two parties, the one encouraging, and the other persecuting, the apostles. At length, the more turbulent party prevailed, and even got the consent of their rulers to seize upon them, and stone them. Paul and Barnabas, therefore, having learned their intention, made their escape, and fled to Lystra and Derbe, both cities of Lycaonia.

There happened one circumstance while they were in these parts which was much taken notice of; and, as it gave occasion to a remarkable occurrence, it will not be improper to relate it particularly. There sat a certain man at Lystra who was disabled in his feet, and thereby rendered incapable of providing a maintenance for himself, being so lame from his mother's womb that he never had walked at all. Now it so happened, that in some place of public resort near which he was laid to beg for alms of those that passed by, this man heard Paul speaking, who, fixing his eyes upon him, and seeing, by the ardour and humility which was expressed in his countenance, that he had faith sufficient to be healed, and finding also in himself that the power of Christ was to be displayed on this occasion, directed his speech to the poor cripple; and said with a loud voice, in the hearing of all that were assembled there, as one that was conscious of the divine authority by which he then acted, Arise, and stand upright on thy feet: and the lame man immediately attempted it, in a believing dependence on the power of Christ, which wrought so effectually in him, that he leaped up at once from the place where he sat, with an astonishing agility, and not only stood upright, but walked about as firmly and steadily as if he had been accustomed to walk from his infancy. And the multitude who were present when this wonderful cure was wrought, seeing what Paul had done by only speaking a word, were all in raptures of astonishment, and lifted up their voices in loud acclamations, saying in the Lycaonian language, The gods are descended from heaven to us in the form and likeness of men. And, perceiving Barnabas to be a person of the better presence and of the more majestic port, they called him Jupiter; and Paul, who was a little active man, they called Mercury, because he was

the leader of the discourse, on which account they thought he might more probably be their god of eloquence. And the priest of that Jupiter who was esteemed the tutelary deity of that place, and whose image was therefore placed in a temple erected to him before their city in the suburbs, not far from the place where the miracle was wrought, immediately brought oxen crowned with garlands, according to their usual manner, to the gates of the place where Paul and Barnabas were, and would, with the multitude, have offered sacrifice to them, to acknowledge the obligation they were under to them for this condescending and beneficent visit, and to take this opportunity of imploring their continued protection in their public and private affairs. But as they were leading on the sacrificial procession towards them, the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, hearing of the purpose for which it was intended, were struck with a becoming horror at the proposal, and rent their mantles, in token of that mixture of indignation and sorrow with which they beheld this strange abuse of a miracle wrought to destroy that idolatry which from thence they took occasion to practise; and, in this moving and expressive manner, they ran in among the multitude, crying out with the greatest earnestness, Why do ye offer these honours to us? for we are men, subject to the same infirmities as yourselves, and are come for this express purpose, to teach you the worship of that God who is the only Creator of heaven, and who has long endured your idolatrous practices; but never left himself without witness, so regulating the seasons as to supply you with the comforts of life. Saying these things, they did with difficulty restrain the people from paying them divine honours.

This is a humiliating picture of human weakness; but it is not finished until we observe, that these very men who thus strove to raise Paul and Barnabas to the rank of deities were, a little time after, so incensed against them through the malignity of the Jews, that they stoned the former of these illustrious ministers; and, supposing him to be dead, dragged him out of the city, and left him to be meat for the fowls of heaven. But as the disciples were gathered about him, with a view of performing the last office of affection to him, in bearing him to his funeral with proper regard, to their unspeakable surprise, they found him so restored by the power of Christ, that he immediately rose up as in perfect health; and his bruises were so healed, that he entered into the city again; and was not only able to walk about it, but the next day found that he was capable of undertaking a journey; and departed with Barnabas to Derbe, a city of Lycaonia, on the borders of Cappadocia, as they did not think it convenient to proceed in their progress to Galatia, Phrygia, or any more distant province. And having preached the gospel at Derbe, to the inhabitants of that populous city, and made a considerable number of disciples there,

they trod back the road they had taken, and returned first to Lystra again, and then to Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia, confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue stedfast in the faith, seeing that through great tribulation we must enter the regions of eternal felicity. Having ordained elders in every church, and committed them to God by fasting and prayer, they returned to Antioch through Pisidia and Pamphylia. On their arrival at Antioch, they collected together the church, and related what they had experienced of the blessing of the Lord attending their labours, a narration which we have no reason to doubt filled the minds of the disciples with joy and gladness.

It will appear surprising to such as have not well considered the depravity of the human heart, that so soon after the first propagation of the gospel, while the apostles were yet living, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit possessed by a great number of disciples, men should have gone forth from Judea, and sought to persuade the newly converted Gentiles that, notwithstanding all that Paul and Barnabas had taught them, they could not be made partakers of salvation unless they submitted to the circumcision of Moses. As much dissension prevailed upon this occasion, it was determined by the church at Antioch to send the two holy men whom we have just mentioned to consult with the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, as being of the longest standing in the christian faith. After much consultation, it was at length determined, that no other burden should be laid upon the Gentiles, than that they should abstain from meats offered to idols, from blood, from things strangled, and from fornication. It has been controverted among the moderns, whether the apostolical precept to abstain from blood is to be understood as only temporal and occasional, a sort of accommodation to the weakness of the Jewish converts, or perpetual, founded on moral principles, and consequently still obligatory. The former opinion is the most prevalent; but the advocates of the latter assert, that blood is prohibited, because it tends to make men savage; that the prohibition is joined to that of fornication, which is an acknowledged immorality; and that God has enjoined abstinence from blood upon all christians, in order to manifest his supreme power over all their enjoyments. Be this as it may; the christians of Antioch were greatly delighted, both by the agreeable nature of these decrees, and the profitable exhortations of Judas and Silas, two prophets who had come down with Paul and Barnabas from Jerusalem.

After a considerable time had elapsed, Paul, who had an ardent zeal for the propagation of the gospel, proposed to his companion Barnabas that they should visit the infant churches, and inquire what was their present condition. Barnabas was very ready to undertake the journey; but was desirous to take with him John Mark, his nephew, who had deserted

them on a former occasion. Paul, however, entertaining a different opinion, after debating the matter a little too warmly, they agreed to take separate courses, Barnabas sailing to Cyprus, and Paul proceeding with Silas, through Syria and Cilicia, into Asia Minor.

At Lystra they found a very exemplary young man, who afterwards became one the apostle's most active and able assistants, Timothy, the son of Eunice, a believing Jewess, but of a Grecian father. He had been carefully educated in the knowledge of the scriptures; but as he had never been regularly initiated into the Jewish religion, Paul himself performed upon him the rite of circumcision, that he might satisfy the clamours of the Jews, who were numerous in that neighbourhood. Taking Timothy then into his company, he visited the different churches which had newly been formed, and delivered to them the decrees of the council at Jerusalem, to keep as an invaluable treasure. They had the pleasure to see, wherever they went, that the churches were continually becoming more established in the faith, as well as increasing in numbers. Their purpose, at setting out, was to preach the gospel in such parts of the lesser Asia as they had not before visited; but they found themselves hindered by their divine guide from following any such plan, and were commanded by a vision to come over into Macedonia, and bestow a portion of their labours on the inhabitants of Europe. Therefore, sailing from Troas, they came with a straight course to the island of Samothracia, which lies near the Hellespont, and the next day to the celebrated port of Neapolis, on the Thracian shore, near the borders of Macedonia; and, landing there, proceeded from thence to Philippi, a city of the first division of Macedonia, and a Roman colony.

During their residence at Philippi, they regularly attended divine worship at a place near the river side, where the Jews, who were mostly women, were accustomed to assemble. Once, as they were going to this oratory, or praying place, they were met by a girl, who, being under the influence of an evil spirit, practised fortune-telling; and, by that means, brought much profit to her owners; for she was a slave. This unhappy creature, when she saw Paul and his company, followed them, crying out, that these men were the servants of the most high God, and teach us the way of salvation. As she continued this practice several days, Paul was grieved lest it should be a stratagem of the devil to bring reproach upon the good cause, and therefore commanded the impure spirit to leave his abode. The masters of the girl, vexed that their profits were gone, apprehended Paul and Silas, and charged them before the magistrates with seeking to overturn the established religion, and to introduce customs which no Roman might lawfully observe. The magistrates, more hastily than became their character, rent off the clothes of the accused, and commanded them to be first

severely beaten, and then committed to prison, and their feet made fast in the stocks, an engine of punishment much more painful than what we now call by the same name. However, neither the danger with which they were threatened, nor the ignominy and pain which they then endured, could prevent them from expressing their holy joy in such loud songs of praise, that they were overheard by their fellow-prisoners. While they were thus engaged, the earth was suddenly convulsed, the foundations of the prison were shaken, the doors flew open of themselves, and every man's bands were instantly unloosed, and fell to the ground. Awakened by the noise, the jailor arose to see if all were safe; and, finding that the prison-doors were open, after a moment's reflection on the awful responsibility of his situation, drew his sword, with intent to terminate his life, a practice frequent among the Romans in cases of extreme emergency. Paul, to whom the Holy Spirit probably communicated the intelligence of the jailor's design, loved his enemy, and therefore loudly exclaimed, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here, and none of us will take the opportunity of escaping while the hand of God is working thus awfully around us. Upon this he called to his servants to bring their lights; and, springing forward in the greatest agitation, fell prostrate at the feet of Paul and Silas, beseeching them to inform him of the way of salvation. They answered, that immediately on believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, not only himself, but all his family should be saved; and began instantly to explain the blessed truths of our religion to their astonished audience. The grace of God was with them, the hearts of their hearers were changed, the jailor and his family were baptized, the wounds of the apostles were washed, and they all spent the remainder of the night in a continued emotion of thankfulness and joy. In the morning, the magistrates, hearing that they were Roman citizens, besought them to leave the city quietly, and forget the injury they had sustained; and they, having comforted and exhorted the disciples, departed in peace.

When Paul and Silas had quitted Philippi in this honourable manner, they went forward in their progress; and, taking their journey westward, through Amphipolis and Apollonia, which were likewise considerable cities of Macedonia, they came to the celebrated Thessalonica, a city which lay near the coast of the Ægean sea, where the Roman governor held his residence, and where there was also a synagogue of the Jews. In this place of worship, the apostle Paul, for three successive sabbath-days, preached the gospel to his countrymen, and was the means of converting a number of them, and many more of those devout Greeks who had been accustomed to worship the God of Israel. Their unbelieving countrymen, however, raised the most violent opposition against them, and accused the apos-

tle and his company, and Jason, at whose house they lodged, of setting up another king in opposition to Cæsar. These rulers proceeded with more mildness than those of Philippi; and when the apostles could not be found, took security of Jason, and his companions, and let them go.

Paul and Silas, being sent away by their children in the night, went to the neighbouring city of Berea, where they preached the gospel with great success both to the Jews and the Greeks. The former are remarked for their candour, and the diligence with which they searched the scriptures, to see whether the predictions which were contained in the Old Testament were fulfilled in the incarnation, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. At length, however, such of the Jews as had not received the gospel were excited to so strong an opposition, as rendered it proper that the apostle should immediately depart for Athens, whither he was followed in a little time by Silas and Timothy.

At Athens, the attention of Paul was principally excited by the idolatrous practices of the Gentiles. He therefore held various disputations with the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, which terminated in a general invitation to declare his sentiments publicly at Areopagus, or Mars-hill, a place where the court of the Areopagites used to assemble. In his discourse which he there delivered, he mentions an altar which had this inscription, **TO THE UNKNOWN GOD**. The probable account of the origin of this altar, the existence of which is attested by Lucian, is the following: In the time of Epimenides, a celebrated philosopher, who lived about six hundred years before Christ, there was a terrible pestilence at Athens; in order to avert which, when none of the deities to whom they sacrificed appeared able or willing to help them, Epimenides advised them to bring some sheep to the Areopagus, and, letting them loose there, to follow them till they lay down, and then to sacrifice them to the God near whose temple or altar they might be. Now it seems probable, that Athens not being then so full of these monuments of superstition as afterwards, these sheep lay down in places where none of them were near, and so occasioned the rearing what the historian calls anonymous altars, each of which had the inscription, 'To the unknown God,' meaning thereby the deity, whoever he were, that had sent the plague. One of these altars, however, repaired, remained till the time of Paul; and as the true God was, no doubt, the author of the distemper, gave just occasion to the apostle to say, that he declared that Deity whom the Athenians ignorantly worshipped. Proceeding in his discourse, he treated of the works and perfections of the Almighty, and showed how he could not be justly compared to any image of silver, gold, or stone, graven by art or men's device. To confirm these observations, he quoted a line from Aratus, a poet who wrote in

Greek, and was a native of Cilicia, Paul's native province, as well as in an ancient hymn to Jupiter written by Cleanthes. He was heard with patience till he treated of the resurrection from the dead; when some openly scoffed, while others proposed to allow him a second hearing. He gathered, however, several disciples, among whom the most celebrated was Dionysius the Areopagite.

Removing to the flourishing city of Corinth, Paul found two agreeable and useful companions, Aquila, a Jew of Pontus, and his wife Priscilla, two eminently religious persons, who had recently left Italy in consequence of the decree of Claudius Cæsar, who had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome. With these Paul wrought at their occupation of tent-makers, whose business it was to make tents or pavilions of linen or skins, articles which were much in quest, not only among soldiers and travellers, but others, in the hotter seasons of the year. Paul had been instructed in that art; as it was usual for those of the Jews who had the most learned education to be brought up to some mechanical employment, for the amusement of their leisure hours, and to provide a resource against any unforeseen exigency. In this city he preached with success both to Jews and Greeks, so as to lay the foundation of a flourishing church. He was delivered from persecution by the temperance of Gallio, the proconsul, who wisely determined that a magistrate had no business to interfere concerning men's private religious opinions. During the apostle's residence of eighteen months in this city, he is believed to have written the two epistles to the Thessalonians, and that to the Galatians.

The first epistle to the Thessalonians is supposed to have been written either in the latter part of the year fifty-one, or in the beginning of the year fifty-two, corresponding to the twelfth and thirteenth years of the emperor Claudius Cæsar. The apostle's design in the epistle was, in general, to confirm the Thessalonians in their adherence to the christian faith, and to engage them to make still greater advances in religion, and become yet more eminent in every branch of the christian temper. In pursuance of this design, having joined with himself Timothy and Sylvanus, or Silas, who had assisted him in establishing the church at Thessalonica, he expresses his great satisfaction with the sincere and exemplary profession of the Thessalonian christians. [ch. i. 1-4.] With the fifth verse, in the opinion of Dr. Macknight, commences a regular demonstration of the divine original of the christian religion. This is proved by four arguments: 1. That many and great miracles were wrought by the preachers of the gospel, professedly for the purpose of demonstrating that they were commissioned by God to preach it to the world. [ch. i. 5-10.] 2. That the apostles and their assistants, by preaching the gospel, brought upon themselves every

where all manner of present evils, without obtaining the least worldly advantage, either in possession or in prospect: that in preaching this new doctrine, they did not accommodate it to the prevailing inclinations of their hearers, nor encourage them in their vices, or use any base arts to obtain belief, but both preached and acted suitably to the character of missionaries sent from God. [ch. ii. 1—13.] The apostle then answers the objection which some might bring against the truth of the christian miracles, taken from the unbelief of the Jews in Judea, and their persecuting Jesus and his disciples. [ch. ii. 14—20.] Another objection which might be urged against the preachers of the gospel, namely, for not delivering themselves from persecution by their miraculous powers, is answered in chapter iii. 1—4. The answer of a third objection which might have been urged against Paul, on the ground of his not loving the Thessalonians, occupies the remainder of the third chapter. 3. That the first preachers of the gospel delivered to their disciples, from the very beginning, precepts of the greatest strictness and holiness; so that, by the sanctity of its precepts, the gospel is showed to be a scheme of religion every way worthy of the true God, and highly beneficial to mankind. [ch. iv. 1—12.] In this part of the epistle, the apostle takes great pains to exhort his disciples to the practice of chastity, industry, and decency. 4. That Jesus, the author of our religion, was declared to be the Son of God, and the Judge of the world, by his resurrection from the dead: and that, by the same miracle, his own promise, and the prediction of his apostles, concerning his return from heaven to reward the righteous and punish the wicked, especially them who obey not the gospel, are rendered absolutely certain. [ch. iv. 13—18, v. 1—10.] The remainder of the epistle is filled with various exhortations tending to the preservation of order, unanimity, and comfort, in the church, as well as the cultivating a christian temper. [ch. v. 11—28.]

From the matters contained in the second epistle, it appears, that the messenger who carried Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians gave him, when he returned, a particular account of their affairs [see 2 Thess. iii. 11.]; and, among many other things, informed him that many of them thought the day of judgment was to happen in that age; because, in his letter, the apostle seemed to insinuate that he was to be living on the earth at the coming of the Lord. [1 Thess. iv. 15.] "We who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord." [verse 17.] "Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up." [chap. v. 4.] "But ye are not in darkness, so as that day should, like a thief," lay hold on you. [verse 6.] "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others, but let us watch and be sober." The same person also informed the apostle, that such of the Thessalonians as thought the coming of Christ and the end of

the world at hand, were neglecting their secular affairs, in the persuasion that all business of that sort was inconsistent with the care of their souls: that certain false teachers among the Thessalonians pretended to have a revelation of the Spirit, importing that the day of judgment was at hand; that others affirmed, that they were sent by the apostle to declare the same things by word of mouth: nay, that a forged letter had been handed about in Thessalonica as from him, to the same purpose. An error of this kind being exceedingly prejudicial to society, it was necessary to put a stop to it immediately; and the rather, that, being imputed to Paul, it was utterly subversive of his apostolical character and inspiration. The state, therefore, of the Thessalonians was no sooner made known to the apostle, than he wrote to them this second epistle; in which, as in the former, Silas and Timothy joined him, to show that they were of the same sentiments with him concerning that momentous affair. The two first chapters of this epistle are filled up principally with an account of the day of judgment, its effects upon saints and sinners, and the great apostasy by which it should be preceded; and the last chapter is devoted to exhortations nearly similar to what were contained in the first epistle. It is supposed to have been written in the year fifty-two.

The epistle to the Galatians is believed, by Dr. Macknight, to be written from Antioch after the council of Jerusalem, and before Paul and Silas undertook the journey in which they delivered to the Gentile churches the decrees of the council, as related Acts xvi. 4. The Galatians were the descendants of those Gauls, who finding their own country too strait for them, left it, after the death of Alexander the Great, in quest of new settlements. These emigrants, on leaving their own country, proceeded eastward along the Danube, till they came to where the Save joins that river. Then dividing themselves into three bodies, under the command of different leaders, one of these bodies entered Pannonia, another marched into Thrace, and the third into Illyricum and Macedonia. The party which marched into Thrace passed over the Bosphorus into the Lesser Asia, and hired themselves to Nicomedes, the king of Bithynia; assisted him in subduing his brother Ziphetes, with whom he was at war; and, in reward for that service, they received from him a country in the middle of the Lesser Asia, which, from them, was afterwards called Gallogrecia, or Galatia. The inland situation of Galatia preventing its inhabitants from having much intercourse with more civilized nations, the Gauls settled in that country continued long a rude and illiterate people. Yet they wanted neither the inclination nor the capacity to receive instruction; for when Paul came among them and preached to them, they were so ravished with the doctrines of the gospel, that they thought themselves the happiest of mortals;

and were so strongly impressed with a sense of the obligation they lay under to the apostle for having enlightened them with respect to religion, that they thought they could never repay it. Soon afterwards, however, certain judaizing teachers came among them, and laboured to depreciate the apostle's character, and to persuade them that it was necessary for their justification before God that they should be circumcised, and conform to all the institutions of Moses. In order to counteract their base insinuations, this epistle was written. In this, first, Paul begins with an address, in which he asserts his apostleship, hints at the doctrine of justification by Christ, and expresses his most affectionate regard for these Galatian churches. [ch. i. 1—5.] Secondly, he vindicates the authority of his doctrine and mission, [ch. i. 6, ii. 21.] he proves that justification can only be had by faith in Christ without the works of the law, [ch. iii. 1, iv. 7.] and expostulates with the Galatians in being deluded by false teachers to give up the liberty of the gospel. [ch. iv. 8, v. 12.] Thirdly, he gives them some practical directions, and exhorts them to a behaviour becoming christians. [ch. v. 13, vi. 18.] In the course of this epistle, the apostle introduces several particulars of his history which we should not otherwise have known.

After Paul had remained a year and a half at Corinth, affording a most excellent example of diligence and disinterested zeal, he took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence, on his return to Syria, taking along with him his two intimate friends Priscilla and Aquila, having shaved his head at the port of Cenchrea, in the neighbourhood of Corinth, in consequence of a vow. Arriving at Ephesus, he there parted with Aquila and Priscilla, and left them behind him, having made but a short stay in that place. However, during that time, he entered into the synagogue, and reasoned so forcibly with the Jews on the subject of Jesus being the Christ, that they desired he would abide longer among them, and procured from him a promise of an early visit. After a safe and prosperous voyage, he landed at the port of Cæsarea; and, going up to Jerusalem, tenderly saluted the church, and delivered the alms which he had brought from the Gentiles. He then returned to Antioch, and thus completed his tour.

We are not informed of the length of his second residence in that city, nor in what transactions he was then engaged; but we may rest assured, from the uniform tenor of his life, that he laboured incessantly in word and doctrine, teaching, reproving, and exhorting, as the Spirit gave him utterance. In due time, he set out upon a second progress, in which he was made a useful and valuable instrument in confirming the faith of the Galatian and Phrygian disciples.

His visit to Ephesus, which was prolonged to a two year's residence, was rendered remarkable by several important events.

Soon after his arrival, he met with twelve well-disposed Jews, who had submitted to the baptism of John, and believed in Jesus, but were unacquainted with that copious outpouring of God's Holy Spirit which had been experienced by the church. These, therefore, Paul baptized in the name of Jesus; and, laying his hands upon them, they received the gift of tongues, and prophesied in such a manner to the edification of the church, as plainly showed that they were miraculously filled with all knowledge and utterance. For three months he preached boldly in the synagogue, alleging the strongest arguments to prove that the kingdom of God, the reign of Messiah, had actually commenced. Finding, however, that the forbearance of his enemies was exhausted, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus. His ministry was so abundantly efficacious, that great numbers were converted, and all the inhabitants of the proconsular Asia, both Jews and Greeks, were made acquainted with the word of Christ's salvation. God, at the same time, wrought many extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul: so that, beside his curing those that were brought to him, handkerchiefs or garments were carried from his body to those that were sick at a distance, and immediately upon their touching them their diseases were removed, and the evil spirits themselves came out of them that were possessed. His reputation being thus raised very high, certain vagabond Jews attempted to imitate him, and to cast out spirits by the name of Jesus, whom Paul preached; but their attempt totally failed, and thus ultimately contributed to increase the reverence in which the character of Jesus was held. Many who had pretended to the knowledge of magical arts became convinced of their wickedness, and publicly burned their books, to the value of about seven thousand pounds of our money.

It is probable, that about this time were converted Philemon, to whom an epistle is addressed, and Epaphras, afterwards a minister of the church at Colosse. The apostle was also visited by several christians from Corinth, which occasioned him, probably, to write also from Ephesus his first epistle to the Corinthian church. As this is a long and interesting epistle, a few remarks on the characters and manners of the Corinthians in their heathen state may not prove unacceptable.

Before Corinth was destroyed by the Romans, it was famous for the magnificence of its buildings, the extent of its commerce, and the number, the learning, and the ingenuity of its inhabitants, who carried the arts and sciences to such perfection, that it was called by Cicero, 'totius Græciæ lumen, the light of all Greece,' and by Florus, 'Græciæ decus, the ornament of Greece.' The lustre, however, which Corinth derived from the number and genius of its inhabitants, was tarnished by their debauched manners. Strabo, Lib. viii. p. 581, tells us, that in the temple

of Venus at Corinth, 'there were more than a thousand harlots, the slaves of the temple, who, in honour of the goddess, prostituted themselves to all comers for hire, and through these the city was crowded, and became wealthy.' From an institution of this kind, which, under the pretext of religion, furnished an opportunity to the debauched to gratify their lusts, it is easy to see what corruption of manners must have flowed. Accordingly it is known, that lasciviousness was carried to such a pitch in Corinth, that, in the language of these times, the appellation of a Corinthian given to a woman imported that she was a prostitute; and to behave as a Corinthian, spoken of a man, was the same as to commit whoredom.

In the Achæan war, Corinth was utterly destroyed by the Roman consul Mummius. But being rebuilt by Julius Cæsar, and peopled with a Roman colony, it was made the residence of the proconsul who governed the province of Achaia, and soon regained its ancient splendour: for its inhabitants increasing exceedingly, they carried on, by means of its two sea-ports, an extensive commerce, which brought them great wealth. From that time forth, the arts, which minister to the conveniences and luxuries of life, were carried on at Corinth in as great perfection as formerly; schools were opened, in which philosophy and rhetoric were publicly taught by able masters; and strangers from all quarters crowded to Corinth to be instructed in the sciences and in the arts: so that Corinth, during this latter period, was filled with philosophers, rhetoricians, and artists of all kinds, and abounded in wealth. These advantages, however, were counterbalanced, as before, by the effects which wealth and luxury never fail to produce. In a word; an universal corruption of manners soon prevailed; so that Corinth in its second state became as debauched as it had been in any former period whatever. The apostle, therefore, had good reason, in this epistle, to exhort the Corinthian brethren to flee fornication; and after giving them a catalogue of the unrighteous, who shall not inherit the kingdom of God, [1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.] he was well entitled to add, "and such were some of you." In short: the Corinthians had carried vice of every kind to such a pitch, that their city was more debauched than any of the other cities of Greece.

Though the apostle had taught the word of God at Corinth during more than a year and six months, the religious knowledge of the disciples was but imperfect at his departure. They were therefore more liable than some others to be deceived by any impostor who came among them, as the event showed. For after the apostle was gone, a false teacher, who was a Jew by birth, [2 Cor. xi. 22.] came to Corinth with letters of recommendation, [2 Cor. iii. 1.] probably, from the brethren in Judea, for which reason he is called a false apostle, [2 Cor. xi. 13.] having been sent forth by men. This teacher

was of the sect of the Sadducees, [see 1 Cor. xv. 12.] and of some note on account of his birth [2 Cor. v. 16, 17.] and education, being, perhaps, a scribe learned in the law. [1 Cor. i. 20.] He seems, likewise, to have been well acquainted with the character, manners, and opinions of the Greeks; for he recommended himself to the Corinthians, not only by affecting, in his discourses, that eloquence of which the Greeks were so fond, but also by suiting his doctrine to their prejudices, and his precepts to their practices. For example; because the learned Greeks regarded the body as the prison of the soul, and expected to be delivered from it in the future state, and called the hope of the resurrection of the flesh the hope of worms, a filthy and abominable thing, which God neither will, nor can do; and because they ridiculed the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, [Acts xvii. 32.] this new teacher, to render the gospel acceptable to them, flatly denied it to be a doctrine of the gospel, and affirmed that the resurrection of the body was neither desirable nor possible; and argued, that the only resurrection promised by Christ was the resurrection of the soul from ignorance and error, which the heretics of these times said was already passed. [2 Tim. ii. 18.] Next, because the Corinthians were addicted to gluttony, drunkenness, fornication, and every sort of lewdness, this teacher derided the apostle's precepts concerning temperance and chastity, and reasoned in defence of the licentious practices of the Greeks, as we learn from the apostle's confutation of his arguments. [1 Cor. vi. 12, 13.] Nay, he went so far as to patronize a person of some note among the Corinthians, who was living in incest with his father's wife, [1 Cor. v. 1.] proposing thereby to gain the good-will, not only of that offender, but of many others also, who wished to retain their ancient debauched manner of living. Lastly, to ingratiate himself with the Jews, he enjoined obedience to the law of Moses as absolutely necessary to salvation.

In thus corrupting the gospel for the sake of rendering it acceptable to the Greeks, the false teacher proposed to make himself the head of a party in a church at Corinth, and to acquire both power and wealth. But Paul's authority as an apostle standing in the way of his ambition, and hindering him from spreading his errors with the success he wished, he endeavoured to lessen the apostle, by representing him as one who had neither the mental nor the bodily abilities necessary to an apostle. His presence, he said, was mean, and his speech contemptible. [2 Cor. x. 10.] He found fault with his birth and education. [2 Cor. x. 10.] He even affirmed that he was no apostle, because he had not attended Christ during his ministry on earth; and boldly said that Paul had abstained from taking maintenance, because he was conscious he was no apostle. On the other hand, to raise himself in the eyes of the

Corinthians, he praised his own birth and education, boasted of his knowledge and eloquence, and laid some stress on his bodily accomplishments; by all which he gained a number of adherents, and formed a party at Corinth against the apostle. And, because there were in that party some teachers endued with spiritual gifts, the apostle considered them also as leaders. Hence he speaks sometimes of one leader of the faction, and sometimes of divers, as it suited the purpose of his argument.

While these things were doing at Corinth, Paul returned from Jerusalem to Ephesus, according to his promise. [Acts xviii. 21.] During his second abode in that city, which was of long continuance, some of the family of Chloe, who were members of the church at Corinth, and who adhered to the apostle, happening to come to Ephesus, gave him an account of the disorderly practices which many of the Corinthian brethren were following, and of the faction which the false teacher had formed among them in opposition to him. [1 Cor. i. 11.]* These evils requiring a speedy remedy, the apostle immediately sent Timothy and Erastus to Corinth, [Acts xix. 22, 1 Cor. iv. 17.] in hopes, that if they did not reclaim the faction, they might at least be able to confirm the sincere. For that purpose, he ordered his messengers to inform the Corinthians that he himself was coming to them directly from Ephesus, to increase the spiritual gifts of those who adhered to him, [2 Cor. i. 15.] and to punish, by his miraculous power, the disobedient. [1 Cor. iv. 18, 19.] Such was the apostle's resolution when he sent Timothy and Erastus away. But before he had time to put this resolution in execution, three persons arrived at Ephesus, whom the sincere part of the church had despatched from Corinth with a letter to the apostle, wherein they expressed their attachment to him, and desired his directions concerning various matters which had been the subject of much disputation, not only with the adherents of the false teachers, but among the sincere themselves.

The coming of these messengers, together with the extraordinary success which the apostle had about that time in converting the Ephesians, occasioned an alteration in his resolution respecting his journey to Corinth. For, instead of setting out directly, he determined to remain in Ephesus till the following Pentecost. [1 Cor. xvi. 18.] And then, instead of sailing straightway to Corinth, he proposed to go first into Macedonia. [1 Cor. xvi. 5, 6.] In the mean time, to compensate the loss which the Corinthians sustained from the deferring of his intended visit, he wrote to them his first epistle, in which he reprov'd the false teacher and his adherents for the divisions which they had occasioned in the church. And because they ridiculed him as a person rude in speech, he informed them that Christ had ordered him, in preaching the gospel, to avoid the enticing words of man's wisdom, lest the doctrine of salvation

through the cross of Christ should be rendered ineffectual. Then addressing the heads of the faction, he plainly told them their luxurious manner of living was very different from the persecuted lot of the true ministers of Christ. And to put the obedience of the sincere part of the church to the trial, he ordered them, in a general public meeting called for the purpose, to excommunicate the incestuous person. After which, he sharply reprov'd those who had gone into the heathen courts of judicature with their law-suits, and directed them to a better method of settling their claims on each other respecting worldly matters.

The Corinthians, in their letter, having desired the apostle's advice concerning marriage, celibacy, and divorce; and concerning the eating of meats which had been sacrificed to idols, he treated of these subjects at great length in this epistle. Also, because the faction had called his apostleship in question, he proved himself an apostle by various undeniable arguments, and confuted the objection taken from his not demanding maintenance from the Corinthians. Then, in the exercise of his apostolical authority, he declared it to be sinful, on any pretext whatever, to sit down with the heathens in an idol's temple to partake of the sacrifices which had been offered there. And, with the same authority, he gave rules for the behaviour of both sexes in the public assemblies; rebuked the whole church for the indecent manner in which they had celebrated the Lord's supper; and the spiritual men for the irregularities which many of them had been guilty of in the exercise of their gifts; proved against the Greek philosophers, and the Jewish Sadducees, the possibility and certainty of the resurrection of the dead; and exhorted the Corinthians to make collections for the saints in Judea, who were greatly distressed by the persecution which their unbelieving brethren had raised against them.

In the year fifty-seven, as most chronologers admit, a violent disturbance took place at Ephesus, while the apostle was preparing to depart from that city. A certain silversmith, whose name was Demetrius, a man of considerable influence, employed many workmen in making small silver shrines, which were models of the celebrated temple of the Ephesian Diana; or, as some suppose, a sort of coins or medals, on the reverse of which that edifice was represented. He, finding that the spread of christianity affected his trade, summoned together his dependants, and many others of his profession, and harangued them concerning the greatness of that goddess whom Asia and all the world worshipped. They applauded the discourse of their leader with the most violent exclamations of, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and thus excited a general alarm among the inhabitants of the city. Some of them seized upon Gaius and Aristarchus, two men of Macedonia, who were Paul's fel-

low-travellers, and dragged them into the theatre in which their famous games were celebrated. When Paul heard of the distress and danger of his friends, he would have gone into the theatre to address himself to the people, that he might either bring them to a better temper, or, at least, procure by his surrender the discharge of his friends. The disciples, however, would not permit him to hazard his person; and in this determination they were confirmed by messages which were sent by some of the officers who superintended the games, which were, in the opinion of very learned men, at that very juncture exhibited in honour of the gods. In the mean time, the multitude continued, some crying one thing, and some another, as their passion or the zeal of others prompted them, the greater part of the assembly being ignorant of the cause why they were thus met. When this tumult had continued for the space of two hours, the town-clerk, or recorder, came forward; and, in an able and temperate speech, professed his veneration for Diana, exculpated the apostles from any criminal charge, and intimated that they were in danger of a prosecution on account of that day's disorderly proceedings. His influence proved sufficient to dismiss the multitude, and they quietly departed to their own homes.

Soon after this transaction, Paul took leave of the disciples; and having passed through Troas in his way, crossed the sea from thence to go into Macedonia, that he might visit the Philippians, Thessalonians, and Bereans, to whom he had sent Timothy and Erastus while he staid in Asia, and from whence Timothy was now returned, and left behind him at Ephesus. Having diligently attended to his apostolical duties in Macedonia, he resided for three months in the country of Achaia. About this time, he is supposed to have written his second epistle to the Corinthians, the first of Timothy, and the epistle to the Romans.

The following remarks from Dr. Macknight, in his work on the Apostolical Epistles, will cast much light on the second of Corinthians.

When the apostle sent his first letter to the church at Corinth, he resolved to remain in Ephesus till the following Pentecost, [1 Cor. xvi. 8.] that Titus, who carried his letter, might have time to return, and bring him an account of the manner in which it was received by the Corinthians. But the riot of Demetrius happening soon after it was sent away, the apostle found it necessary to avoid the fury of the rioters and of the idolatrous rabble, who were all greatly enraged against him, for having turned so many of the inhabitants of Asia from the established idolatry. Wherefore, leaving Ephesus, he went to Troas, a noted sea-port town to the north of Ephesus, where travellers, coming from Europe into Asia, commonly landed. Here he proposed to employ himself in preaching the gospel of Christ,

[2 Cor. ii. 12.] till Titus should arrive from Corinth. But Titus not coming at the time, St. Paul began to fear that the Corinthians had used him ill, and had disregarded the letter which he had delivered to them. These fears so distressed the apostle, that, notwithstanding his preaching at Troas was attended with uncommon success, he left that city, and went forward to Macedonia, expecting to find Titus. But in this expectation he was disappointed. Titus was not in Macedonia when the apostle arrived. He therefore resolved to wait in that country till Titus should come and inform him how the Corinthians stood affected towards their spiritual father. It seems, he judged it imprudent to visit them till he knew their state.

In Macedonia, St. Paul had many conflicts with the idolaters, [2 Cor. vii. 5.] who were greatly enraged against him, as all the other idolaters were, for opposing both the objects and the rites of their worship. These fightings, joined with his fears for Titus, and his uncertainty concerning the disposition of the Corinthians, exceedingly distressed the apostle at this time. But his uneasiness was at length happily removed, by the arrival of Titus, and by the agreeable accounts which he gave him of the obedience of the greatest part of the Corinthians, in excommunicating the incestuous person, at which solemn action Titus may have been present. Much encouraged, therefore, by this good news, the apostle wrote to the Corinthian church this second letter, to confirm the sincere part in the attachment to him, and to separate the rest from the false teacher who had led them so far astray.

To understand this epistle rightly, the reader must recollect, that as Titus spent some time in Corinth after delivering the apostle's first letter, he had an opportunity to make himself acquainted, not only with the state of the sincere part of the church, but with the temper and behaviour of the faction. Wherefore, when he gave the apostle an account of the good disposition of the church, he, no doubt, at the same time, informed him concerning the faction; that some of them still continued in their opposition to him, and in their attachment to the false teacher; and that that impostor was going on in his evil practices. Farther, Titus, by conversing with the faction, having learned the arguments and objections by which their leaders endeavoured to lessen the apostle's authority, together with the scoffing speeches which they used to bring him into contempt, we may believe that he rehearsed all these matters to him. Being thus made acquainted with the state of the Corinthian church, St. Paul judged it fit to write to them this second letter. And that it might have the greater weight, he sent it to them by Titus, the bearer of his former epistle. [2 Cor. viii. 17, 18.] In this second letter, the apostle artfully introduced the arguments, objections, and scoffing speeches, by which the faction were endeavouring to bring him into contempt; and not

only confuted them by the most solid reasoning, but even turned them against the false teacher himself, and against the faction, in such a manner as to render them ridiculous. In short: by the many delicate, but pointed ironies, with which this epistle abounds, the apostle covered his adversaries with shame, and showed the Corinthians that he excelled in a talent which the Greeks greatly admired. But while St. Paul thus pointedly derided the faction and its leaders, he bestowed just commendations on the sincere part of the church, for their persevering in the doctrine he had taught them, and for their ready obedience to his orders concerning the incestuous person. And, to encourage them, he told them, that, having boasted of them to Titus, he was glad to find his boasting well founded in every particular.

The Corinthian church being composed of persons of such opposite characters, the apostle, in writing to them, was under the necessity of suiting his discourse to them according to their different characters. And therefore, if we apply to the whole church of Corinth the things in the two epistles, which apparently were directed to the whole church, but which were intended only for a part of it, we shall think these epistles full of inconsistency, if not of contradiction. But if we understand these things according as the apostle meant them, every appearance of inconsistency and contradiction will be removed. For he himself hath directed us to distinguish the sincere part of the Corinthians from the faction. [2 Cor. i. 14.] "Ye have acknowledged us in part, (that is, a part of you have acknowledged,) that we are your boasting. [chap. ii. 5.] Now if a certain person hath grieved me, he hath not grieved me, except by a part of you, that I may not lay a load on you all." It is, therefore, plain, that the matters in the two epistles to the Corinthians, which appear inconsistent, are not really so; they belong to different persons. For example: the many commendations bestowed on the Corinthians in these epistles belong only to the sincere part of them; whereas, the sharp reproofs, the pointed ironies, and the severe threatenings of punishment found in the same epistles, are to be understood as addressed to the faction, and more especially to the teacher who headed the faction. And thus, by discriminating the members of the Corinthian church according to their true characters, and by applying to each the passages which belonged to them, every appearance of contradiction vanishes.

Concerning the time when the first epistle to Timothy was written, two different opinions have been entertained. That which has most generally prevailed is, that it was written about the year of our Lord fifty-eight, when Paul had lately quitted Ephesus on account of the tumult raised there by Demetrius, and was gone into Macedonia. Pearson, L'Enfant, and Mac-

knight, however, suppose that it was not written till the year sixty-five, between the first and second imprisonment of Paul at Rome. Upon examining the contents of this epistle, it appears that it was principally intended to direct Timothy in managing the affairs of the church while he abode at Ephesus; and particularly to instruct him in choosing proper persons to be set apart for the ministry and other offices in the church, as well as in the exercise of a regular discipline. Another part of the apostle's design was to caution this young evangelist against the influence of those judaizing teachers, who, by their subtle distinctions and endless controversies, had corrupted the purity and simplicity of the gospel; to press upon him a constant regard, in all his preaching, to the interests of practical religion; and to animate him to the greatest diligence, fidelity, and zeal, in the discharge of his office.

In pursuance of this design, the apostle, after having saluted his beloved pupil with his usual affection, and reminded him of the reasons for which he left him behind at Ephesus, takes occasion, from the idle speculations and Jewish controversies that had been unhappily introduced into the church, to assert the practical nature and tendency of the christian doctrine, and from thence to remonstrate against the absurdity of opposing the gospel out of a pretended zeal for the law; when, in reality, the great end of the law was much more effectually answered by the gospel, as it not only restrained men from the more open and notorious acts of vice, against which the law was more immediately levelled, but was calculated to raise its votaries to the most sublime heights of virtue. [ch. i. 1—11.] The apostle, having mentioned the gospel, cannot forbear digressing, in the fulness of his heart to express the affectionate sense he had of the divine goodness in calling him, who had been a persecutor, to the christian faith and ministerial office; and observes, that this favour was extended to him, though so unworthy, as an encouragement to those that should believe in every future age. [verse 12—17.] He then goes on to recommend to Timothy a conscientious care in discharging the duties of that sacred office he had committed to him, and reminds him of the fatal miscarriage of some who had apostatized from the faith. In pursuance of this general exhortation, he directs that prayer should be offered up for all men, and especially for princes and magistrates, as it was the great design of christianity to promote the peace and welfare of communities, and the happiness of the whole human race. And as the prudent behaviour of all the members of the society was of great importance to the credit of religion, he advises the women to maintain the strictest decency in their dress, as well as modesty and reserve in their whole deportment, walking as persons professing godliness; and forbids their teaching in public assem-

blies, as inconsistent with that due subjection to the other sex which he enforces from the scripture account of the fall. [verse 18; ii. 15.] As one very important part of Timothy's office was to ordain ministers and officers in the church, the apostle proceeds to instruct him in the qualifications necessary both for bishops and deacons. A bishop, or pastor, he describes as a person of a blameless and exemplary character; distinguished for his temperance, moderation, and charity; the husband of one wife; prudent in the management of his own family; not lately converted to the christian faith, but well furnished with knowledge, and in good repute with his heathen neighbours. His directions for the choice of deacons are nearly the same; which he concludes with representing the advantages that would attend the faithful discharge of that office. [chap. iii. 1—13.] And that Timothy might be the more concerned to follow his instructions, he speaks in very high terms of the importance of the charge committed to him, and the sublime and excellent nature of the christian dispensation. Yet he assures him, the Spirit had expressly foretold that apostates should arise in the church, who would corrupt the purity and simplicity of the gospel, requiring abstinence from marriage, and from various kinds of meats which God had left indifferent, and teaching other doctrines equally false and pernicious. [verse 14; iv. 5.] As many of the precepts he had given him were of universal concern, he exhorts him to inculcate them upon the society committed to his care; leaving these idle tales of which the Jewish rabbies were so fond, and confining his discourses to the great truths of practical religion: these, he observes, were the foundation of all their hopes as christians, and the advancement of these was the great end of all his labours and sufferings. And to render his ministry among them successful, he recommends it to him to maintain such a purity and sanctity of manners, as might not only secure him from that contempt to which his youth would otherwise expose him, but render him a worthy example to the flock. With the same view, he exhorts him to use the utmost diligence in exercising and improving the gifts with which God had honoured him, for the edification of the church, and the salvation of souls. [verse 6, to the end.]

The apostle then proceeds to lay down some directions for Timothy's conduct towards persons in different circumstances of life, advising him to suit his manner of address to their respective ages and standing in the church. This leads him to give some rules in relation to those widows who were entrusted by the society with some peculiar office, and maintained in the discharge of it out of the public stock. None were to be admitted into this number but those who, being advanced in life, were destitute of any other support, and had maintained an exemplary character for piety, charity, and every good work;

for he observes, the many irregularities into which persons in younger life were often betrayed, was a sufficient reason for excluding them from such a trust. [chap. v. 1—16.] Paul further directs, that a peculiar honour should be paid to faithful ministers, and no accusation received against them but on the credit of two or three witnesses. And as a due care in the exercise of christian discipline was of so much importance to the credit of religion, he gives him a most solemn charge to observe the strictest impartiality in the execution of this difficult part of his office. On the same principles, he admonishes him not to engage too hastily in setting apart any to the ministry, lest he should make himself partaker of their guilt; and, from the variety of men's characters, intimates the necessity of prudence and caution in his manner of treating them. To all which he adds some advices relating to the behaviour of servants towards their masters, whether they were heathens or christians. [verse 17; vi. 2.]

The apostle having finished his instructions to Timothy in relation to the pastoral office, exhorts him to avoid those false teachers who, instead of insisting upon the great truths of practical religion, amused their hearers with trifling controversies, which only served to raise a spirit of envy and contention in the church, while, at the same time, under a pretended zeal for the truth, they were really carrying on their own mercenary views. This leads him to caution Timothy against all approaches towards a covetous temper, which he represents as the root of all evil; and to press upon him a constant and growing regard to vital practical godliness, as of the utmost consequence to his own and his people's happiness. [chap. vi. 3—12.] To give yet greater force to his admonitions, the apostle concludes with a most solemn charge to Timothy, as in the presence of God and Christ, to maintain the purity of the christian faith as he had received it from him, that it might be preserved uncorrupt till the glorious appearance of Christ at the great day. After which, he inserts, by way of postscript, an exhortation to the rich not to be puffed up with their wealth, but to employ it in acts of charity and beneficence, that they might secure to themselves eternal life; and closes all with renewing his earnest request to Timothy to keep that gospel he had entrusted with him, and carefully to avoid those empty speculations and vain sophistries by which some had been ensnared. [Verse 13, to the end of the epistle.]

The scriptures do not inform us at what time, or by whom, the gospel was first preached in Rome. But, from the following circumstances, it is probable that the church there was one of the first-planted Gentile churches, and that it soon became very numerous.

When Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, A. D. 57, their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world, [Rom. i. 8.]

and many of them possessed spiritual gifts, [Rom. xii. 6.] and their obedience was known to all men. [Rom. xvi. 19.] Further, the fame of the church at Rome had reached the apostle long before he wrote this letter. For he told them he had a desire for many years to come to them. [Rom. xv. 23.] The gospel, therefore, was introduced into Rome very early, perhaps by some of the disciples who were scattered abroad after Stephen's death, in the end of the reign of Tiberius. Or the founding of the Roman church may have happened even before that period; for among the persons who heard Peter preach on the day of Pentecost, and who were converted by him, "strangers of Rome" are mentioned. [Acts ii. 10, 41.] These Roman Jews, on their return home, no doubt, preached Christ to their countrymen in the city, and probably converted some of them; so that the church of Rome, like most of the Gentile churches, began in the Jews. But it was soon enlarged by converts from among the religious proselytes; and, in process of time, was increased by the flowing in of the idolatrous Gentiles, who gave themselves to Christ in such numbers, that, at the time Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, their conversion was much spoken of.

These facts merit attention; because the opposers of our religion represent the first christians as below the notice of the heathen magistrates, on account of the paucity of their numbers, and the obscurity with which they practised their religious rites. But if the faith of the Roman brethren was spoken of throughout the whole empire at the time this letter was written, the disciples of Christ in Rome must have been numerous, and must have professed their religion openly; for the turning of a few obscure individuals in the city from the worship of idols, and their worshipping the true God clandestinely, could not be the subject of discourse in the provinces. Farther: that there were many christians in Rome when Paul wrote this epistle may be inferred from the tumults occasioned by the contests which the Jews had with them about the law, and which gave rise to Claudius's decree, banishing the whole of them from Rome. [Acts xviii. 2.] The salutations, likewise, in the end of this epistle, show how numerous the brethren in Rome were at that time, some of whom were of long standing in the faith, as Andronicus and Junias, who were converted before Paul himself; others of them were teachers, as Urbanus; others were deacons and deaconesses, as Mary, Tryphena, Tryphosa, and Persis, all of whom were active in spreading the gospel; others were persons of station, such as the members of the family of Narcissus, if, as is commonly supposed, he was the emperor's favourite of that name. But although this should not be admitted, the saints in Cæsar's household, whose salutation, some years after this, the apostle sent to the Philippians, may have been persons of considerable note.

The gospel being offered to the world as a revelation from God, the Jews justly expected that it would agree in all things with the former revelations of which they were the keepers. And therefore, when they perceived that many of the doctrines taught by the apostles were contrary to the received tenets which the scribes pretended to derive from the writings of Moses and the prophets, the bulk of the nation rejected the gospel, and argued against it with the greatest vehemence of passion, in the persuasion that it was an impious heresy, inconsistent with the ancient revelations, and destructive of piety.

To remove this specious cavil, the apostles, besides preaching the doctrines of the gospel as matters revealed to themselves, were at pains to show that these doctrines were contained in the writings of Moses and the prophets; and that none of the tenets contrary to the gospel, which the Jewish doctors pretended to deduce from their own sacred writings, had any foundation there. Of these tenets, the most pernicious was their misinterpretation of the promise to Abraham, "that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed." For the Jews, considering the moral precepts of the law of Moses as a perfect rule of duty, and its sacrifices and purifications as real atonements for sin, and believing that no man could be saved out of their church, affirmed that the blessing of the nations in Abraham's seed consisted in the conversion of the nations to Judaism by the Jews. Hence the Jewish believers, strongly impressed with these notions, taught the Gentiles, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved." [Acts xv. 1.] But this doctrine, though obstinately maintained, was a gross error. The law of Moses was no rule of justification. It was a political institution, established for governing the Jews as the subjects of God's temporal kingdom, in Canaan. And therefore the apostles, elders, and brethren, assembled in the council of Jerusalem, justly decreed that the yoke of the law was not to be imposed on the Gentiles as necessary to their salvation.

A decision so deliberately and solemnly pronounced by such an assembly, ought, among the disciples of Christ, to have silenced all disputations on the subject. Nevertheless, the converted Jews, having been accustomed to glory in their relation to God as his people, and in the privileges which they had so long enjoyed, were extremely offended when, according to the new doctrine, they found the Gentiles, under the gospel, raised to an equality with them in all religious privileges. Wherefore, disregarding the decrees which were ordained of the apostles and elders, they exhorted the Gentiles every where to become Jews if they wished to be saved. And this exhortation made the stronger impressions on the Gentiles, that the Jewish worship by sacrifices, purifications, and holidays, was, in many respects, similar to their former worship. Besides, as the Jews were the

only people who, before the introduction of the gospel, enjoyed the knowledge of the true God, and a revelation of his will; and as the christian preachers themselves appealed to that revelation in proof of their doctrine, the Gentiles naturally paid a great regard to the opinion of the Jews in matters of religion, and especially to their interpretations of their ancient oracles. Hence some of the Gentile converts, especially in the churches of Galatia and Phrygia, who, before their conversion, were extremely ignorant in religious matters, hearkening to the judaizing teachers, received circumcision; and thereby bound themselves to obey the law of Moses, in the persuasion that it was the only way to secure the honour of the Deity.

According to this view of the matter, the controversy which, in the first age, disturbed the christian church, was not, as Locke supposes, whether the Gentiles in their uncircumcised state should be admitted into the church, and enjoy equal privileges with the Jews; and whether it was lawful for the Jews to hold religious communion with them while they remained uncircumcised; but plainly whether there was any church but the Jewish in which men could be saved. For when the judaizers taught the Gentile brethren, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved," they certainly meant that salvation could be obtained no where but in the Jewish church.

In this controversy, the unbelieving Jews, and all the judaizing christians, ranged themselves on the one side, strongly and with united voices affirming that Judaism was the only religion in which men could be saved; that there was no gospel church different from the Jewish, nor any revealed law of God but the law of Moses; and that the gospel was nothing but an explication of that law, of the same kind with the explications given of it by the prophets. On the other side, in this great controversy stood the apostles and elders, and all the well-informed brethren, who, knowing that the Jewish church was at an end, and that the law of Moses was abrogated, strenuously maintained that a new church of God was erected, in which all mankind obtain salvation by faith without circumcision; and that the gospel was the only law of this new church. They therefore maintained the freedom of the Gentiles from the law of Moses in all its parts, and boldly asserted that the gospel alone was sufficient for the salvation of the Gentiles; consequently that they were under no obligation to have recourse to the Levitical sacrifices and purifications for procuring the pardon of their sins.

The controversy concerning the obligation of the law of Moses, viewed in this light, was a matter of no small importance, since on its determination depended whether the law of Moses or the gospel of Christ should be the religion of the world. No wonder, therefore, that Paul introduced this contro-

versy in so many of his epistles, and that he wrote three of them in particular for the express purpose of confuting an error so plausible and so pernicious, viz. his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews. These learned epistles, in process of time, produced the desired effect. By the strength of the arguments set forth in them, and by representing the same things every where in his preaching and conversation, the apostle enlightened many of the Jewish converts; and these well-instructed Jewish brethren, in their several churches, effectually opposed the errors of the judaizers, by all which Judaism has at length been banished from the christian church, in which, for a while, it had taken root, through the misguided zeal of the Jewish converts; and the gospel now remains the only revealed religion, authorized by God, and obligatory on man.

This controversy concerning the law of Moses was agitated very early at Rome, where the Jews, being rich and factious, disputed the matter with greater violence than in other churches. And the unbelieving part taking a share in the controversy, they occasioned such tumults, that the emperor Claudius, in the eleventh year of his reign, banished the contending parties from the city. So the Roman historian, Suetonius, informs us, who, confounding the Christians with the Jews, calls the whole by the general name of Jews; and affirms, that they were excited to these tumults by Christ, because he had heard, as Dr. Macknight supposes, that Christ was the subject of their quarrels.

Among the banished from Rome was Aquila, a Jew, born in Pontus, and his wife Priscilla, both of them christians. These came to Corinth about the time Paul first visited that city; and being of the same occupation with him, they received him into their house, employed him in their business, and gave him wages for his work, with which he maintained himself all the time he preached the gospel to the Corinthians. During his abode with them, Aquila and Priscilla, no doubt, gave the apostle a full account of the state of the church at Rome before its dispersion; and, among other things, told him, that the unbelieving Romans, following the Greeks, affirmed the light of natural reason to have been from the beginning a sufficient guide to mankind in matters of religion: that, being great admirers of the Greeks, they considered their philosophy as the perfection of human reason, and extolled it as preferable to the gospel, which they scrupled not to pronounce mere foolishness: that, on the other hand, the unbelieving Jews, no less prejudiced in favour of the law of Moses, affirmed that it was the only religion in which men could be saved, and condemned the gospel as a detestable heresy, because it did not adopt the sacrifices, purifications, and other rites enjoined by Moses. They farther told the apostle, that many, even of the converted Jews, extolled the institutions of Moses as more effectual for the salvation of sin-

ners than the gospel ; and, in that persuasion, pressed the Gentiles to join the law with the gospel, that by its sacrifices and purifications the gospel might be rendered a complete form of religion :—that the Gentile converts, who knew their freedom from the law of Moses, despised their judaizing brethren as superstitious bigots ; while the others regarded them as profane, for neglecting institutions which they esteemed sacred :—that those who possessed spiritual gifts had occasioned great disturbance in the church, each extolling his own gifts, and striving to exercise them in the public assemblies, without giving place to others :—lastly, that some, both of the Jewish and Gentile believers, reckoning it disgraceful to obey constitutions made by idolaters, had, in several instances, contemned the wholesome laws of the state, and were in danger of being punished as evil-doers, to the great scandal of the christian name.

As the apostle had not been in Rome when he wrote this epistle, some persons well acquainted with the affairs of the church there must have made him acquainted with all the particulars above mentioned : for his letter to the Romans was evidently framed with a view to these things. If so, who more likely to give the information than Aquila and Priscilla, with whom the apostle lodged so long ? And though the Roman brethren were then dispersed, consequently the apostle had no opportunity of writing to them as a church ; yet the disorders which prevailed among them having made a deep impression on his spirit, we may suppose he resolved to embrace the first opportunity to remedy them. Accordingly, during his second visit to the Corinthians, having heard that the church was re-established at Rome, Paul wrote to the Romans this excellent and learned letter which bears their name ; wherein, at great length, he discoursed of the justification of sinners ; answered the objections made to the gospel-doctrine of justification ; proved, from Moses and the prophets, the calling of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews, and their future restoration ; and gave the Roman brethren many precepts and exhortations suited to their character and circumstances.

From the pains which the apostle took in this letter to prove that no Gentile can be justified by the law of nature, nor Jew by the law of Moses ; and from his explaining in it all the divine dispensations respecting religion, as well as from what he says chap. i. 7, 13, 14, 15, it is reasonable to think it was designed for the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles at Rome, as well as for the brethren, who therefore would show the copies which they took of it to their unbelieving acquaintance. And inasmuch as the apostle professed to derive his views of the matters contained in this letter from the former revelations and from inspiration, it certainly merited the attention of every unbeliever to whom it was shown, whether he were a Jewish scribe, or a heathen philosopher, or a Roman magistrate, or one of the people ;

some of whom, no doubt, read it. And though, by reading it, they may not have been persuaded to embrace the gospel immediately, the candid and intelligent, by seriously weighing the things written in it, must have received such instruction in the principles and duties of natural religion, as could hardly fail to lead them to see the absurdity of the commonly received idolatry, which was one good step towards their conversion. To conclude : as in this learned letter the principal objections by which Jews and deists have all along impugned the gospel are introduced and answered, it is a writing which the adversaries of revelation, who pretend to oppose it on rational principles, ought to peruse with attention and candour.

The commentators observe, that although the apostle, in the inscription of this letter, hath asserted the apostolical authority, to make the Romans sensible that the things written in it were dictated to him by the Spirit ; yet, as he was personally unknown to the greatest part of them, he does not teach, exhort, and rebuke them, with that authority which he uses in his letters to the churches of his own planting, but he writes to them in a mild and condescending manner, in order to gain their affection.

To return to the narrative of the apostle's life, we find that, after residing three months at Achaia, he set sail for Asia by the way of Macedonia. His companions in this journey were Sopater of Berea ; Aristarchus and Secundus, two Thessalonian brethren ; Gaius of Derbe ; Timothy ; and from Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. Part of this company went before to Troas, and waited there till the arrival of Paul. Some days after, Paul and his company set sail from Philippi, on the conclusion of the days of unleavened bread ; and crossing part of the Ægean sea, came to them at Troas, in five days, where they continued seven days conversing with the christians there. And on the first day of the week, when the disciples, as it was usual with them on that day, met together to break bread, that is, to celebrate the eucharist in remembrance of the death of our blessed Redeemer, Paul, being now to take his leave of them, and about to depart on the morrow, preached to them with great fervency ; and was so carried out in his work, that he continued his discourse until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room in which they were assembled ; for they carefully avoided whatever might incur censure, or even suspicion. But this occasioned them to keep the windows open, to prevent the immoderate heat of the room : and a certain young man, whose name was Eutychus, who was there, sitting in an open window fell into a profound sleep ; and, as Paul continued his discourse a long time, he was so overpowered with sleep, that he fell down from the third story to the ground, and was taken up dead. This threw the whole assembly into disorder ; and Paul, breaking off his discourse, went down and fell upon him ; and, tak-

ing him in his arms, said, Do not make any disturbance, for I assure you that his life is in him, and God will quickly restore him to perfect health. And having thus composed and quieted their minds, Paul returned to his work; and going up again into the chamber where the assembly met, and having broken bread, and eaten with the rest of the disciples, in commemoration of the death of Christ, when this solemnity was over, he conversed with them a considerable time longer, even till break of day, and so went out from that house, and departed from Troas to meet the ship which was to take him a-board at Assos. And before the assembly broke up they brought the youth into the room alive and well, and were not a little comforted at so happy an event; and the rather, as they might apprehend that some reproaches would have been occasioned by his death, if he had not been so recovered; because it happened in a christian assembly, which had been protracted so long beyond the usual bounds of time on this extraordinary occasion. But they that were to go with Paul went before into the ship, and sailed round the neighbouring promontory to Assos, where they were to take up Paul; for so he had appointed, choosing himself to go afoot from Troas thither, that he might thus enjoy a little more of the company of his christian brethren, of whom he was then to take a long leave. And as soon as he joined them at Assos, according to his own appointment, they took him up into the ship, and came to the celebrated port of Mitylene, in the island of Lesbos. And, sailing from thence, they came the next day over against Chios, the island so famous for producing some of the finest Grecian wines; and the day following we touched at the island of Samos; and, steering from thence towards the Asian shore, having stayed awhile at Trogyllium, we put into the mouth of the river Mæander, and came the day after to Miletus. For Paul, under whose direction the vessel was, had determined to sail by Ephesus, which lay on the other side of the bay, without calling there; and much less would he go up the river to Colosse or Laodicea, that he might not be obliged to spend any considerable time in Asia; for he earnestly endeavoured, if it were possible for him to do it, to be at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Nevertheless, he sent for the ministers of Ephesus, and made a very remarkable discourse to them, of which we shall give a particular account.

From Miletus the apostle sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church, purposing to deliver to them a very solemn charge, previous to his appearing among his bitter enemies at Jerusalem. When they were assembled, he addressed them in words to the following purport: You well know, my brethren, how I have behaved myself among you, all the time which has elapsed from the first day in which I entered into Asia to the present moment, serving the Lord Jesus Christ with deep humility and tears of affection; and, in the midst of many trials, of which

the most remarkable arose from the malice of my countrymen. You also know that I have suppressed nothing which might tend to your advantage, nor neglected any opportunity of communicating to you either public or private instruction. My testimony, both to the Jews and the Greeks, has been constantly the same, inculcating upon them repentance towards God, and true and living faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound under the strong impulse of the Spirit of God to Jerusalem, not particularly knowing what things shall there befall me, excepting that the Holy Spirit testifies in almost every city through which I pass; assuring me, by the mouth of inspired prophets, whom I find in many christian churches, that heavy bonds, and all the distresses of captivity, are the portion which I must there expect to receive. But none of these things greatly distress me, nor do I esteem my life precious to myself, so that I may but faithfully and joyfully finish my course as a christian and an apostle, and fulfil my ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the truth and importance of the gospel of the grace of God. Our intercourse in this world must now come to an end; for I know assuredly, that all of you among whom I have so abundantly and successfully laboured shall see my face no more; for if I should ever return to these parts of the world again, it is particularly intimated to me that I shall no more come to Ephesus. I therefore call upon you to receive and bear witness to my solemn declaration, that if any of you, or of the people under your care, perish, I am clear from the blood of all men. For this is well known to every one present, that I have never, in compliance to any one's prejudices, shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Therefore, my brethren, pay the most diligent regard both to yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath ordained you bishops, to feed the church of God which he has redeemed with his own blood, even the blood of that exalted person who was the true Immanuel, God with us. For the spirit of prophecy hath informed me, that soon after my thus taking leave of the Asiatic churches, grievous wolves will enter among you, not sparing the flock, but perverting the people from the purity and liberty of the gospel, that they may accomplish their own unhallowed projects of worldly aggrandizement. What is most distressing of all to consider, some among your own selves will be found to act this wretched part, and thus bring upon their heads eternal destruction. Watch, therefore, with all diligence and care, remembering that I for three years resided among you, and that therefore the account you have to give, if the intent of my labours be frustrated, will be inconceivably awful. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, as your everlasting keeper, and to his precious word, as your infallible guide; well knowing that he is able to build you up in your most holy faith, and to give you

an inheritance among the saints and angels above. I have coveted no man's silver or gold, or costly apparel; but, on the contrary, have laboured at the occupation of a tent-maker, that I might thus supply my own necessities, and assist towards the support of them that are with me. I have set you an example, that, labouring as I have done, you ought to assist the needy and infirm, and carefully remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, who observed, in conversation with his disciples, that it is happier to give than to receive. Having thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed most fervently with them, while they wept upon him and kissed him, being especially sorry that they should see his face no more.

The voyage of Paul from Miletus to Jerusalem was not destitute of interesting events. At Tyre, which was formerly the most mercantile city in the world, but now much declined, they met with certain disciples, who informed Paul, by the inspiration of the Spirit, that if he tendered his own liberty and safety, he should not go up to Jerusalem. These brethren, with their wives and children, accompanied the apostle to the shore, where they kneeled down and prayed, and thus took a pious and affectionate farewell. Philip, the evangelist, whom they visited at Cæsarea, and whom we have already mentioned as the instrument of God in converting the Ethiopian eunuch, had four virgin daughters, who were all of them prophetesses. While the apostle and his company staid with him, the prophet Agabus, who had predicted the famine which happened in the time of Claudius Cæsar, came down from Judea to Cæsarea. This man, in the presence of many disciples, took up Paul's girdle; and, binding his own hands and feet, said, "Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and deliver him a prisoner into the hands of the Gentiles." The brethren, hearing these things, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered with the greatest tenderness and firmness of spirit, "What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" Christ, and from the regard which I feel for his ever-blessed gospel. When they found that his mind was thus determined, they ceased to entreat him any further, but resigned him into the hands of a wise and gracious providence, saying, "The will of the Lord be done." From Cæsarea they proceeded to Jerusalem, attended by several Cæsarean brethren, and took up their lodging at the house of one Mnason, an old disciple.

So blind are we to the contingencies of human life, that the very means from which we expect peace and safety, not unfrequently produce the most dangerous or even fatal results. The brethren at Jerusalem, anxious for the preservation of Paul, and for the removal of those prejudices which many of the Jewish

believers had entertained against him as an enemy of the law, advised him to unite with four men of their acquaintance in the performance of a vow, observing, at the same time, that they had already issued such orders as must effectually secure the liberty of the Gentiles. He acquiesced in this proposal; and the next day, after being legally purified, presented himself in the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until an offering should be sacrificed for every one of them, according to the institutions of Moses. The Jews of Asia, who had witnessed the success of Paul's ministry, were exceedingly incensed against him, especially because he had turned to the Gentiles. When, therefore, they saw the apostle in the temple, they raised a violent commotion among the people, and would have put him to immediate death, if Claudius Lysias, the tribune who commanded in the fort Antonia, had not collected a band of soldiers, rescued him from their violence, and safely conveyed him to that castle.

When Paul had arrived at the stair-case of the castle, he requested of the tribune that he might be permitted to speak to him; who, finding that he spoke to him in Greek, inquired of him if he were not that Egyptian who, some little time before, had made an uproar, and led into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers. Josephus relates the history of this impostor, but increases the numbers of his followers to thirty thousand men. He informs us, that an Egyptian magician, who pretended to be a prophet, had collected a body of thirty thousand men, whom he conducted, by way of the wilderness, to mount Olivet; whence he proposed to proceed to Jerusalem, drive out the Roman garrison, take possession of the city, and make use of his followers for guards to secure himself against opposition. Felix, knowing that delay would be attended with danger, assembled his legions, and a body of Jews; and, advancing against him, totally defeated him, slew great numbers of his people, took many prisoners, and dispersed the rest. The Egyptian and some of his friends sought their safety in flight.

When the apostle had satisfied Claudius Lysias, that so far from being that Egyptian, he was a native of Tarsus in Cilicia, he freely permitted him to speak to the people. He then addressed them in a speech of some length, to which they gave the greater attention, because he used that dialect of the Syriac which was spoken in Judea, and therefore called Hebrew. He began with recounting some of the transactions of his life before he was acquainted with the gospel of Christ, related the history of his conversion, and was proceeding to speak of his being sent among the Gentiles, when their fury burst through all restraint, and they drowned his voice with their clamorous demands of vengeance. The tribune, who probably did not well understand what was the purport of Paul's defence, supposed

from the outcries of the Jews, that he must have been some atrocious malefactor, and therefore commanded that his confession should be extorted by scourging. Paul, however, claiming the privileges of a Roman citizen, escaped this cruel and ignominious treatment; and, by passing the night in the fortress, found there an asylum from the rage of his countrymen.

As the tribune was desirous of knowing the true ground on which Paul was thus violently accused by the Jews, he requested them the next day to call the sanhedrim together, and to examine him before that learned body. In the course of this examination, two circumstances occurred, which have been interpreted unfavourably to the integrity of the holy apostle. The first was, that when the high-priest had commanded Paul to be smitten upon the mouth, he exclaimed, "God shall smite thee, thou whited wall; for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and commandest me to be smitten contrary to the law?" and that when he was charged with hereby reviling God's high-priest, he denied knowing that the person whom he thus severely reprov'd sustained any such a character. But here let it be remarked, 1. That as the council were called together on a very short notice, it is by no means certain that the high-priest was invested with the ensigns of his office, he might appear only as a common member of the sanhedrim; and Paul, who had not been much at Jerusalem for many years, might not know him sufficiently to recollect his features. 2. The exclamation of the high-priest was not a legal sentence, but a tumultuous outcry; so that the apostle, who, in consequence of addressing his speech to the whole body, might have turned his face in another direction, would be really uncertain from whom it proceeded. His styling him a judge by no means contradicts this, since all the sanhedrim sat as judges, though only the high-priest could lay claim to any high power of divine original. 3. Paul seems to have spoken by the prophetic Spirit of God; for, about five years after, Ananias miserably perished, being slain in a tumult, after in vain endeavouring to conceal himself in an old aqueduct. The apostle has also been charged with duplicity, in laying claim to the title of a Pharisee after having so long embraced the christian religion. But here let it be observed, that the contest between the Pharisees and the Sadducees having been now for many years conducted with great rancour, all such as held the doctrine of the resurrection were considered, in a looser sense, as taking the side of the Pharisees; and that the christians, who were yet considered as a Jewish sect, might be, with great propriety, referred to that division of the nation as being the firmest believers in a resurrection to come. Paul might, therefore, very truly say, that as he had been educated a Pharisee, so he had never forsaken the most essential and characteristic

principle of that sect. Let it also be remembered, that the apostles had a positive promise, that whenever they were examined before kings and rulers, the Holy Spirit of God would instruct them how to speak ; it is therefore irreverent to imagine that Paul was permitted to lie and dissemble upon this solemn occasion.

The council having fallen into a violent confusion, Claudius Lysias forcibly took away Paul to the castle, being apprehensive lest he should have been murdered in the tumult. In the following night, the Lord Jesus appeared to him in a vision, and exhorted him not to give way to fear, since he should be safely conveyed to Rome, and there deliver an important testimony to the truth of the gospel. In the mean time, about forty of the Jews formed a plot for his destruction, engaging under a solemn oath neither to eat nor drink till they had accomplished their purpose. Their rulers concurred with them in their project ; and, in order to afford them a favourable opportunity, promised that they would request the favour of a further examination. The conspiracy was, however, discovered by means of Paul's nephew ; and he was sent by the tribune to Caesarea under a sufficient guard, with a very candid letter from the tribune to the governor Felix.

After five days' confinement in Herod's judgment-hall, Ananias, the high-priest, came down from Jerusalem, together with the elders, and a certain orator named Tertullus, who was employed to conduct the prosecution. This orator began with flattering Felix on the ground of his excellent government, though his conduct, as a magistrate, was detested by the whole Jewish nation. He then charged the apostle with being a mover of sedition, and insinuated that Claudius Lysias had acted very tyrannically in sending an armed force to rescue him from their hands. Paul, when permitted to speak, asserted the purity of his intentions, and the integrity of his conduct ; and challenged the most bitter of his enemies to come forward and substantiate the charges which they had brought against him. Felix, having heard both sides, deferred the conclusion of the trial till Claudius Lysias should come down and give him further information ; and in the mean time, commanded that Paul's confinement should be made as easy as possible.

Truth and innocence communicate a greatness to the mind which the pomp of power and the pride of riches can but awkwardly imitate. Paul, the prisoner, was happy in his chains, knowing that the God in whose cause he suffered was able to succour and deliver him. Felix, on the contrary, having, from motives of curiosity, admitted the apostle to a free conversation with him, was so struck by his reasoning concerning righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, that he trembled, and requested to defer the further consideration of these subjects. When we shall hereafter have occasion to describe the charac-

ter of Felix, the suitableness of these reproofs, and the considerations which added to their force, will be more clearly seen. Even in the instance of his conduct towards Paul, he practised mean and detestable arts, hoping that money would be given him in order to procure his discharge. At length, after a suspense of two years, at the expiration of his government, he left the apostle in bonds, in order to confer some obligation upon the Jews.

When Festus, the successor of Felix, was come into the province of Judea, in the sixtieth year of the christian era, he went up, three days after taking possession of his government, from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. Then the high-priest, and several other persons of the chief rank among the Jews, appeared before him with an accusation against Paul; and earnestly entreated that he would not, as they pretended Lysias and Felix had done, obstruct the course of public justice against one whom they knew to be so notorious an offender. Begging it as the only favour they desired against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem to be judged there, forming a scheme, at the same time, in their own secret purposes, of laying an ambush of desperate wretches for him, who they knew would readily undertake to intercept his journey, and to kill him by the way. But Festus prudently answered, as God inclined his heart, that as he had business of another kind to employ him while he continued at Jerusalem, he thought it best Paul should be kept awhile longer at Cæsarea, and that he himself would shortly set out for that place. Therefore, said he, Let those of you who are best able to manage the prosecution, and who can most conveniently undertake the journey, go down along with me; and if there be any thing criminal in this man, for which he should be punished by the Roman laws, let them accuse him in my hearing. And thus, having continued among them more than ten days, he went down to Cæsarea; and several of the Jews attended him, as being determined to lose no time, but to prosecute the affair in the most strenuous manner. The next day, sitting down on the tribunal, he commanded Paul to be brought before him. When he appeared, the Jews who came down from Jerusalem presented themselves in a numerous company, and stood round about him, bringing many heavy accusations against Paul, like those which Tertullus had formerly advanced before Felix, which, nevertheless, it was evident that they were not by any means able to prove by proper witnesses. Paul, therefore, while he answered for himself, insisted on his innocence, and said, Whatever my accusers take upon them to allege against me, I aver, that neither against the law of the Jews, to which I was expressing my regard at the very time I was seized; nor against the temple, to which I came with a design to worship there; nor against Cæsar, to whom I always have behaved as a peaceable subject; have I

committed any offence at all. I openly deny their charge in every branch of it, and challenge them to make it out by proper evidence in any instance or in any degree. But Festus, willing to ingratiate himself with the Jews by so popular an action at the beginning of his government, answered Paul and said, I am a stranger, in a great measure, to the questions in debate among you, which the Jewish council must, no doubt, understand much better; wilt thou, therefore, go up to Jerusalem when I return thither, and there be judged before me in their presence concerning these things? that so the persons who were eye-witnesses may be more easily produced, that I may have the sanction of the sanhedrim's advice in the sentence I pass in a cause which has given so great an alarm, and which is apprehended to be of such public importance. But Paul, apprehensive of the attempt which might be made upon his life in his journey, or in the city itself, said, I am standing at Cæsar's tribunal, where, as a Roman citizen, I ought to be judged; and I insist upon the privilege of having my cause decided there. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as thou, O Festus, very well knowest, and must have perceived clearly by what has this day been examined before thee. For if, indeed, I have done wrong to any, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I pretend not that there is any thing so sacred in my character as to exempt me from human jurisdiction; and, in that case, I refuse not to die, nor do I expect or desire any favour; but what I insist upon is strict and impartial justice, equally due to all mankind; and if, as I know in my conscience, and as thou hast from the course of this trial the greatest reason to believe, there is nothing but malice and falsehood in these things of which these mine enemies accuse me, no man can justly give me up to them merely to gratify their prejudice and cruelty. And since it is an affair of so great importance, in which, I have reason to believe, my life is concerned, I must insist upon the privilege which the laws of Rome give me, and appeal unto the hearing of Cæsar himself, before whom I doubt not but I shall be able to evince the justice of my cause.

Then Festus, having spoken for a while in private with the chief persons of the Roman army and state about him, who constituted a kind of council, called in the prisoner again, and answered him, "Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go." For how desirous soever I am to oblige the people of my province, I will never allow myself, upon any occasion, to violate the privileges of a Roman citizen; I will therefore give proper order, as soon as possible, for conveying thee to Rome, that thou mayest there be presented before the emperor himself. In the mean time, Paul was remanded to his confinement, and his accusers returned to Jerusalem a second time, with the mortification of not having been able to accomplish their purpose against him.

While Paul continued in confinement, king Agrippa, son of that Herod Agrippa whose melancholy death was recorded in the last chapter, came to Cæsarea on a visit to Festus; and having learnt from him some particulars concerning Paul, expressed a desire to give him a public hearing. Such a hearing being procured, Agrippa said unto Paul, when he stood before him, and Festus, and that great assembly of nobility and gentry which was met at his examination, It is now permitted unto thee to speak for thyself; do it therefore with freedom, and be assured that all due regard shall be paid to what thou hast to offer on this occasion. Then Paul, stretching forth his hand in a graceful and respectful manner, addressed himself to the splendid audience before which he stood, and made his defence in terms like these: O king Agrippa, I esteem myself peculiarly happy that I am this day called to make my defence before thee concerning all these things of which I am accused by the Jews; especially as I know that thou art accurately acquainted with all things that relate to the customs which prevail, and the questions which are in debate among the Jews, to some of which my cause and discourse will refer. Wherefore, I humbly entreat thee that thou wilt hear me with patience and indulgence, since it is necessary for me to enlarge circumstantially upon some important particulars which cannot be justly represented in a few words. I will therefore begin with observing, that the manner of my life from my youth, which, from the beginning of that age, was spent among those of my own nation at Jerusalem, is well known to all the Jews there, who were acquainted with me from the first of my setting out in the world, and indeed from the very time of my entrance upon a course of liberal education under that celebrated master Gamaliel; and if they would candidly testify what they knew to be true, they would join with me in assuring you that I lived a Pharisee, according to the rules observed by that which you well know to be the strictest sect of our religion, in every thing relating, not only to the written law of God, but likewise to the traditions of the fathers. And now I stand in judgment in the midst of this assembly, not for any crime that I have committed, but indeed for the hope of that promise of a resurrection to eternal life and happiness by means of the Messiah, which, in times past, was made by God unto our fathers. To the accomplishment of which important promise all the known remainders of our twelve tribes, in one part of the world or another, hope to attain; and, by the expectation which they have of it, are animated in all their labours and sufferings for religion, while they are worshipping continually night and day in the stated and constant performance of their morning and evening devotions, whether in the temple, or in other places in which they present their prayers; concerning which hope, O king Agrippa, glorious and reasonable as it is, I may truly say I am most un-

justly and inconsistently accused by the Jews. For the doctrine I preach contains the fullest assurance and demonstration of a resurrection that ever was given to the world, and I am persuaded it is this that provokes those of my enemies who disbelieve it to prosecute me with so much malice. But can there indeed be any evil in maintaining this doctrine myself, and endeavouring to convince others of it? Permit me, O my honoured auditors, to appeal to you and say, why should it be judged an incredible thing by any of you that God, a being of infinite perfections, and the original author of the human frame, should raise the dead, and continue their existence in a future state? Will not his almighty power enable him to do it? and will not the honour of his moral attributes be hereby illustrated and vindicated? And if it be credible, is it not important enough to deserve the most attentive regard? I am confident, sirs, you would all have thought it so, had you passed through such extraordinary scenes as occasioned a change in my views and conduct, which, therefore, I will plainly and fully open to this august assembly. I once indeed thought with myself that I ought in conscience to do many things most contrary to the name and destructive to the interest of Jesus the Nazarene, whom, under that title, I most impiously derided, esteeming all his pretences to be the Messiah most false and contemptible. I determined, therefore, to exert all my power against those who owned him under that character. Which accordingly I did, particularly in Jerusalem, where many now living were witnesses of my wild rage; and cannot but remember how I shut up many of the saints in prisons, having received authority from the chief priests to do it; and how, when some of them were killed, I gave my vote against them, and did all I could to animate both the rulers and the people to cut them off from the face of the earth. And, frequently punishing them in all the synagogues wherever I could meet with them, I compelled them, if I could possibly effect it, to blaspheme the name of Jesus Christ, which I now so highly revere, and openly to renounce all dependance upon him. And, being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even to these foreign cities, to which some of them had fled, hunting out the poor refugees, and endeavouring to drive them not only out of their country, but out of the world. In this view, as I was going to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests, to execute this cruel purpose against all the christians I could find there, at mid-day, when I was in the way thither, and was drawing near the end of my journey, I solemnly declare before thee, O king Agrippa, and before this assembly, as in the presence of God, I saw a great and most astonishing light from heaven, exceeding the splendour of the sun, shining about me, and those who travelled with me. And when we were all fallen down to the earth, as if we had been struck with lightning, I

very distinctly heard a voice speaking to me, and saying, in the Hebrew language, Saul, Saul, why dost thou persecute me? It is hard for thee to attempt an opposition to me, and madly to presume to kick against the goads. And I said in astonishment, Who art thou, Lord? and which way have I persecuted thee? And who can judge of my surprise, when he who appeared to me in this divine lustre and glory said, I am Jesus the Nazarene, whom thou persecutest by the opposition thou art making to my cause and interest. But though, by engaging in this desperate attempt, thou hast forfeited thy life, I am determined graciously to spare it, and to use thee hereafter as the instrument of my glory; arise, therefore, and stand upon thy feet; for to this purpose I have, in this extraordinary manner, appeared unto thee, even to ordain thee a minister of my gospel, and a witness both of the things thou hast now seen, and of those in which I will hereafter appear unto thee. And thou shalt experience my gracious presence with thee, delivering thee from the rage and malice of the Jewish people, and also from the dangers thou shalt encounter with among the Gentiles, to whom I now send thee; that I may make thee instrumental, by the preaching of my gospel, to open their eyes which are now in a miserable state of blindness, that they may turn from that spiritual darkness in which they are now involved, to the light of divine knowledge and holiness, and from the power of Satan, to which they are now in a wretched subjection, unto the love and service of God; that so they may receive the free and full forgiveness of their sins, be they ever so many, or ever so aggravated; and may obtain an inheritance among them that are sanctified, through that faith which is in me. From that ever-memorable time, O king Agrippa, through the grace of God subduing my heart, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision with which he was pleased thus miraculously to favour me; but I immediately engaged with all the united powers of my soul in the service of that divine master against whose interest and kingdom I had hitherto been acting; openly declared, first to them at Damascus, where I was going when this vision happened, and afterwards to those at Jerusalem, and through all the country of Judea, and then to all the Gentiles wherever I came in my various and wide-extended travels from one country to another, that they should repent of their sins and turn to God with their whole hearts, performing deeds worthy of that repentance which they profess, and without which the sincerity of it can never be approved in his sight. Now let any one judge whether for this I should be treated as a criminal worthy of death, or whether indeed I have deserved these bonds. Yet, on account of these things, and for no other cause, the Jews, who have the same inveteracy against the gospel of Jesus that I once had, seizing me in the temple some time ago, attempted, in a tumultuous manner, to have killed me

with their own hands. And since I was rescued at first by Lysias the tribune, they have repeated the attempt again and again, contriving to assassinate me in my way to the council, before which they urged that I might again be brought. I impute it, therefore, to an extraordinary providence that I am yet alive; and publicly declare it with all thankfulness, that it is by having obtained help from God that I continue until this day; and I endeavour to employ my life to the purposes for which it is prolonged, resolutely and courageously testifying both to small and great, as to what is really a matter of the greatest concern, both to the meanest and the most exalted of mankind, the way of salvation by Christ Jesus my Lord: thereby, indeed, in effect, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses have declared should be; that is, in short, that the Messiah, having suffered, and being of the first of those who rose from the dead to an immortal life, should discover light, and be the means of revealing knowledge and happiness both to the people of the Jews and also to the Gentiles; that by following his instructions, and obeying his commands, they also might at length obtain a glorious resurrection, and a life of everlasting felicity in the heavenly world.

And as he was thus making his defence, Festus, astonished to hear him represent this despised gospel of Jesus of Nazareth as a matter of such high and universal concern, and thinking the vision he had related as introductory to that assertion quite an incredible story, said with a loud voice, which reached the whole auditory, Paul, thou art distracted; much study of these ancient records, on which thou layest so great a stress, drives thee to madness, or thou wouldest never talk of such facts as these, or expect to be credited in such wild assertions. But this invidious imputation was so far from provoking Paul to any indecency, that, with a perfect command of himself, he calmly and gravely replied, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but I utter the words of truth and sobriety, which will bear the test of the severest examination, and I desire nothing more than that they may be brought to it. For the king himself knoweth of these things, and is no stranger to them, to whom also I speak with freedom, emboldened by his permission, and assured of his character; for I am persuaded he has better and more favourable thoughts of what I have been saying, as none of these things are entirely hidden from him; for this is not an affair that was transacted in a corner; the death of Jesus, the preaching of his gospel, my rage against it, and sudden conversion to it, were all open and notorious facts, of the truth of which thousands had opportunity of being certainly and thoroughly informed; and I am satisfied the king has often heard of them. "O king Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?" Yes, I know that thou believest them to have been written by a divine inspiration, and art aware of the weight of those arguments which

are derived from the authority of their testimony. Then Agrippa said to Paul, Thou hast given such an account of these matters, that thou almost persuadest me to become a christian myself, instead of condemning thee under that character. And Paul, powerfully struck with so remarkable an acknowledgment, said, with great fervency of spirit, and yet with perfect decency, O king, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all them that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." My afflictions I would bear myself till providence shall release me from them; but my satisfaction in the truth of the gospel is so entire, and the consolations I experience from it are so solid and noble, that I can wish nothing better to this illustrious audience, than that they had the same faith in it as I now enjoy. And as he said this, that the impression Paul began to make upon the court might reach no further, the king arose, and Festus the governor, and Bernice, and those that sat with them upon the bench. And when they had retired to the governor's apartment, they agreed among themselves that this man, whether his reasonings were conclusive or not, had done nothing worthy of death nor imprisonment, and therefore might have been immediately set at liberty, if he had not, by appealing to Cæsar, rendered it necessary that he should be conveyed to the imperial tribunal at Rome.

As it was determined that Paul and his company should sail into Italy, they delivered him and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan cohort, whose name was Julius. And, going on board a ship of Adramyttium, a city of Mysia, not far from Pergamos, they weighed anchor, intending to sail by the coast of the Lesser Asia, Aristarchus, a Macedonian, a christian brother, of the city of Thessalonica, being with them. Steering their course northward from Cæsarea, the next day they reached Sidon, a celebrated city on the Phœnician shore; and Julius, the centurion, treating Paul with great humanity, permitted him to go to his friends there, whom he had not been able to visit in his way to Jerusalem; and to enjoy the benefit of their care, towards rendering his voyage as agreeable as they could, as well as affording him some present refreshment. And, weighing anchor from thence, they sailed under the island of Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand; because the winds were in the south-west quarter, and so were contrary to them, and consequently prevented their taking the more direct course, which they might otherwise have done by sailing more to the west, and leaving Cyprus to the north. And, sailing through the sea which lies over against Cilicia and Pamphylia, without an opportunity of calling on any of their friends at Tarsus, Attalia, Perga, or Antioch in Pisidia, where Paul had once and again made so delightful a progress, they came to the port of Myra, a city of Lycia, whose celebrated promontory they could

desery at a considerable distance. There the centurion, finding a ship of Alexandria that was bound for Italy, put them on board it, and embarked with it. When they had sailed slowly for several days, by Rhodes and several other islands which lay near the Carian shore, and were hardly got over against the point of Cnidus, a celebrated port of Caria, the wind not permitting them to make greater despatch, they steered to the south, and sailed under Crete, over against the promontory of Salmone, on the eastern coast of that island; and, passing it with difficulty, when they had made the Cape, they came to a certain place called the Fair Havens, the most considerable port of that part of Crete. And as much time was spent in making this little way, and the season of the year was so far advanced that sailing was now hazardous, because the fast of expiation was now over, and consequently winter was coming on apace, Paul spake to those who had the chief direction of the voyage, exhorted them not to put out to sea, and forewarned them that the prosecution of their present scheme would be attended with the loss of much property and the danger of their lives. Julius, however, the centurion, in whose breast the determination of the affair lay, paid greater regard in this instance to the opinion of the pilot and the master of the vessel, than to those things which were spoken by Paul, imagining, notwithstanding the esteem he had for him in other respects, that these were more competent judges in the business of navigation. As the haven, notwithstanding its agreeable name, was not commodious to winter in, the greater part of the company advised to set sail from thence, if they might possibly reach to Phenice, which is a kind of double haven, on the south coast of Crete, looking from the south-west to the north-west, where, in consequence of a jutting point of land which defended it, they hoped, on getting into the upper part of it, to lie secure from almost any wind that could blow. As the weather, in a little time, became more favourable, and the south wind blew gently, which would prevent her driving out to sea, supposing they were now secure of their purpose, and by the help of a side wind might coast along the island, they weighed anchor from the fair havens, and sailed on close to the shore of Crete. But not long after they had put to sea, the ship was in great danger, as on a sudden there arose against it a very tempestuous whirling kind of wind, which, by the mariners in this sea, is called Euroclydon, or, in modern language, a Levanter, which often shifts the quarter from whence it blows; and accordingly, in this case, was first east, and by north, and afterwards several degrees southward of the east. And as the ship was violently hurried away by the force of it, and was not able to bear up against the wind, which was so very boisterous that, as the seamen used to speak, she could not look the storm in the face, they gave her up to the wind, and were driven before it. And, running under a certain

island, called *Clauda*, a little to the south of the western coast of *Crete*, the violence of the storm was such, that, with the utmost difficulty, they were hardly able to make themselves masters of the boat, which they were willing to preserve from being staved, that it might be of use in an exigency. When they had drawn up the boat, they used all the helps they could to make the vessel able to ride out the storm, under-girding the ship, to keep it from bulging; and fearing, as the wind varied more to the north, and blew towards *Africa*, lest they should fall upon the greater or lesser *Syrtis*, those quick-sands on the African shore so famous for the destruction of mariners and vessels, they struck sail, that so their progress might be slower, hoping that some favourable weather might come for their relief, and so were driven before the wind. As they were exceedingly tossed by the storm, and there was danger of the vessel's foundering, the next day they lightened the ship, by heaving overboard the cargo with which she was laden. On the third day, the tempest was so great, that all the passengers, as well as mariners, were employed; and they cast out the very tackling of the ship, which, in such circumstances, they must have been very desirous of preserving. Now as they knew not where the wind had driven them, for neither sun nor stars appeared for several days, and still the sea ran high, and no small tempest pressed upon them, all the little remainder of hope, that they might be delivered from their danger, was, in a manner, taken away from them, and the whole company expected nothing but that the vessel would certainly be lost, and every hand on board perish. And when, in all this time, they had no heart to think of taking any regular refreshment, so that there was great want of food, and their distress was such that they were quite dispirited, Paul, standing up in the midst of them, exhorted them to be of good courage; for that he had seen the vision of an angel of that God to whom he belonged, who informed him that all their lives should be preserved, and that he should be safely brought before the tribunal of *Cæsar*, but they must first be shipwrecked upon a certain island.

When the fourteenth night was come, as they were tossed up and down the *Adriatic sea*, the mariners suspected about midnight that they drew near to some island; and sounding the depth of the water, they found it twenty fathoms; and having gone a little way from thence, they sounded again, and found it only fifteen fathoms, which decrease of their soundings convinced them that this apprehension was just. And therefore, fearing lest they should fall upon some rocky shore, where there might not be depth of water sufficient to keep the vessel from striking, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and heartily wished for day-break to discover their situation. But when the mariners perceived the danger to be so extreme, they endeavoured to flee out of the ship, and to provide for their own

safety by making to the shore; and when, to compass their design, they had let down the boat into the sea, and were just going into it, under a pretence that they were about to carry out anchors from the ship-head to make the vessel more secure by dropping them at a distance, Paul, who was probably, by the Spirit, informed of their designs, declared to the centurion and the soldiers, that unless these abided in the ship they could not be saved. Then the soldiers, who had learned from their commander to pay a deference to what Paul said, that the success of this intended fraud might be effectually prevented, cut off the cords by which it was fastened to the side of the ship, and let it fall off into the sea before any of the mariners were got into it. When the day was coming on, Paul revived their spirits, exhorting them to take meat, and assuring them that not one of their number would perish. The historian here remarks, that there were no fewer than two hundred and seventy-six persons on board. After they had done their meal, being satisfied with food, they once more lightened the ship; and, having been told by Paul that they should run upon some island, they threw away the very stores they had on board, and cast out the remainder of their corn into the sea. And when it was day, they had the shore before them, but did not know the land, and still were at a loss what course to take; but they perceived a certain creek, having a level shore convenient for landing, into which they were minded, if they were able, to have thrust the ship. And, with this view, when they had weighed the anchors, they committed the ship to the sea, and tried to stand in for the creek; at the same time loosing the rudder-bands, that they might reach the land with the greater safety; and, hoisting up the main-sail to the wind, which seemed to set right for their purpose, they made for the shore. But, falling on a place which was a neck of land, where two seas met, such was the violence of the current, that they ran the ship aground; and the fore part, which struck upon the sand, stuck fast, and remained immovable, while the hinder part was broken to pieces by the force of the waves. In this critical juncture, as there were many prisoners aboard who were to be conveyed in custody to Rome, there was a most unjust and cruel purpose formed against them; and the counsel of the soldiers was, that they should kill the prisoners, lest any one should take this opportunity to swim away, and should escape out of their hands, of which they did not care to run the hazard, as they well knew how severe the Roman law was in such cases, where there was any room to suspect the guards of connivance or negligence. But the centurion, being desirous to save so worthy and considerable a person as Paul, hindered them from executing their purpose, and commanded those that could swim to throw themselves out first into the sea, and get away to land. And as for the remainder, some adventured

themselves upon planks, with which the wreck supplied them; and others, upon some of the things which they found means to get out of the ship; and so, through the care of divine providence, it came to pass, according to the prediction of Paul, that they all got safe to land, and there was not a single life lost.

Paul and the rest of the ship's company, having escaped the danger of the shipwreck, and got safe on shore, soon discovered that the island on which they were cast was called Melita, since denominated Malta. The natives of the place, though esteemed barbarians by the more polished inhabitants of Greece and Rome, treated the unhappy strangers with no little kindness; for, having kindled a fire, they brought them all to it, because of the present rain which had followed the storm, and because of the cold with which they were almost ready to perish. A very remarkable circumstance now took place; for as Paul was gathering a bundle of sticks, and laying them on the fire, a viper, which had lain concealed among the wood, coming out of the heat, upon feeling the warmth of the fire, fastened upon his hand and bit it. The natives, who saw this happen, supposed that he had been a murderer pursued by divine providence with the reward of his crimes, though he had been so successful as to escape from human justice and the danger of the sea. But as the miraculous power of Christ immediately interposed to heal him, he, without any manner of confusion, shook off the fierce animal into the fire, suffered no evil, and took no further notice of what had happened. For a while the spectators gazed upon him with earnestness, expecting, in some way or other, to witness the effects of the poison; but, at length, perceiving that he was perfectly uninjured, they changed their detestation of him into a criminal veneration, and declared him to be a god descended from the mansions of bliss. In the neighbourhood of that place where Paul's company landed, was the estate of the chief magistrate Publius, who had given them a very hospitable reception. His hospitality was amply repaid; for his father, being ill of a fever and bloody flux, was restored through the prayers of Paul, and the imposition of his hands. The fame of this miracle spread far; numbers came and were healed; and the gratitude of the inhabitants was so far excited, that when the apostle and his companions proceeded on their voyage, they furnished them with a rich supply of every kind of provisions.

Having remained three months on shore, they set sail for Rome in a ship of Alexandria, whose sign was Castor and Pollux, fictitious deities who are represented by the constellation of the twins, and whose figure was placed in the head of the vessel, and expected to procure them protection from nautical accidents. Not long after they had left Malta, they made the island of Sicily; and, having arrived at Syracuse, the most

considerable city of that island, they continued there three days. From thence they coasted round the eastern shore of Sicily, and came over against the city and promontory of Rhegium, in the southernmost part of Italy, from which, as the name of that place implies, it was supposed that the island of Sicily was broken off. After lying by one day, being favoured with a southerly gale, they pursued their voyage, and came in two days to Puteoli, a noted town for trade, which lay not far from Naples, and was very famous for its hot baths. Here they staid seven days, in order to enjoy the company of some christian brethren, and proceeded the rest of their way by land to Rome. At Appii-forum they were met by the Roman brethren, by whose conversation Paul was greatly encouraged, as he found that Christ was not destitute of zealous and faithful followers in that great and rich metropolis to which he was now hastening.

When they arrived at Rome, the centurion Julius, who, as we had occasion to observe, had all along treated Paul with considerable kindness, delivered the prisoners to the commander of the Prætorian guard; but Paul, probably in consequence of the high character which the centurion had given him, was suffered to dwell by himself with a soldier that kept him. Thus did the providence of God work for him, that even his imprisonment might not be attended with the total loss of liberty, nor render him incapable of promoting the cause of the Redeemer.

When three days were elapsed, Paul, who ardently longed for the salvation of his countrymen, sent messages of invitation to the leading persons among the Jews; and, when they were collected together, said to them in the language of affection and firmness, "Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people, or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar, not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause, therefore, have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you; because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain." They said in reply, "We neither received letters out of Judea concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. But we desired to hear of thee what thou thinkest; for as concerning this sect, we know that every where it is spoken against." With this intention, before they separated they appointed a future day, when they should again assemble at his lodging, and hear him discourse more largely about the christian religion. We are told, that on this occasion he explained the nature of the kingdom of God, and solemnly testified that it was already erected, persuading them

to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their Prince and their Saviour, and confirming his doctrine with sundry passages out of the law of Moses, and out of the writings of the prophets. In this important work he laboured from morning till evening, with various success; for while some were ready to profess their belief of the gospel, others openly declared that they retained their former incredulity. When Paul perceived the divided state of their sentiments, he dismissed them with the following solemn reproof: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing, ye shall see, and not perceive. For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known, therefore, unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." After their departure, they had much disputation among themselves; while Paul employed his time to much greater profit, in freely proclaiming the gospel of Christ to all those who visited him for instruction, which he did for two years without molestation.

Such, however, was the active zeal of this holy apostle, that he did not content himself with his daily exercise of preaching the gospel, but composed, in the time of this imprisonment, some of his most excellent and edifying epistles. These we shall now proceed to review, beginning with that which was addressed to the church of Ephesus.

He commences, as usual, by declaring his name and character, describing the persons to whom his epistle was inscribed, and pronouncing upon them his fervent benediction. [chap. i. 1, 2.] 1. He returns thanks to God, who had displayed so great love to them in calling them to be partakers in the blessings of the gospel, in consequence of his eternal purpose to glorify his grace in their sanctification and salvation, through the blood of his Son and the communication of his Spirit. [verse 3—14.]

2. He assures them of the fervency of his prayers for them, that they might have a clear knowledge of the great objects of their hope and expectation; and, from an experimental sense of the exceeding greatness of the power of God, might have a fixed regard to the supreme authority and dignity of Christ, who, by that power, is raised from the dead, and exalted to be head over all things to the church. [verse 15, to the end.]

3. To magnify the riches of divine grace, and to affect them with a more grateful sense of their obligations to it, the apostle leads them to reflect upon that wretched state of moral death in which the gospel found them; and shows them it was owing to the rich mercy and the great love of God that they were

raised in Christ from death to life, and in the whole of their salvation it was evident that they were saved by grace, and not by works or any righteousness of their own. [chap. ii. 1—10.]

4. He represents the happy change that was thus made in their condition; that they who once were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and afar off from God, were now received into his church, and had an equal right to all the privileges of it with the Jewish converts; the middle wall of partition having been broken down by Christ in favour of the believing Gentiles, who, being reconciled to God, were no more strangers, as they had been formerly, but were united in one body under Christ, the common head of all believers; who, being animated by one Spirit, and built upon the same foundation, were made an holy temple in the Lord. [verse 11 to the end.]

5. To encourage and confirm the Gentile converts in their adherence to the gospel, and recommend it more to their regard, the apostle, in the strongest terms, expresses the sense he had of the divine goodness in appointing him to be the apostle of the Gentiles, and authorizing him to preach among them the unsearchable riches of Christ; and declares how great an honour he esteemed it to be employed in making known the calling of the Gentiles to be joint-heirs with the Jews in all the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom, though he had suffered greatly for it, and was now in bonds on this account. [chap. iii. 1—12.] And then,

6. He entreats them not to be discouraged at the sufferings he underwent for his regard to the Gentiles; but rather to consider it as an honour to them, that, in the stedfastness with which he suffered, they had such a confirmation of the truth of his doctrine, and of the sincerity of his concern for their spiritual advantage, in proof of which, he closes this part of his epistle with a most affectionate and earnest prayer for their establishment in the christian faith, and their advancement in the knowledge and experience of the love of Christ, of which he speaks in the most lofty and exalted terms, as far surpassing all conception, concluding, in the warmth of his devotion, with a grand and suitable doxology. [verse 13 to the end.] And now,

The other part of this epistle, which is practical, is contained in the three remaining chapters; in which the apostle gives them several weighty exhortations and advices for the direction of their lives and manners, that they might be regular in their practice; and tells them of the christian duties that were required of them, to which the consideration of their privileges should engage them, pointing out to them the means and motives that were proper to promote the observance of them; and urging the great care and caution they should use to behave suitably to the profession which they made, and to the character which they bore. And here,

1. The apostle, from the consideration of his own sufferings, as well as of the many important respects in which all true christians are united, after a general exhortation to them to walk worthy of the excellency of their calling, particularly urges them to mutual forbearance and unity of Spirit, as being joined together in one church, and called to partake of the same privileges in Christ without distinction of either Jew or Gentile: and as a powerful inducement to their cultivating such a disposition, he represents the glorious foundation which Christ, as the great head of the church, has laid for it, in the variety of gifts and graces he has bestowed, and in the sacred offices he has appointed; which, being all derived from the same Spirit, and designed for the same end, were all to be employed for the advancement of his interest and kingdom, and for the better edification of the whole church, till, in the unity of the faith, they should grow up into one perfect body under Christ their head; and so must have a tendency to promote their present union, and to inspire them with the most endearing affection to each other. [chap. iv. 1—16.]

2. He presses them, as having learned Christ, and been enlightened by the gospel, to show the difference there was between them and the unconverted Gentiles, by an unspotted purity and holiness of behaviour, and not to walk like those from whom they were so happily distinguished by knowledge and grace; and cautions them in particular against lying, excess of anger, and stealing, and that corrupt communication to which the heathens were notoriously addicted, but which were inconsistent with the character of christians, and grievous to the Holy Spirit. [verse 17—30.]

3. He further cautions them against all malice, and urges them to mutual love and readiness to forgive, in consideration of the divine compassions manifested in the gospel; and then pursues his exhortations to abstain from all inordinate desires, and from all manner of uncleanness and immodesty, as well in words as actions, in which, however, they had shamefully indulged themselves in the darkness of heathenism; the light of christianity displayed them in such odious colours, as plainly showed them to be unbecoming their profession, and no way reconcilable with the obligation they were under to walk as children of the light. [verse 31 to the end, and chap. v. 1—14.]

4. He recommends it to them, in consideration of their character and circumstances, to be prudent and circumspect in their whole conversation, as those who were instructed in the will of God; and not to seek for pleasure in a dissolute excess, but, guarding against all intemperance, to make it the delightful business of their lives to express their gratitude to God, under the influences of his Spirit, by praising him for all his mercies; and while they were thus careful of their duty to God, he also urges them not to be negligent of the duties which they

owed to one another as members of society, but to behave with due submission to each other in their several stations. [verse 15—21.] And then,

5. Having hinted at the relative duties of society in general, he descends to particulars; and, beginning with the duties of husbands and wives, he recommends it to husbands to love their wives, in imitation of the love which Christ bears to the church, and presses upon wives the correspondent duty of conjugal subjection, in imitation of the subjection which the church pays to Christ the head of it. [verse 22, to the end.] From whence he passes on to the mutual duties of children and parents, and of servants and masters, giving suitable admonitions to each, and adding proper arguments to enforce them. [chap. vi. 1—9.] And after this, for a conclusion of the whole,

6. He gives a general exhortation to them all, of whatever condition or relation in life, to prepare for a strenuous combat with their spiritual enemies, by putting on the whole armour of God, and living in the exercise of those christian graces which were necessary for their defence and safety; and having, among other things, exhorted them to fervency in prayer, he particularly recommends himself to their remembrance at the throne of grace, that he might carry on the important work in which he was engaged with freedom and fidelity, whatever he might suffer for it; and, leaving it to Tychicus, (by whom he sent this epistle,) more fully to inform them of every circumstance relating to him, he closes his epistle with an apostolical benediction, not only to themselves, but to all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. [verse 10, to the end.]

The occasion of the epistle to the Philippians is peculiarly pleasant. The brethren at Philippi, having heard of Paul's imprisonment at Rome, sent Epaphroditus, one of their most esteemed pastors, to that city, to comfort him by making known to him their love, and by supplying him with money, that he might want nothing necessary to render his confinement easy. [ch. iv. 18.] In making this present to the apostle, all the brethren of that church, no doubt, contributed according to their ability; but none more liberally, we may believe, than Lydia, who was the apostle's first convert there, and who showed such attachment to Christ, that she constrained his servants to lodge in her house all the time of their first abode at Philippi. The bishops, likewise, and deacons, showed equal forwardness with the other brethren in expressing their respect for the apostle by so seasonable a gift, as may be gathered from his mentioning them particularly in the address of his letter. This new instance of the Philippians' love to the apostle, and of their zeal for the gospel, making a deep impression on his mind, he wrote to them the letter bearing their name, in which he first of all commended their faith, and their earnest desire to contribute to the spreading of the gospel. Next, as news which he

knew would be most acceptable to the Philippians, he informed them that he had preached with great success at Rome, and that his imprisonment, instead of hindering, had furthered the gospel, by making it known even in the palace itself. Then he expressed his hopes of being soon released, in which case he promised to visit them; but, in the mean time, he would send Timothy to comfort them. Also he thanked them, in the most handsome manner, for their kind remembrance of him, and for their care in supplying his wants; telling them, at the same time, that through their liberal gift, he had every thing which his present situation required.

From the manner in which the apostle expresses himself on this occasion, it appears, that before he received the Philippians' present, he was in great want even of necessaries, which may seem strange, considering how numerous and rich the brethren at Rome must have been. But we should remember, that as Paul had not converted the Romans, he did not think himself entitled to maintenance from them; that, being a prisoner, he could not work, as in other places, for his own support; that from the churches where enemies and opposers had raised a faction against him he never would take any thing; and that the Philippians were the only church with which he communicated as concerning giving and receiving. This honour he did them, because they loved him exceedingly, had preserved his doctrine in purity, and always had behaved as sincere christians.

The excellent character of the Philippians may be understood from the manner in which this epistle was written. For while most of his letters to other churches contain reprehensions of them, either for their errors or for their bad conduct, no fault is found with any of the Philippians; but, on the contrary, this letter is entirely employed in commending them, or in giving them exhortations or encouragements to duty. For though the apostle entertained a good opinion of the Philippians, he by no means wished them to rest satisfied with their present attainments, but told them that he himself constantly endeavoured to make further progress in virtue, and ordered them all to walk by the same rule.

The affectionate and encouraging strain in which the letter to the Philippians is written, was, in part, owing to the good account which Epaphroditus, one of their pastors, had given of their behaviour. But having brought word also that the judaizing teachers were endeavouring to introduce themselves among the Philippians, the apostle judged it necessary to put them on their guard against persons whose whole business was to destroy the purity and peace of the churches. And therefore, in the third chapter it is observable, that the apostle's zeal for the truth, and his great love to the Philippians, led him to speak of these corrupters of the gospel with more bitterness

than in any of his other letters. Perhaps, also, he was directed to do so by a particular impulse of the Spirit, who judged it proper that this sharpness should be used for opening the eyes of the faithful, and making them sensible of the malignancy of the false teachers, and of the pernicious tendency of their doctrine.

As to the time when the epistle to the Philippians was written, it is generally believed to have been towards the end of the apostle's first confinement. For when he wrote it, he had good hope of being released, [chap. i. 25; ii. 24.] but did not expect to be set at liberty immediately. For, said he, [chap. ii. 19.] "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may have good courage when I know your affairs." Wherefore, since Timothy was to bring him an account of the affairs of the Philippians, the apostle certainly expected his return before he himself was released, or, at least, before he left Italy. From Heb. xiii. 23, we learn that Timothy was actually sent to Philippi; consequently we may suppose that the apostle, who was released according to his expectation, waited for Timothy's return at some place in Italy, that they might set out together for Judea. And the apostle's release happening, as is generally believed, in the spring of A. D. 62, the epistle to the Philippians may have been written in the summer or autumn of A. D. 61.

In the epistle to the Colossians, the apostle, having joined Timothy's name with his own in the inscription of the epistle, begins with expressing his thankfulness to God for calling them into his church, and giving them a share in the important blessings of the gospel; at the same time declaring the great satisfaction with which he heard of their faith and love, and assuring them of his constant prayers that they might receive larger supplies of divine wisdom and grace, to enable them to walk worthy of their high character and hopes as christians. [chap. i. 1—14.] And to make them more sensible of the excellence of this new dispensation into which they were admitted, he represents to them, in very sublime terms, the dignity of our Saviour's person, as the image of God, the creator of all things, and the head of the church, whose death God was pleased to appoint as the means of abolishing the obligation of the Mosaic law, which separated between the Jews and the Gentiles, and of reconciling sinners to himself. [verse 15—23.] From this view of the excellency of Christ's person, and of the riches of redeeming grace, the apostle takes occasion to express the cheerfulness with which he suffered in the cause of the gospel, and his earnest solicitude to fulfil his ministry among them in the most successful manner; assuring them that he felt the most tender concern both for them and the other christians in the neighbourhood, that they might be established in their adherence to the christian faith. [verse 24, to the end, chap. ii. 1—7.]

Having given these general exhortations, the apostle proceeds to caution the Colossians against suffering their minds to be corrupted from the simplicity of the gospel, either by Pagan philosophy or by Jewish tradition, reminding them of the obligation which their baptism laid them under of submitting to Christ as the only lawgiver and head of his church, who had totally abolished the ceremonial law, and discharged them from any further regard to it. [verse 8—19.] And since, upon embracing christianity, they were to consider themselves as dead with respect to any other religious profession, he shows the absurdity of being still subject to the appointments of the Mosaic law, and cautions them against those corrupt additions to christianity which some were attempting to introduce, especially by superstitions of their own devising. And, as the most effectual means for their security, he exhorts them, as they were risen with Christ, to keep their thoughts fixed on him as their Lord and life, and on that better world whither he was ascended, and to which they had the prospect of being admitted. [verse 20 to the end, chap. iii. 1—4.] From this glorious hope, the apostle presses them to guard against every degree of uncleanness, malice, covetousness, falsehood, and whatever was inconsistent with the purity of that new dispensation into which they were entered; and exhorts them to abound in the practice of meekness, forbearance, humility, and love, and to accustom themselves to those devout exercises and evangelical views which would have the most direct tendency to improve the christian temper. [verse 5—17.]

After these general precepts, the apostle proceeds to recommend to the Colossians such a care in discharging the duties correspondent to the several relations of life, as would be most honourable to their christian profession; and particularly enumerates those of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants. And to assist them in the performance of these duties, he exhorts them to be constant in prayer; and, for the credit of their religion, advises them to maintain a prudent obliging behaviour to their Gentile brethren. [verse 18, to the end, chap. iv. 1—6.]

The apostle closes his epistle with recommending to them Tychicus and Onesimus, of whom he speaks in very honourable terms, and to whom he refers them for a more particular account of the state of the church at Rome; and, having inserted salutations from Aristarchus, Epaphras, one of their ministers, (who was then with Paul,) and others, he gives directions for reading his epistle at Laodicea, addresses a solemn admonition to Archippus, and concludes with his salutation written with his own hand. [verse 7, to the end.]

Philemon, to whom the epistle was written, will be more particularly spoken of in the nineteenth chapter. That it was written from Rome about the same time with that to the Colossians

may be gathered from the following circumstances. Like the epistle to the Colossians, this was written when the apostle was in bonds, verses 1, 10, 13, 23, and when he had great hopes of obtaining his liberty, verse 22. Timothy joined Paul in both epistles. Epaphroditus, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, joined in the salutations in both. Lastly, Onesimus, the bearer of this, was one of the messengers by whom the epistle to the Colossians was sent.

Doddridge observes, that this epistle, considered as a mere human composition, is a master-piece of its kind. For if it is compared with an epistle of Pliny, supposed to have been written on a similar occasion, Lib. ix. Epis. 21, that epistle, though penned by one who was reckoned to excel in the epistolary style, and though it has undoubtedly many beauties, will be found, by persons of taste, much inferior to this animated composition of the apostle Paul.

The epistle to the Hebrews is believed to have been written after the apostle's release from his first imprisonment, and before he left Italy on his return to Asia. This epistle was probably directed to such of his Hebrew brethren as resided in Judea, where the Jewish converts were almost incessantly persecuted by their unbelieving countrymen. The manifest design of Paul in the epistle to the Hebrews, is to confirm the Jewish christians in the faith and practice of the gospel of Christ, which they might be in danger of deserting, either through the insinuations or ill treatment of their persecutors.

It was natural for the defenders of the Mosaic law to insist upon the divine authority of Moses, the distinguishing glory and majesty which attended its first promulgation by the ministry of angels, and the special privileges with which it invested those who adhered to it. In answer to all arguments and insinuations of this kind, the apostle shows,

1. That in all these several articles christianity had an infinite superiority to the law. Which topic he pursues from chapter the first to the ninth; reminding the believing Hebrews, that it was a most extraordinary favour that God had sent them a revelation by his own Son, whose glory was far superior to that of angels, [chap. i. throughout,] very naturally inferring from hence, the danger of despising Christ on account of his humiliation, which, in perfect consistence with his dominion over the world to come, was voluntarily submitted to by him for wise and important reasons; particularly to deliver us from the fear of death, and encourage the freedom of our access to God. [chap. ii. throughout.] With the same view, he further magnifies Christ as superior to Moses their great legislator; and, from the sentence passed on those who rebelled against the authority of Moses, infers the danger of despising the promises of the gospel. [chap. iii. 1—13.] And as it was natural from hence to call to mind that rest in Canaan to which the authority

wherewith Moses was invested was intended to lead them, the apostle cautions them against the sin of unbelief, as that would prevent their entering into rest; an expression which he shows to refer to a nobler state of rest than what the Jews enjoyed in Canaan, even on their most sacred days, and in their most prosperous ages. [chap. iii. 14; iv. 21.] Further enforcing this caution by awful views of the omniscience of God, and animating representations of the character of Christ as our high-priest, of whose divine appointment, gracious administration, and previous suffering, he goes on to discourse, and promises further illustrations of so important a topic. [chap. iv. 12; v. throughout.] Declaring that he would advance to sublimer truths, without dwelling upon the first principles, for the sake of those who might have apostatized from christianity, and whose case he represents as very hopeless. [chap. vi. 1—9.] And then, for the establishment and comfort of sincere believers, he sets before them the consideration of the goodness of God, and his fidelity to his sacred engagements, the performance of which is sealed by the entrance of Christ into heaven as our forerunner. [chap. vi. 9, to the end.] Further, to illustrate the character of our blessed Lord, the author and finisher of our faith, he enters into a parallel between Melchizedec and Christ, as agreeing in title and descent; and from instances in which the priesthood of Melchizedec excelled the Levitical priesthood, he infers the surpassing glory of the priesthood of Christ to the priesthood under the law. [chap. vii. 1—17.] From these premises, which plainly manifested the defects of the Aaronical priesthood, he argues that it was not only excelled, but vindicated and consummated by that of Christ, to which it was introductory and subservient, and, by consequence, that the obligation of the law was henceforth dissolved. [chap. vii. 18, to the end.] He then recapitulates what he had before demonstrated of the superior dignity of Christ as the high-priest of christians; and further illustrates the distinguished excellence of that new covenant which was foretold by Jeremiah as established in him, and plainly enriched with much better promises than the old. [chap. viii. throughout.] Illustrating further the doctrine of the priesthood and intercession of Christ, by comparing it to what the Jewish high-priest did on the great day of atonement. [chap. ix. 1—14.] And having enlarged on the necessity of shedding Christ's blood, and the sufficiency of the atonement made by it, [chap. ix. 15, to the end,] and proved that legal ceremonies could not by any means purify the conscience, and from thence argued the insufficiency of the Mosaic law, and the necessity of looking beyond it, [chap. x. 1—15.] the apostle urges the Hebrews to improve the privileges which such an high-priest and covenant conferred on them, to the purpose of approach to God with holy confidence, a constant attendance

on his worship, and most benevolent regards to each other. [chap. x. 15—25.]

The apostle, having thus at length obviated the insinuations and objections of the Jews to the gospel of Christ as inferior to the Mosaic dispensation, by showing its transcendent excellence in a clear and convincing light, for the satisfaction and establishment of the believing Hebrews, proceeds,

2. To awaken their attention, and fortify their minds against the storm of persecution, which had come, and was further likely to come, upon them for the sake of the christian faith. To this end, he reminds them of the extremities they had already endured in defence of the gospel, and of the fatal consequences which would attend their apostasy [chap. x. 26, to the end]; calling to their remembrance the renowned examples of the faith and fortitude which had been exhibited by holy men mentioned in the scriptures of the Old Testament, and particularly by Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Sarah, [chap. xi. 1—16.] by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses [chap. xi. 17—29.]; concluding his discourse with glancing on many other illustrious worthies; and, besides those recorded in scripture, referring also to the case of several who suffered under the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes. [chap. xi. 30; xii. 2.]

And, having thus executed his design in the argumentative part of the epistle, he applies the whole by exhorting the Hebrew christians to sustain and improve the afflictions to which they were exposed, and to exert themselves vigorously to promote the united interests of peace and holiness: [chap. xii. 3—14.] cautioning them against disparaging the blessings of the gospel, and making them a sacrifice either to any secular views or sensual gratifications; representing the incomparable excellence of these blessings, and the wonderful manner in which they were introduced, which even the introduction of the Jewish economy, glorious and magnificent as it was, did by no means equal: [chap. xii. 15—29.] exhorting them to brotherly affection, purity, compassion, dependance on the divine care, steadfastness in the profession of the truth, and to a life of thankfulness to God and benevolence to man, from the consideration of the inestimable privileges derived to us from Christ, which ought always to encourage us resolutely to endure any infamy and suffering which we may meet with in his cause: [chap. xiii. 1—16.] concluding the whole with recommending to them particular regard to their pious ministers, and entreating their prayers, adding some salutations and a solemn benediction. [chap. xiii. 17, to the end.]

The following remarks of Dr. Macknight, in his preface to the epistle to Titus, will serve to continue the history of the apostle after the expiration of his first imprisonment at Rome. The leaving of Titus in Crete is supposed to have happened

some time in the year sixty-two, after the apostle was released from his first confinement in Rome. In the letters which he wrote about that time to the Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, and the Hebrews, having promised to visit them, we may believe that, when at liberty to fulfil his promise, he sailed in the spring of sixty-two from Italy for Judea, accompanied by Titus and Timothy. In their way, touching at Crete, they went through the cities, and preached the gospel to the idolatrous inhabitants with such power and success, that great numbers of them were converted. However, although the apostle's success was so great in Crete, and his converts were not formed into churches, he did not judge it proper to remain in Crete; but, committing the care of the disciples there to Titus, with an order to ordain elders in every city, he sailed into Judea in spring, sixty-three, accompanied by Timothy. The brethren in that country, being greatly distressed by the troubles which preceded the war with the Romans, the apostle, if he heard in Crete of their distress, might think it necessary to hasten his visit to them. Accordingly, as soon as he landed in Judea, he and Timothy went up to Jerusalem, and spent some time with the Hebrews, after which they proceeded to Antioch; and, in their progress through the churches, comforted and established them. From Antioch, the apostle set out on his fifth and last apostolical journey, in which he and Timothy travelled through Syria and Cilicia, and then came to Colosse in Phrygia early in the year sixty-four. And, seeing he had desired Philemon to provide him a lodging at Colosse, it is reasonable to think he abode there some time. On that occasion, as Benson and others conjecture, he may have written his epistle to Titus in Crete, in which he desired him to come to him at Nicopolis, because he proposed to winter there. [Tit. iii. 12.] From Colosse, the apostle went with Timothy to Ephesus, where, having inquired into the state of the church in that city, he gave the Ephesian brethren such exhortations as he judged necessary; then departed to go into Macedonia, leaving Timothy at Ephesus to charge some teachers not to teach differently from the apostles. [1 Tim. i. 3.]

In passing through Macedonia, the apostle, no doubt, visited the Philippians and the other brethren in that province, according to his promise, Phil. ii. 24. After that, he went forward to Nicopolis to winter there, as he proposed, being accompanied by Erastus and Trophimus, who, it seems, had joined him either at Ephesus or in Macedonia. In the beginning of the year sixty-five, while the apostle abode at Nicopolis, taking in consideration the weight of the charge which he had devolved on Timothy, he wrote to him that excellent letter in the canon, called the first epistle to Timothy, in which he taught him how to discharge the duties of his function properly. It seems, that, in parting with Timothy, St. Paul had promised to return soon

to Ephesus from Nicopolis. [1 Tim. iii. 14.] But he was disappointed in his resolution; for not long after writing his letter to Timothy, Titus came from Crete to Nicopolis, according to the apostle's order, [Tit. iii. 12.] and gave him such an account of the state of the churches in that island, as determined him to visit them immediately; so that, laying aside his purpose of returning to Ephesus, he left Nicopolis early in the year sixty-five, accompanied by Titus, Trophimus, and Erastus, the latter of whom went no further with him than to Corinth. [2 Tim. iv. 20.] At his arrival in Crete, he, no doubt, visited the churches, and rectified the disorders which had taken place in them. But while employed in that work, hearing of the persecution which Nero was carrying on against the christians in Rome, on pretence that they had set fire to the city, and judging that his presence in Rome might be of use to the brethren in their distress, he resolved to go thither. I suppose the apostle sailed for Italy with Titus in the end of the summer sixty-five, leaving Trophimus sick at Miletus, a city of Crete. [2 Tim. iv. 20.] For that Titus was in Rome with Paul during his second imprisonment is certain from 2 Tim. iv. 10. where the apostle informed Timothy that Titus was one of those who had fled from the city through fear, and had gone into Dalmatia; but whether with or without his approbation the apostle doth not expressly say.

Continuing the same history, he proceeds to relate, in his preface to the second epistle of Timothy, that Paul, on his arrival at Rome, taking an active part in the affairs of the christians, soon became obnoxious to the heathen priests and to the idolatrous rabble, who hated the christians as atheists, because they denied the gods of the empire, and condemned the established worship. Wherefore, being discovered to the magistrates, probably by the unbelieving Jews, as the ringleader of the hated sect, he was apprehended, and closely imprisoned as a malefactor. [2 Tim. ii. 9.] This happened in the end of the year sixty-five, or in the beginning of sixty-six. The apostle has not informed us directly what the crime was which the heathen magistrates laid to his charge. If it was the burning of the city, which the emperor falsely imputed to the christians in general, his absence from Rome when the city was burnt being a fact he could easily prove, it was a sufficient exculpation of him from that crime. Probably, therefore, the magistrates accused him of denying the gods of the empire, and of condemning the established worship. In this accusation, it is natural to suppose the unbelieving Jews joined, from their hatred of Paul's doctrine; and, among the rest, Alexander, the Ephesian coppersmith, who having, as it would seem, apostatized to Judaism, had blasphemed Christ and his gospel; and, on that account, had been lately delivered by the apostle to Satan. [1 Tim. i. 20.] This virulent judaizing teacher hap-

pening to be at Rome when Paul was apprehended, he, in resentment of the treatment received from the apostle, appeared with his accusers when he made his first answer, and, in the presence of his judges, contradicted the things which he urged in his own vindication. So the apostle told Timothy, 2 epist. iv. 14, "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: for he greatly opposed our words." The rest of the unbelieving Jews were not a little enraged against Paul for preaching that Jesus Christ, being lineally descended from David, was heir to his throne: that, being raised from the dead, his right to rule the Gentiles was thereby demonstrated: and that the Gentiles were to be saved through faith in him, without obeying the law of Moses. These things they urged against Paul as crimes worthy of death, on pretence that they subverted not only the law of Moses, but the laws of the empire. The hints which the apostle hath given us of the things laid to his charge, and of the particulars which he urged in his own vindication, lead us to form these conjectures. [2 Tim. ii. 8.] "Remember, Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel. [9.] For which I suffer evil unto bonds, as a malefactor. [10.] For this cause I patiently bear all things, on account of the elected, that they also may obtain the salvation which is by Jesus Christ with eternal glory." Such were the crimes of which Paul was accused by his enemies. The answers which he made to their accusations are insinuated, 2 Tim. iv. 17, "Howsoever, the Lord stood by me, and strengthened me, that through me the preaching might be fully declared, and all the Gentiles might hear." The Lord strengthened him fully to declare, in the presence of his judges and accusers, what he had preached concerning the supreme dominion of Christ, his right to rule all the Gentiles as the subjects of his spiritual kingdom, his power to save them as well as the Jews, together with the nature and method of their salvation. He likewise told Timothy that the Lord strengthened him thus fully to declare what he had preached, that all the Gentiles might hear of his courage and faithfulness in maintaining their privileges. To this bold declaration of his preaching concerning Christ, the apostle told Timothy he was animated by considering, that "if we die with him, we shall also live with him. If we suffer patiently, we shall also reign with him. If we deny him, he also will deny us." [2 Tim. ii. 11, 12.] To conclude: the evident reasonableness of the things which the apostle advanced in answer to the accusations of his enemies, and the confidence with which he urged them, made, it seems, such an impression on his judges, that, notwithstanding they were greatly prejudiced against him, and showed themselves determined to take his life, they did not then condemn him; but sent him back to his prison, thinking it necessary to give him a second hearing.

How long the apostle remained in prison before he was allowed to make his first answer doth not appear. Neither do we know what length of time elapsed between his first and second answers. Only from his desiring Timothy, after making his first answer, to come to him before winter, we may conjecture that he made his first answer early in the summer of the year sixty-six, and that he thought it might be a considerable time before he would be brought to a second hearing.

Soon after his first answer, therefore, in the year sixty-six, the apostle wrote his second epistle to Timothy, to inform him of what had happened to him since his coming to Rome, namely, that he was closely imprisoned as a malefactor, and that he had spoken for himself in the hearing of his judges. Also he gave him some hints of the crimes which his enemies laid to his charge, and of the answers which he had made to their accusations, and of the principles by which he was emboldened to make these answers. Moreover, he told him, that although his judges had not yet condemned him, he had not the smallest hope of escaping when he should be brought to a second hearing; that his accusers and judges had showed themselves so enraged against him before he made his first answer, that when he was brought into the court, neither any of the Roman brethren, nor any of the brethren from the provinces, nor any of his own fellow-labourers who were then in the city, appeared with him; but all forsook him: that during his trial, his judges showed such an extreme hatred of the christians and of their cause, that all his assistants, except Luke, had fled from the city, fearing that they likewise would be apprehended and put to death: that being thus deserted by his friends and fellow-labourers, and having no hope of escaping, he had a great desire to enjoy Timothy's company during the short time he had to live. He therefore requested him to come to him before winter. Yet being uncertain whether he should live so long, he gave in this letter a variety of advices, charges, and encouragements, with the solemnity and affection of a dying parent; because, if he should be put to death before Timothy came, the loss would in some measure be made up to him by the things written in this letter.

These particulars, which are all either expressed or insinuated in the apostle's second epistle to Timothy, show clearly that it was written not long before the apostle's death, the time of which may be determined with a good degree of probability by the following circumstances. The emperor Nero having set fire to the city on the tenth of July, A. D. 64, to remove the odium of that nefarious action which was generally imputed to him, he endeavoured to make the public believe it was perpetrated by the christians, who, at that time, were become the objects of the popular hatred, on account of their religion. For, as if they had been the incendiaries, he caused them to be

sought out, and put to death in the most barbarous manner. So Tacitus informs us, *Annal. Lib. xv. c. 44*, and Suetonius, *Ner. c. 16*. This is what is commonly called the first general persecution of the christians. Wherefore, as the ancients, with one voice, have reported that the apostle Paul was put to death at Rome by Nero in this persecution, we cannot be much mistaken in supposing that his death happened in the end of the year sixty-six, or in spring sixty-seven, in the thirteenth year of Nero's reign.

Eusebius, Jerome, Maximus, and other ancient authors, content themselves with doing little more than affirm that the apostle Paul was beheaded at Rome under Nero; so that the largest account concerning this event is taken from Abdius, a very suspicious author. He says, that after the crucifying of Peter, and the ruin of Simon Magus, Paul, yet remaining in free custody, was dismissed, and delivered at that time from martyrdom by God's permission, that all the Gentiles might be replenished by his preaching of the gospel. He says also, that while Paul was thus employed at Rome, he was accused to the emperor, not only for teaching new doctrine, but also for stirring up sedition against the imperial government. For this, he being called before Nero, and demanded to show the order and manner of his doctrine, there declared what his doctrine was, namely, to teach all men peace and charity, how to love one another, and to prefer one another in honour; that rich men should not be puffed up with pride, nor trust in their uncertain treasures, but in the living God; that poor men should learn to be satisfied with their condition, rejoicing in their poverty with a hope, and having food and raiment, be therewith content; that fathers should bring up their children in the fear of God, and that children should obey their parents; that husbands should love their wives, and wives reverence their husbands; that citizens and subjects should pay tribute to Cæsar, and render due obedience to inferior magistrates; that masters should be courteous to their servants, and servants faithful to their masters; and lastly, that this doctrine was not taught him by men, but by Jesus Christ, and the Father of glory, who spake to him from heaven, and commanded him to preach the gospel, assuring him that whosoever believed his word should not perish, but have everlasting life. After having made this declaration, he was condemned to be beheaded, and two of the emperor's guards, Ferega and Parthemius, were ordered to conduct him to the place of execution. These men beseeching Paul that he would afford them instruction, he prayed for them, and assured them they should be hereafter baptized at his sepulchre. After praying, he gave up his neck to the stroke, and exchanged a life of trouble for immortal felicity.

Dr. Macknight, who conceives that the apostle Paul was

chosen by Christ instead of Matthias, sums up his character in the following words :

‘ In the choice of this new apostle, Jesus had a view to the conversion of the Gentiles, which, of all the services allotted to the apostles, was the most dangerous and difficult. For the person engaged in that work had to contend with the heathen priests, whose office and gains being annihilated by the spreading of the gospel, it was to be expected that they would oppose its preachers with an extreme rage. He had to contend likewise with the unbelieving Jews living in the heathen countries, who would not fail to inflame the multitude against any one who should preach salvation to the Gentiles, without requiring them to obey the law of Moses. The philosophers too were to be encountered, who, no doubt, after their manner, would endeavour to overthrow the gospel by argument; whilst the magistrates and priests laboured to destroy it by persecuting its preachers and abettors. The difficulty and danger of preaching to the Gentiles being so great, the person who engaged in it certainly needed an uncommon strength of mind, a great degree of religious zeal, a courage superior to every danger, and a patience of labour and suffering not to be exhausted, together with much prudence to enable him to avoid giving just offence to unbelievers. Besides these natural talents, education and literature were necessary in the person who attempted to convert the Gentiles, that he might acquit himself with propriety when called before kings, and magistrates, and men of learning. All these talents and advantages Saul of Tarsus possessed in an eminent degree; and, being a violent persecutor of the christians, his testimony to the resurrection of Jesus would have the greater weight when he became a preacher of the gospel. Him, therefore, the Lord Jesus determined to make his apostle in the room of Judas; and, for that purpose, he appeared to him from heaven as he journeyed to Damascus to persecute his disciples. And, having convinced him of the truth of his resurrection by thus appearing to him in person, he commissioned him to preach his resurrection to the Gentiles, together with the doctrines of the gospel, which were to be made known to him afterwards by revelation, saying to him, [Acts xxvi. 16.] “ I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of those things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee: to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness,” &c. Such was the commission which Jesus, in person, gave to Saul of Tarsus, who afterwards was called Paul; so that, although he had not attended Jesus during his ministry, he was, in respect both of his election and of his fitness for it, rightly numbered with the apostles.

‘ Here also it must be remembered to the honour of the

apostle Paul, that, being made an apostle for the purpose of converting the idolatrous Gentiles, he laboured in that department more abundantly than all the other apostles. After having the gospel revealed to him by Christ, [Gal. i. 12.] and after receiving the power of working miracles, and of conferring miraculous gifts on them who should believe, [2 Cor. xii. 12, 13.] he first preached in Damascus, then went to Jerusalem, where he was introduced to Peter and James. But the Jews in that city, who were enraged against him for deserting their party, endeavouring to kill him, the brethren sent him away to Cilicia, his native country. From that time forth St. Paul spent the greatest part of his life among the Gentiles, visiting one country after another with such unremitting diligence, that at the time he wrote his epistle to the Romans, [chap. xv. 19.] "from Jerusalem, and about as far as Illyricum, he had fully preached the gospel of Christ." But, in the course of his labours, having met with great opposition, the Lord Jesus appeared to him on different occasions to encourage him in his work; and, in particular, caught him up into the third heaven. So that, not only in respect of his election to the apostolic office, but in respect of the gifts and endowments bestowed on him to fit him for that office, and of the success of his labours in it, St. Paul was not inferior to the very chiefest apostles, as he himself affirms.

‘I have said that Paul excelled his brethren apostles by reason of the abundance of the revelations that were given to him. By this, however, I do not mean that his discourses and writings are superior to theirs in point of authority. The other apostles, indeed, have not entered so deep into the christian scheme as he hath done; yet, in what they have written, being guided by the same Spirit which inspired him, their declarations and decisions, so far as they go, are of equal authority with his. Nevertheless, it must be remembered, that it is St. Paul chiefly, who, in his epistles, as shall be shown immediately, hath explained the gospel economy in its full extent, hath shown its connection with the former dispensations, and hath defended it against the objections by which infidels, both in ancient and modern times, have endeavoured to overthrow it.

‘In confirmation of this account of the superior illumination of the apostle Paul, I now observe, that the greatness of the mercy of God, as extended to all mankind, was made known to him before it was discovered to the other apostles, namely, in the commission which he received at his conversion to preach to the Gentiles the good news of salvation through faith, "that they might receive forgiveness of sin, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith." [Acts xxvi. 18.] So that he was the first of the apostles who, by Christ's command, declared that faith and not circumcision was necessary to the sal-

vation of the idolatrous Gentiles. And as St. Paul early communicated to his brethren apostles the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles, [Gal. ii. 2.] it seems to have been by him that Christ first made known to the other apostles the extent of the divine mercy to mankind. For that the apostles, besides discovering to each other the revelations which they received, read each other's writings, is plain from the character which Peter hath given of Paul's epistles. [2 Pet. iii. 15, 16.]

• It is St. Paul who hath informed us that sin and death were permitted to enter into the world and pass through to all men by the disobedience of one man; because God determined, by the obedience of a greater man, to bestow resurrection from the dead on all men, and to give all an opportunity of obtaining righteousness and life under a more gracious covenant than the former procured for them by the merit of that obedience.

• It is St. Paul who, in his learned epistle to the Hebrews, hath largely explained and proved the priesthood and intercession of Christ; and hath shown that his death is considered by God as a sacrifice for sin, not in a metaphorical sense, and in accommodation to the prejudices of mankind, but on account of its real efficacy in procuring pardon for penitents; that Christ was constituted a priest by the oath of God: that all the priests and sacrifices that have been in the world, but especially the Levitical priests and sacrifices, were emblems of the priesthood, sacrifice, and intercession of Christ: and that sacrifice was instituted originally to preserve the memory of the revelation which God made at the fall concerning the salvation of mankind through the death of his Son, after he should become the seed of the woman.

• It is this great apostle who hath most fully explained the doctrine of justification, and hath shown that it consists in our being delivered from death, and in our obtaining eternal life through the obedience of Christ: that no sinner can obtain this justification meritoriously through works of the law; that though faith is required as the condition thereof, justification is still the free gift of God through Jesus Christ; because no works which men can perform, not even the work of faith itself, hath any merit with God to procure pardon for those who have sinned; that this method of justification, having been established at the fall, is the way in which mankind, from the beginning to the end of time, are justified; and that, as such, it is attested both by the law and by the prophets.

• It is St. Paul who, by often discoursing of the justification of Abraham, hath shown the true nature of the faith which justifies sinners: that it consists in a strong desire to know, and in a sincere disposition to do, the will of God; that it leads the believer implicitly to obey the will of God when made known; and that even the heathens are capable of attaining this kind of faith, and of being saved through Christ. Also it is this apos-

tle who, by penetrating into the depth of the meaning of the covenants with Abraham, hath discovered the nature and greatness of those rewards which God taught mankind, even in the first ages, to expect from his goodness; and who hath shown the gospel, in its chief articles, was preached to Abraham and to the Jews, nay, preached to the antediluvians, in the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. So that the gospel is not a revelation of a new method of justification, but a more full publication of the method of justification mercifully established by God for all mankind from the very beginning.

‘ It is the apostle Paul chiefly, who, by proving the principal doctrines of the gospel from the writings of Moses and the prophets, hath shown that the same God who spake to the fathers by the prophets, did, in the last days of the Mosaic dispensation, speak to all mankind by his Son: that the various dispensations of religion under which mankind have been placed are all parts of one great scheme, formed by God for saving penitent sinners: and, in particular, that there is an intimate connection between the Jewish and the christian revelations; that the former was a preparation for the latter: consequently those writers show great ignorance of the divine dispensations, who, on account of the objections to which the law of Moses, as a rule of justification, is liable, and on account of the obscurity of the ancient prophecies, wish to disjoin the Jewish and christian revelations. But all who make this attempt, do it in opposition to the testimony of Jesus himself, who commanded the Jews to search their own scriptures, because they are they which testify of him [John v. 39.]; who, in his conversation with the disciples on the road to Emmaus, “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, expounded unto them from all the scriptures the things concerning himself;” [Luke xxiv. 27.] and who told them, verse 44, “That all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him.” The attempt is made in opposition also to the testimony of the apostle Peter, who, speaking to Cornelius of Christ, said, “To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” [Acts x. 43.] The Jewish and Christian revelations, therefore, are so closely connected, that if the former is removed as false, the latter must of necessity fall to the ground.

‘ It is the apostle of the Gentiles who hath set the Sinaitic covenant, or law of Moses, in a proper light; by showing that it was no method of justification even to the Jews, but merely their national law delivered to them by God, not as governor of the universe, but as king in Israel, who had separated them from the rest of mankind, and placed them in Canaan under his own immediate government as a nation, for the purpose of pre-

servicing his oracles and worship amidst that universal corruption which had overspread the earth. Accordingly, this apostle hath proved, that, seeing the law of Moses contained a more perfect account of the duties of morality, and of the demerit of sin, than is to be found in any other national law, instead of justifying, it condemned the Jews by its curse, especially as it prescribed no sacrifice of any real efficacy to cleanse the consciences of sinners, nor promised them pardon in any method whatsoever: and that by the rigour of its curse, the law of Moses laid the Jews under the necessity of seeking justification from the mercy of God through faith, according to the tenor of the covenant of Abraham, which was the gospel and religion of the Jews. Thus, by the lights which St. Paul hath held up to us, the impious railings of the Manicheans against the law of Moses, and against the God of the Jews, the author of that law, on the supposition that it was a rule of justification, are seen to be without foundation; as are the objections, likewise, which modern deists have urged against the Mosaic revelation, on account of God's dealings with the Israelites.

‘It is St. Paul who hath most largely discoursed concerning the transcendent greatness of the Son of God above angels and all created beings whatever; and who hath shown that, as the reward of his humiliation and death in the human nature, he hath, in that nature, obtained the government of the world for the good of his church, and will hold that government till he hath put down the usurped dominion which the apostate angels have so long endeavoured to maintain in opposition to the righteous government of God: that as the last exercise of his kingly power, Christ will raise the dead, and judge the world, and render to every one according to his deeds: and that when all the enemies of God and goodness are thus utterly subdued, the Son will deliver up the kingdom to the Father, that God may be over all in all places.

‘It is this great apostle, who hath made known to us many of the circumstances and consequences of the general judgment not mentioned by the other apostles. For besides repeating what Christ himself declared, that he will return a second time to this earth, surrounded with the glory of his Father, and attended by a great host of angels; that he will call all the dead forth from their graves; and that, by his sentence as judge, he will fix the doom of all mankind irreversibly; this apostle hath taught us the following interesting particulars: that the last generation of men shall not die; but that in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, Christ will change such of the righteous as are alive upon the earth at his coming. And, having said nothing of Christ's changing the wicked, the apostle has led us to believe that no change shall pass on them, consequently that the discrimination of the righteous from the wicked shall be made, from the difference of the body in which the one and the

other shall appear before the tribunal, and that no particular inquiry into the actions of individuals will be needed to determine their different characters. The character of each will be shown to all, by the nature of the body in which he appears to receive his sentence. The same apostle has taught us, that after sentence is pronounced upon all men, according to their true characters thus visibly manifested, the righteous shall be caught up in the clouds, to join the Lord in the air; so that the wicked being left alone on the earth, it follows that they are to perish in the flames of the general conflagration. He further informs us, that the righteous, having joined the Lord in the air, shall accompany him in his return to heaven, and there live in an embodied state with God, and Christ, and the angels, to all eternity.

‘ It is St. Paul who hath given us the completest account of the spiritual gifts which were bestowed in such plenty and variety on the first christians, for the confirmation of the gospel. Nay, the form which the christian visible church has taken under the government of Christ, is owing, in a great measure, to the directions contained in his writings. Not to mention that the different offices of the gospel ministry, together with the duties and privileges belonging to these offices, have all been established in consequence of his appointment.

‘ Finally, It is St. Paul who, in his first epistle to the Thessalonians, hath given us a formal proof of the divine original of the gospel, which, though it was originally designed for the learned Greeks of that age, hath been of the greatest use ever since in confirming believers in their most holy faith, and stopping the mouths of adversaries.

‘ The foregoing account of the matters contained in the writings of the apostle Paul shows, that whilst the inspired epistles of the other apostles deserve to be read with the utmost attention, on account of the explications of particular doctrines and facts which they contain, and of the excellent precepts of piety and morality with which they abound, the epistles of Paul must be regarded as the grand repository in which the whole of the gospel doctrine is lodged, and from which the knowledge of it can be drawn with the greatest advantage. And therefore, all who wish to understand true christianity, ought to study the epistles of this great apostle with the utmost care. In them, indeed, they will meet with things hard to be understood. But that circumstance, instead of discouraging, ought rather to make them more diligent in their endeavours to understand his writings, as they contain information from God himself concerning matters which are of the utmost importance to their temporal and eternal welfare.’

CHAPTER XVIII.

The lives and writings of the four Evangelists.

Introductory remark—Matthew—his life—the date of his gospel—the language in which it was written—to whom it was addressed—life of Mark—his gospel—when written—whether an epitome of Matthew—peculiarities in Mark—life of Luke—his gospel—when it was written—plan of the four evangelists—life of John—date of his gospel—his design in writing it—remarks on its last chapter—the moderation of the evangelists in speaking of our Lord's enemies—their means of information—credibility of their testimony—preaching and death of Matthew—the labours of Mark—his death—Luke writes the Acts—accounts of his death uncertain—John writes his first epistle—evidences of its authenticity—his design in writing it—when and where it was written, and to whom it was addressed—who is to be understood by antichrist—remarks on the second and third of John—the apocalypse—continuation of the life of John—remarkable story of his conduct towards a young man—his death.

IN whatever point of view we consider the conduct of our adorable Redeemer, we shall discover the most striking controversy between the spirit by which he was actuated, and the motives that influenced the most celebrated conquerors. Alexander, Cæsar, and the mighty Timur, were men formed of the same clay with ourselves, exposed to all the infirmities incident to human nature, and possessed of a legal authority over the persons and properties of comparatively but a few of mankind. They extended their command by acts of violence and deceit, waded through slaughter to the throne of empire, and then, in too many instances, shut the gates of mercy upon their fellows. Yet, as they fancied that there was something honourable in their crimes, they were anxious to find able and eloquent historians, who might transmit to posterity the memory of their achievements. Christ, on the contrary, though by nature he was rich, “for our sakes became poor. Being in the form of God, he thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” He was, indeed, a king, having an unquestionable right to universal dominion; yet he asserted not this claim by the battles of the warrior, but by the preaching of his word, and confirmed it by miracles of mercy, which were performed as well on his enemies as on his friends. Not one transaction of his spotless life shrinks from the severest scrutiny of impartial justice; but as he did not

wish the propagation of his religion to result from the exertion of distinguished human abilities, he was content to have his history recorded by the most artless writers, all of whom, Luke only excepted, were plain, untutored men, who simply noted down such of the words and actions of their Master as they either witnessed or were credibly informed of, leaving them to make their own impression on the mind of the reader.

Concerning Matthew we have here but little to observe. He was originally a publican; and not only forsook a gainful employment for the sake of Christ, but made a feast to testify his joy on account of his conversion. He does not appear to have been at all distinguished from his brethren, but associated regularly with them from the time of his being called by Jesus to the descent of the Spirit at the feast of Pentecost.

The time when the gospel of Matthew was written has been much disputed. Eusebius only says, that when Matthew was about to go to other people, he delivered his gospel to the Hebrews in their own language, without telling us when it was that Matthew left Judea. Dr. Lardner observes, that Theophylact, in the eleventh century, and Euthymius, in the twelfth, say that Matthew writ in the eighth year after our Saviour's ascension; Nicephorus Callisti, in the fourteenth century, says that Matthew writ about fifteen years after Christ's ascension; and the Paschal Chronicle, in the seventeenth century, intimates the same thing. None of those writers expressly refer to more ancient authors for their opinion. But it may be reckoned probable, that they collected it from the history in the Acts, and from the fore-mentioned passage in Eusebius. They who thought that Matthew and the other apostles left Judea soon after the conversion of Cornelius, supposed his gospel might be writ in the eighth year of our Lord's ascension. And they who think that the apostles did not leave Judea to go to the Gentiles till the council of Jerusalem, [Acts xv.] supposed Matthew's gospel to have been writ in the fifteenth year of our Lord's ascension, of the vulgar account, forty-nine; but neither had for their opinion the express authority of Eusebius, or any other very ancient writer. It is well known to be very common to insert articles in chronicles and such-like works. This article concerning the time of Matthew's gospel is probably a late addition.

According to the testimonies of most of the ancients, as Papias, A. D. 116, Irenæus, in 178, Origen, in 230, Eusebius, in 315, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Gregory Nazianzen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, Jerom, Chrysostom, &c. this gospel was written in the Hebrew or Syriac language, which was then common in Judea; but the Greek version of it, which now passes for the original, is said to be as old as the apostolical times. However, many learned moderns, as Erasmus, Calvin,

Le Clerc, &c. are of opinion that this gospel was first written in Greek, which was much used at that time throughout all the Roman empire, and particularly in Judea; and it is alleged, that Papias, who first advanced this opinion, was a weak, credulous man. Le Clerc, Jones, Basnage, Lardner, &c. are of this opinion. Dr. Lardner observes on this point, that if St. Matthew did not write till about thirty years after our Lord's ascension, which he thinks most probable, he would use the Greek language; but if he wrote his gospel within the space of eight years after Christ's ascension, it is most likely that he wrote in the Hebrew. He adds further, that there was very early a Greek gospel of St. Matthew cited and referred to by Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, and others; that many of the ancients do not seem to have fully believed that Matthew wrote in Hebrew, because they have shown very little regard to the Hebrew edition of it; that there are not, in our Greek gospel of St. Matthew, any marks of a translation; that there is no where any probable account who translated this gospel into Greek; and, besides, as the Greek gospel was translated into Hebrew in very early days of christianity, many, not examining it particularly, nor indeed being able to do it for want of understanding the language, might conjecture that it was first writ in Hebrew. Hence, according to Dr. Lardner, sprung the opinion that Matthew published his gospel at Jerusalem or in Judea, for the Jewish believers, and at their request, before he went abroad to other people: whereas, he apprehends that this gospel, as well as the others, were writ and intended for believers of all nations; and that the Nazarene gospel was St. Matthew's gospel translated from the Greek, with the addition of some other things taken from the other gospels, and from tradition. Allowing the date of the gospel already assigned, he cannot conceive the reason why Matthew should write in Hebrew any more than any other of the evangelists; for it may be reckoned highly probable, or even certain, that he understood Greek before he was called by Christ to be an apostle. Whilst a publican, he would have frequent occasions both to write and to speak Greek, and could not discharge his office without understanding that language. Lardner's Credibility, &c. vol. v. chap. 5.

In whatever language this gospel was written, the author appears to have considered himself as one who addressed a people well acquainted with the subjects of its history. For, notwithstanding the particulars which are mentioned by him are of the most wonderful nature, he evidently takes no pains to obviate those objections that he must be sensible would occur to persons who were unacquainted with those remarkable events. He has given no explication of the manners and customs of the Jews. Throughout the whole of his history he has not given us so much as one date, whereby the reader can form a judg-

ment of the age in which the transactions happened which he has recorded; so that the time when these events took place can only be fixed from his mentioning the names of Herod, Archelaus, and Pilate. Thus it pretty plainly appears, that Matthew wrote immediately for the Jews.

There is little reason to doubt but that the evangelist Mark was the same as John Mark, the son of a pious woman called Mary, who lived at Jerusalem, and was an early convert to the religion of Christ. We find, from the history of the Acts, that the disciples used frequently to meet at her house for religious exercises; and that Peter, being well acquainted with this practice, immediately repaired thither after his miraculous release from imprisonment. She was the sister of Barnabas, as appears from Col. iv. 10. Therefore, when Barnabas and Paul went to preach to the Gentiles, Barnabas took with him his nephew Mark, in quality of their minister or assistant. [Acts xiii. 5.] When, however, they had arrived at Perga, Mark, discouraged by the difficulties of the way, forsook the apostles, and returned to Jerusalem. On this account, Paul refused to accept of him as a companion on a second journey, notwithstanding Barnabas so vehemently urged it, that their dispute led to their pursuing separate plans. [Acts xv. 36—41.] A complete reconciliation afterwards took place between Mark and Paul, as is certain from the terms in which the evangelist is mentioned in several epistles. He was, probably, a Levite, as his uncle Barnabas was of that order.

Concerning the gospel of Mark, Eusebius gives us the following account, in the second book of his Ecclesiastical History. 'When, therefore, the divine word had come to them, (i. e. to the inhabitants of Rome,) the power of Simon became immediately extinct, and, together with the man himself, utterly perished. But so great a splendour of piety shined upon the minds of the hearers of the divine word, that they did not rest satisfied with having once heard him, nor with having enjoyed the unwritten instruction of the celestial word; but entreated with much importunity Mark, to whom the gospel was ascribed, who was then a follower of Peter, that he would leave with them some written memorial of that doctrine which they had heard preached, nor did they desist till they had prevailed upon the man, and thus gave occasion for the writing of the gospel according to Mark. They say also that Peter, being informed by the Holy Spirit of what was done, was exceedingly delighted with the ardent desire of the men, and authorized the writing to be publicly read in the churches. Clement relates this story, in the sixth book of his Institutes, to whom Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, may be joined as a witness. Peter also mentions Mark in his first epistle, which is reported to have been written at Rome, as he himself intimates, calling it, by a figure,

Babylon, when he says, "the church which is at Babylon, chosen together with you, and Marcus my son, salute you."

In confirmation of this account of Eusebius, it is observed, that many circumstances tending to Peter's honour are omitted in this gospel, though mentioned by other evangelists. Some have supposed it was written in Latin, but it is most generally admitted to have been composed in Greek. It is remarkable, that some of the ancient heretics were more partial to this gospel than to any other.

Jerom was of opinion that Mark abridged Matthew's gospel. But the characters of an abridgment do by no means agree to that work; for, in the first place, the order observed in it is different from the order found in Matthew. Secondly, Mark is sometimes more full in his accounts of things than Matthew. For example, he relates the storm at sea. [chap. iv. 35.]—the cure of the demoniac of Gadara. [v. 1.]—the healing of the woman that had the flux of blood:—the resurrection of Jairus' daughter: [v. 21.]—the Baptist's death: [vi. 14.]—the conversation with the Pharisees in Galilee about eating with unwashed hands. [vii. 1.]—the cure of the epileptic boy after the transfiguration: [ix. 14.]—the miracle wrought on the blind beggars at Jericho: [x. 46.]—the cursing of the fig-tree: [xi. 12.]—and the question concerning the great commandment in the law: [xii. 28.] more distinctly and with more circumstances than Matthew or even Luke. Thirdly, Mark has recorded things which Matthew has omitted altogether: such as the parable of the seed which sprang up silently: [iv. 26.]—the miracles wrought on the stammerer of Decapolis: [vii. 31.]—and on the blind man of Bethsaida: [viii. 22.]—the person who followed not Jesus as his disciple, and yet cast out devils in his name: [ix. 38.]—the histories of the widow that cast two mites into the treasury, [xii. 41.]—and of the young man that followed Jesus when he was apprehended: [xiv. 51.]—lastly, our Lord's appearance to Mary Magdalene after his resurrection, and his ascension into heaven, both of them omitted by Matthew, are related, Mark xvi. 9. These things, duly considered, cannot but incline one to believe that Mark was himself an eye-witness of our Lord's life; at least, they render it certain he had the fullest information thereof from those who were the eye-witnesses; so far was he from transcribing or copying the work of another.

Eusebius, *Lib. iii. cap. 39*, mentions a tradition of Papias, in which John the presbyter is said to have affirmed, 'That Mark, Peter's interpreter, wrote faithfully whatever he heard, but not in the order wherein the things were said and done by Christ; for he neither heard nor followed Christ; but was a companion of Peter, and wrote his gospel rather with a view to the people's profit, than with a design to give a regular his-

tory.' If this tradition is true, the order observed in Luke, being the same with that of Mark, cannot be the right order. But the truth of the tradition may justly be doubted, because it is contradicted, not only by Luke, who, in his preface, tells us that he designed to give a regular history, but by Mark also, who frequently asserts the order of his own narration. Besides, Epiphanius affirms that Mark was one of the seventy disciples. Nay, he is more particular still; for he tells us he was one of those who were offended at the words of Christ, [John vi. 44.] and who forsook him; but that he was afterwards reclaimed by Peter, and, being filled with the Spirit, wrote a gospel.

Eusebius and Jerom assert that Luke was a Syrian, a native of Antioch, but do not determine whether he was of Jewish or Gentile extraction. This has been a subject of much dispute. They who believe him to have been a Jew, urge, in defence of their opinion, that the apostle Paul was possessed of too much prudence to have employed him as he did in preaching the gospel in Judea, and even in Jerusalem, if he had not undergone circumcision, a rite which was expressly forbidden to the Gentile converts. Others conclude him to have been a Gentile, because that Paul, in his epistle to the Colossians, [chap. iv. 10, 11, compared with verse 14.] expressly distinguished Luke from his fellow-labourers of the circumcision. To this it has been thought sufficient to reply, that Timothy is spoken of in a similar way, and that in both instances no more seems to be meant than that they were not Hebrews of the Hebrews, but had one of their two parents a Gentile.

Many learned men have supposed that Lucius, mentioned, Rom. xvi. 21, is the same with Lucius of Cyrene, spoken of, Acts xiii. 1, and that, in both passages, the evangelist Luke is intended. If these suppositions may be admitted, we shall obtain some knowledge both of Luke's character and history. From Acts xi. 19—21; xiii. 1—4, it appears he was an early Jewish believer; and, together with others, was very serviceable in propagating the gospel both among the Jews and Gentiles out of Judea. It is also thought that his native place, Cyrene, gives reason to think that one of his parents might be a Greek.

Some have supposed that Luke was one of Paul's converts, and others, that he was one of the seventy disciples; but nothing decisive has been advanced in support of either position.

It is generally believed that Luke was a physician, because [Col. iv. 14.] the apostle says, "Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you." But some call this in question, pretending that if the apostle had there been speaking of the evangelist, it would have been superfluous to have mentioned the occupation of a person so well known. They affirm, therefore, that Luke the physician was a different person from Luke the evangelist. But those who espouse the common notion support

it by this argument, that though Luke be here styled by his profession, yet, being joined with Demas, he must be the evangelist; because, in the other passages wherein the opinion of all the evangelists is spoken of, he is joined with Demas, and both are called Paul's fellow-labourers. [Philemon, verse 24, 2 Tim. iv. 10, 11.] This argument is the more to be regarded, that the epistle to the Colossians, in which Luke is styled the physician, was sent at the same time with that to Philemon, who was an inhabitant of Colosse.

What is certain concerning this evangelist, from his own history of the Acts, is, that he often attended Paul in his travels, and was his fellow-labourer in the gospel. The first time he speaks of himself as Paul's companion, is Acts xvi. 10, where, using in his narration the first person plural, he intimates that he was one of Paul's company at Troas, before he took ship to go into Macedonia. He went with him, therefore, from Troas to Samothrace, then to Neapolis, and after that to Philippi. But it is observable, that, having finished his account of the transactions at Philippi, he changes his style from the first to the third person plural, [chap. xvii. 1.] nor does he any more speak of himself, till Paul was departing from Greece with the collection for the saints in Judea. [Acts xx. 6.] Here, therefore, he joined him again, accompanying him through Macedonia to Troas, and from thence to Jerusalem, where he abode with him. After this, Paul being sent prisoner to Rome, Luke attended him to that city, and remained with him for his assistance, as is plain from the salutations which are contained in the epistles which Paul wrote during his imprisonment. It is not certain where he wrote his gospel; but as that work came abroad before the Acts of the Apostles, it is supposed that Luke collected the materials while travelling with Paul in Greece and Judea, before the latter was seized upon by the Jews in the temple, and finished it while Paul was a prisoner in Cæsarea. Both these treatises he inscribed to one Theophilus, an intimate friend, who, from his name, is supposed to have been a Greek, and, from the epithet 'most excellent,' to have been a person of high rank.

It has been generally believed that the gospel of Luke was the third in the order of time that was written; but Dr. Macknight and some others have been induced to ascribe to it an earlier origin than that of either Mark or Matthew.

Whoever has read the four gospels attentively, will easily perceive, that the three former evangelists have written for a different purpose and on a different plan than John. As this is a point of very considerable importance, we shall present the reader with an extract from Dr. Macknight, which will cast considerable light upon the subject.

The evangelists did not intend to relate all the transactions of Christ's life. The Spirit, by whose direction they wrote, guided

them into this resolution, lest their books should have swelled to too great a bulk. Accordingly, when Luke set about writing, he proposed to give little besides the history of our Lord's ministry in Galilee and Perea, because that period comprehended the principal transactions of his public life, and was less known to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. It was, therefore, consistent with his plan, to omit what happened at the passovers and other feasts during the period which is the subject of his history. Farther, though Jesus preached several months in Judea, and made many disciples after his baptism, [John iii. 22; iv. 1.] his ministry in Galilee, properly speaking, did not begin till John's imprisonment. Before that event, his preaching was, for the most part, confined to Judea, as is evident from this, the cure of the nobleman's son after the Baptist's imprisonment was the second miracle he performed in Galilee. Wherefore, the transactions in Judea, in the beginning of our Lord's ministry, being out of the period which is the subject of Luke's history, are omitted by him entirely; and he begins his account at John's imprisonment, bringing it down to the conclusion of Christ's ministry in Perea. He judged it necessary, however, to relate with accuracy our Lord's conception, birth, circumcision, baptism, and temptations, these being matters of great importance, and very needful to be known. He gives a particular account also of his death, resurrection, and ascension, because they are the great foundations upon which the truth of the christian religion rests. Withal, he introduces a short sketch of the Baptist's history, for this reason, that as he was Messiah's forerunner, his ministry was subservient to Christ's, and had a necessary connection with it.

Matthew and Mark seem to have adopted Luke's plan, thinking it needless to relate the transactions in Judea before the Baptist's imprisonment, or in Jerusalem at the passovers and other feasts. For though these were matters of great importance, whether their quality or their number be considered, Jesus having gone to Jerusalem, at least, thrice every year, they were abundantly well known to the inhabitants of that metropolis, and, indeed, to the whole nation; the Jews, in general, coming up to worship in these seasons. Most of them were performed in the temple before great multitudes of people, who always resorted thither. And such persons as had not the happiness to be eye-witnesses of them, being, however, in the town where they were done, must have been speedily informed of them, either by the eye-witnesses, or by the subjects of the miracles, who did not fail to publish them every where, or by the general reports which nobody presumed to contradict. Wherefore, as Matthew and Mark published their gospels while the fame of Christ's actions in Jerusalem was every where fresh, and the witnesses of them were living in all parts of the country, they had the same reason with Luke for writing the

history of the principal period only of our Lord's ministry. Moreover, composing their gospels while the disciples had the conversion of the Jews much at heart, as a matter of great importance to the success of christianity, even among the Gentiles, it was entirely agreeable to their purpose to adopt Luke's plan, that, by supplying what he had omitted, they might make their countrymen as well acquainted as possible with that part of our Lord's history which comprehended the substance of his public life, and which was, at least, known. That the conversion of their own nation was long the principal object of the apostles' study, is evident from the general strain of their labours in preaching, which, for a good while, were confined wholly to the Jews. The evangelists Matthew and Mark, indeed, speak little of our Lord's ministry in Perea, which Luke has related at some length. But the reason, perhaps, was this, his sermons and parables in Perea being many of them the same with those preached in Galilee, which they have supplied, they judged it needless to repeat them. What they had to do was only to inform us that those parables and sermons were delivered also in Galilee, because Luke had omitted to mention them in his account of Christ's ministry there. The three historians were directed to treat of Christ's life on so narrow a plan, and in so succinct a manner, not only that a sufficient number of Jews might be converted, but for other reasons; and this among the rest, that to find the disciples silent where they might have told things greatly to the honour of their Master, adds not a little weight to their testimony, and beautifully displays the modesty with which they wrote. Wherefore, the world has suffered no loss by the brevity of the first historians; especially as the Holy Spirit, from the very beginning, intended to raise up one to write a history of Jesus, in which some of the principal transactions of his life, omitted by the former historians, should be supplied, to the great praise of their modesty, to the recommendation of their work, and to the edification of the church. Besides, that the three first evangelists should have formed their gospels upon one and the same plan was highly proper, in order that by the joint concurrence of their several testimonies, the accounts which they gave of him might be fully confirmed, and gain the greater credit in the world.

This account of the plan upon which the three evangelists formed their histories is the more probable, as it appears they composed them in Judæa for the use of the Jews, and to forward their conversion. We have already observed, that the three evangelists, in their accounts of things, all along suppose their readers perfectly acquainted with the Jewish affairs. For example, when they happen to speak of matters peculiar to their own country, however remote those things might be from the apprehension of foreigners, they generally give no explication of them: besides, they are at no pains to obviate the objections

which might be made to their story by persons unacquainted with it, nor are the general circumstances of time marked by two of them. I now add, that in all their computations of the hours of the day, the three make use of the Jewish form and division of it. It is quite otherwise with John; for he supposes his readers ignorant of the Jewish affairs, and, for that reason, never mentions any thing peculiar to the Jews without giving such an explication of it as he knew was necessary to make himself understood. Thus, [chap. v. 2.] speaking of Jerusalem, he says, "there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep-market, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda, having five porches." [chap. vi. 4.] Speaking of the passover, he tells us that it was a feast of the Jews. In like manner he describes the feast of tabernacles, [chap. vii. 2.] "The Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand; and, verse 37, he informs his readers that the last day was the great day of the feast. Chap. xix. 13, he gives both the Roman and the Jewish names of the place where Jesus was tried by the governor. But as remarkable as any, is the explication found, chap. xix. 31, "The Jews, therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath-day, for that sabbath-day was an high day," &c. Likewise, verse 42, "There laid they Jesus, therefore, because of the Jews' preparation-day. This manner of writing, every reader must be sensible, John would not have made use of, had he composed his gospel for the use of the Jews, or published it in Judea. On the other hand, the three evangelists would hardly have written in the manner they have done, had they originally designed their works for the Gentiles, or published them out of Judea.

From what has been said, it clearly appears that John wrote his gospel for the use of the world in general, and published it in some of the Gentile countries after the writings of the other evangelists were sent abroad. Hence, in forming his history, he followed a different plan from theirs. For, as he lived to see a new generation arise in Judea, which was not personally acquainted either with our Lord himself or with those who had heard and seen him, he judged it proper to record Christ's ministry in Judea, but especially his sermons and miracles at the great festivals, lest the memory of these things should have died with the witnesses, who, by that time, were mostly taken off the stage. Moreover, he had the pleasure to see the christian religion propagated into countries far distant from Judea, where Jesus had lived; in which distant countries his history could not be known, but by the gospels already published, or by the reports of those who were personally acquainted with him. Wherefore, the other evangelists having altogether omitted it, he judged it absolutely needful to give the world a specimen of Christ's ministry in Judea, that we might thereby know more of his doctrine and miracles, be able to form a better

notion of his consummate prudence, and behold with admiration the courage and zeal wherewith he acted in the capital, under the eyes of the great men, the priests, the scribes, and the elders, before whom he was not afraid to assume the character of one sent by God, and to act accordingly. Such were the plans upon which the four gospels were composed, and such the views with which they were published. Taken together, they contain as complete an account of our Lord's life as was necessary to be left on record; and each, in its order, was adapted to the circumstances of mankind at that time, the subsequent gospels supplying what was wanting in the precedent ones, till the history was completed.

John was the son of Zebedee, a fisherman, who had a boat, and nets, and hired servants, [Mark i. 20.] and followed his occupation on the sea of Galilee. From Matthew xxvii. 55, compared with Mark xv. 40, it appears that the name of Zebedee's wife was Salome; for, in the former of these passages she is called the mother of Zebedee's children, who, in the latter, is named Salome. Zebedee had another son, whose name was James, and who seems to have been elder than John. Both of them were fishers like their father, and assisted him in his business till they were called to follow Jesus. They seem all to have lived in one family, in the town of Bethsaida, which, being situated near the sea of Galilee, was a convenient station for fishers.

Because the mother of Zebedee's children is mentioned among the women who followed Jesus from Galilee to the last passover, ministering to him, as related, Mat. xxvii. 56, Lardner conjectures that Zebedee was then dead, and that the two brothers lived in separate houses. For when our Lord upon the cross recommended his mother to John, it is said, [John xix. 27.] "From that hour that disciple took her unto his own home." Perhaps John and his mother Salome lived together. Theophylact was of opinion that John's mother was related to our Lord; and Lardner supposes that that relation encouraged her to ask the two chief places in Christ's kingdom for her sons, and that it was the occasion of our Lord's committing the care of his mother to John. But there is no evidence in scripture of Zebedee's children being related to our Lord by their mother.

John had not the advantage of a learned education. For we are told [Acts iii. 14.] that the council perceived Peter and John were unlearned men. Nevertheless, like the generality of the Jewish common people of that age, they may have been well acquainted with the scriptures, having often heard them read in the synagogues. And as, with the rest of their countrymen, they expected the coming of Messiah about that time, they lent a willing ear to the Baptist when he published that Messiah was actually come, though the people did not know him. [John i. 26.] Afterward, when the Baptist pointed out Jesus

to his disciples, [verse 29.] “ as the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world,” he said to them, [verse 33.] “ I knew him not to be Messiah, but he who sent me to baptize with water, the same said to me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. [verse 34.] And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God.” If the sons of Zebedee were of the number of those to whom John testified that Jesus was the Son of God, we may believe they attached themselves early to him, and were among those who are called his disciples, and to whom he manifested his glory at the marriage in Cana, by turning water into wine. [John ii. 11.]

After the miracle in Cana, the sons of Zebedee seem to have followed their ordinary occupation, till Jesus called them to attend on him constantly, as mentioned, Matt. iv. For the evangelist, having related the calling of Peter and Andrew, adds, [verse 21.] “ And, going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them ; [22.] And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him, namely, when he went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.”

Some time after this, Jesus chose twelve of his disciples to be with him always, that they might be eye and ear-witnesses of all he did and said, and be qualified to testify the same to the world ; and, in particular, be qualified to bear witness to his resurrection from the dead. These chosen persons Jesus named apostles ; and the sons of Zebedee being of that number, he surnamed them Boanerges, or sons of thunder, to mark the courage with which they would afterwards preach him to the world as Christ, the Son of God. How well James fulfilled his Master’s prediction may be known from his being put to death by Herod Agrippa, not long after our Lord’s ascension, on account of his boldly testifying the resurrection of Jesus from the dead ; so that he became the first martyr among the apostles. Cave, in his life of James, says, the sons of Zebedee had the surname of Boanerges given them on account of the impetuosity of their tempers. And it must be acknowledged, that they showed too much anger in their proposal to have the Samaritans destroyed by fire from heaven, because they refused to receive Jesus as he was going up to Jerusalem to worship. [Luke ix. 54.] “ Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, even as Elias did.”

But although James and John showed improper zeal on the occasion mentioned, they were highly esteemed by their Master for their other good qualities, as appears from this, that of all the apostles, they only, with Peter, were admitted by him to be

the witnesses of the resurrection of Jairus' daughter, and of our Lord's transfiguration, and of his agony in the garden. John, more especially, was so much beloved of Jesus, that he was called "the disciple whom he loved." His benevolent disposition John manifested in his first epistle, by the frequency and earnestness with which he recommended mutual love to the disciples of Christ. With benevolence, John joined great fortitude and constancy in his attachment to his Master. For he only of the twelve attended him during his crucifixion, and saw the blood and water issue from his side when the soldier pierced it; and was, probably, present when his body was laid in the sepulchre, and saw the sepulchre closed with a stone. He, with Peter, ran to the sepulchre when Mary Magdalene brought word that the Lord's body was taken away. He was present also when Jesus showed himself to the apostles on the evening of the day of his resurrection, and on the eighth day thereafter. He, with his brother James, was present when Jesus showed himself to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and to the five hundred on the mountain in Galilee, mentioned, Matt. xxviii. 16. Moreover, he was present with the rest of the apostles when our Lord ascended into heaven from the mount of Olives. So that, with the greatest propriety and truth, he could begin his first epistle with saying, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen, &c. we declare unto you," referring to his gospel, in which he hath narrated the crucifixion, miracles, sufferings, death, and resurrection of the living Word, his appearances to his disciples after his resurrection, and, last of all, his ascension into heaven. To conclude: John was one of the hundred and twenty upon whom the Holy Ghost descended on the day of Pentecost, which immediately followed our Lord's ascension.

After the effusion of the Holy Spirit, John displayed the greatest boldness in maintaining his Master's cause, when, with Peter, he was brought before the council, and was strictly charged not to teach in the name of Jesus. For, on that occasion, he made the noble answer recorded, Acts iv. 19. "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have heard and seen."

We are told, [Acts viii. 14.] that "when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, that they might receive the Holy Ghost." It seems, none could confer that gift but apostles.

From Gal. ii. 9, it appears that John was present at the council of Jerusalem, which met, A. D. 49, or 50, to determine the great question agitated in the church of Antioch, namely, whether it was necessary to the salvation of the believing Gentiles that they should be circumcised. And if, as is probable, John

had his ordinary residence in Jerusalem till that time, he had his share in working the many signs and wonders which are said to have been done by the hands of the apostles. [Acts ii. 43; iv. 33; v. 12.]

John, according to Mill, Fabricius, and Le Clerc, wrote his gospel at Ephesus, after his return from the isle of Patmos, A. D. 97, at the desire of the christians in Asia. Wetstein thought that this gospel might be written about thirty-two years after our Lord's ascension. Basnage and Lampe, together with Dr. Lardner, fix the date of its composition in the year sixty-eight, just before the destruction of Jerusalem. This hypothesis brings its date very near to that of the other three gospels, which was about the year sixty-four or sixty-five; and, in the opinion of some, the gospel itself, the leading design of which was to show how inexcusable the Jews were in not receiving Jesus as the Christ, and to vindicate the providence of God in the calamities already befallen or now coming upon them, was peculiarly suitable to the circumstances in which the Jewish nation was then placed. The ancients assign two reasons which induced John to compose his gospel: the first was, because that in the other three gospels there was wanting the history of the beginning of our Lord's preaching, until the imprisonment of John the Baptist, which, therefore, he applied himself particularly to relate: the second reason was, in order to remove the errors of the Corinthians, Ebionites, and other sects. Mr. Lampe, however, and Dr. Lardner, have brought forward several important reasons, to show that John did not write his gospel against Cerinthus, or any other heretic.

The last chapter of John's gospel may be considered as a supplement, which was added principally with the view of giving the reader some account of the author. Some of the early christians had imbibed the notion that St. John the evangelist would live till the day of judgment, a notion to which a false interpretation of a saying of Christ, and the great age which the evangelist actually attained, had given rise. For this reason, John has related at full length, in the last chapter, the conversation which took place between Christ, Peter, and himself, after the resurrection; and has shown in what connection and in what sense Christ said of John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"

Grotius and several other critics have contended, that the last chapter was added, not by John himself, but by some other person or persons, and, probably, by the elders at Ephesus, after John's decease. Their principal argument is founded on verse twenty-four. "This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and we know that his testimony is true." But as this inference is not supported by the testimony of the ancients, Dr. Campbell does not think it admissible. The style of the whole

of the twenty-first chapter is exactly the same as that of the rest of the gospel; and as to the twenty-fourth verse in particular, he can see no reason for supposing that even that alone is an addition; for the phrase, "we know that his testimony is true," is nothing more than a figure of rhetoric called *communicatio*, and expresses the same as "every christian knows that his testimony is true." Besides, if this addition had been made by the Ephesian elders, they would probably have inserted their names; for the testimony of "we know," made by unknown persons, could add no authority to John's gospel.

The historians with whom we are here concerned, as Dr. Campbell observes, in their own character, do neither explain nor command, promise nor threaten, commend nor blame; but preserve one even tenor in exhibiting the facts entirely unembellished, reporting in singleness of heart both what was said and what was done to Christ by either friends or enemies. Not a syllable of encomium on the former, or of invective against the latter. As to their Lord himself, they appear to regard his character as infinitely superior to any praise which they could bestow; and as to his persecutors, they mingle no gall in what they write concerning them; they do not desire to aggravate their guilt in the judgment of any man, either by giving expressly, or by so much as insinuating, through the severity of their language, their opinion concerning it.

Nay, which is more remarkable, the names of the high-priest and his coadjutor, of the Roman procurator, of the tetrarch of Galilee, and of the treacherous disciple, are all that are mentioned of the many who had a hand in his prosecution and death. In regard to the four first, it is manifest that the suppression of the names, had the facts been related, would have made no difference to contemporaries; for, in offices of so great eminence, possessed by single persons, as all those offices were, the official is equivalent to the proper name, which it never fails to suggest; but such a suppression would have made to posterity a material defect in the history, and greatly impaired its evidence. In regard to the fifth, it is sufficient to observe, that without naming the traitor, justice could not have been done to the eleven. Whereas, of those scribes and Pharisees who bargained with Judas, of the men who apprehended Jesus, of the officer who struck him on the face at his trial, of the false witnesses who deposed against him, of those who afterwards spat upon him, buffeted, and mocked him, of those who were loudest in crying, "Away with him! crucify him! Not this man, but Barabbas!" of those who supplied the multitude with the implements of their mockery, the crown of thorns, the reed, and the scarlet robe, of those who upbraided him on the cross with his inability to save himself, or of the soldier who pierced his side with a spear, no name is given by any of the historians.

Now this reserve in regard to the names of those who were

the chief instruments of his sufferings is the more observable, as the names of others, to whom no special part is attributed, are mentioned without hesitation. Thus Malchus, whose ear Peter cut off, and who was immediately after miraculously cured by Jesus, is named by John; but nothing further is told of him, than that he was present when our Lord was seized, and that he was a servant of the high-priest. Simon, the Cyrenian, who carried the cross, is named by no fewer than three of the evangelists; but we are also informed, that in this service he did not act voluntarily, but by compulsion. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus are the only members of the sanhedrim, except the high-priest, who are mentioned by name; but they were the only persons of that body who did not concur in condemning the Son of God, and who, though once fearful and secret disciples, assumed the resolution to display their affection at a time when no one else ventured openly to acknowledge him. Our Lord's biographers, whilst they were thus far ready to do justice to merit, avoid naming any man without necessity, of whom they have nothing to say that is not to his dishonour. To the virtuous and good, they conciliate our esteem and love, an effectual method of raising our admiration of virtue and goodness, and exciting in us a noble emulation; but our contempt and hatred they direct against the crimes, not against the persons of men; against vices, not against the vicious; aware that this last direction is often of the most dangerous tendency to christian charity, and consequently to genuine virtue. They showed no disposition to hold up any man to the christians of their own time as an object of either their fear or their abhorrence, or to transmit his name with infamy to posterity.

The evangelists Matthew and John, being apostles, were eye-witnesses of most of the things they have related. They attended our Lord during his ministry; they heard him preach all his sermons, and saw him perform the greatest part of his miracles; they were present at his crucifixion; they conversed with him after his resurrection; and they beheld his ascension. Besides, as apostles, they possessed the gifts of illumination and utterance. By the former, they were absolutely secured from falling into error in any point of doctrine or matter of fact relating to the christian scheme. By the latter, they were enabled to express themselves clearly and pertinently upon every subject of christianity which they had occasion to treat of, either in their sermons or writings. These gifts our Lord had expressly promised to all his apostles. [John xiv. 25.] "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." So likewise, after his resurrection, [Luke xxiv. 49.] "And,

behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you ; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high."

Farther, the apostles of the Lord spake by inspiration also, in all the courts of justice and assemblies where they happened to be tried. This privilege their Master promised them very early. For when he sent them out on their first mission, he told them they were to be brought before kings and rulers for his name's sake ; and forbade them to meditate beforehand what or how they should speak, assuring them that the Spirit would inspire them to make proper defences in behalf of themselves, and of the cause they were engaged to support. [Matt. x. 18—20.] "And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles. But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak ; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." This promise Jesus renewed to his apostles a little before his passion. [Mark xiii. 11.] "But when they shall lead you and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate ; but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye : for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost." Nay, on another occasion, he seems to have extended the promise of inspiration to all the disciples, who, at that time, were to be employed in preaching the gospel, and who thereby might be exposed to persecution. See Luke xii. 1, 11, 12. The whole of these promises were punctually fulfilled. For about ten days after our Lord's ascension, the disciples received the Holy Ghost while they tarried in Jerusalem, according to their Master's order, in expectation of being endued with power from on high. Thus we are told, Acts ii. 3, that while the disciples were gathered together, the Spirit descended in the visible symbol of fire, which rested upon each of them, to denote the indwelling of the Spirit with them. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost:" they were inspired with the knowledge of the christian religion, and had all things that were either said or done by their Master brought to their remembrance, according to his promise. From that moment forth the Spirit gave clear indications of the reality of his presence with the disciples ; for he enabled them all at once to speak the various languages under heaven as fluently as if they had been their native tongues, and thereby qualified them to preach the gospel in all countries immediately upon their arrival, without the necessity of submitting to the tedious and irksome labour of learning the languages of those countries. Moreover, he gave them the power of working all manner of miracles ; nay, he enabled them to impart unto those whom they converted, the power of working miracles also, and the faculty of speaking

with tongues, and of prophesying, and of preaching by inspiration. The apostles of the Lord, having such convincing proofs of their inspiration always abiding with them, they did not fail, on proper occasions, to assert it, that mankind might every where receive their doctrine and writings with that submission which is due to the dictates of the Spirit of God. Hence we find them calling the gospel which they preached and wrote, The word of God, The commandment of God, The wisdom of God, The testimony of God; also, The word of Christ, The gospel of Christ, The mind of Christ, The mystery of God the Father, and of Christ. Wherefore Matthew and John, being apostles, and having received the gift of the Spirit with the rest of their brethren, there can be no doubt of their inspiration. Their gospels were written under the direction of the Holy Ghost, who resided in them; and, upon that account, they are venerated by all christians as the word of God, and have deservedly a place allowed them in the sacred canon.

The characters of Mark and Luke come next to be considered. They were not apostles, it is true; yet they were qualified to write such a history of our Lord's life as merits a place in the canon of scripture. For as they were, in all probability, early disciples, they may have been eye-witnesses of most of the things which they have related. Nay, they may have been in the apostles' company on the day of Pentecost, and may have received the gifts of the Spirit together with them, consequently they may have written by inspiration also. A tradition recorded by Epiphanius, that Mark was of the number of the seventy disciples, seems to favour these suppositions. However, if they are not admitted, this must be granted, that the evangelists whom we are speaking of accompanied the apostles in their travels. This matter is certain with respect to Luke; for, in his history of the Acts, he speaks of himself as Paul's companion; and, in the preface to his gospel, he expressly mentions the information of the ministers of the word, to lead us, as Dr. Macknight imagines, to think of Paul, with whom he had long travelled, and who had not the knowledge of Christ's history by personal acquaintance, but by revelation. [See Gal. i. 11, 12; 1 Cor. xi. 23.] As for Mark, he is generally reported by antiquity, and currently believed, to have been Peter's assistant. And in conformity to this opinion, all interpreters, both ancient and modern, suppose that Peter speaks of Mark the evangelist, 1 epist. v. 13. "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, salutes you; and so doth Marcus, my son." This appellation Peter gives to Mark, because of the great intimacy and friendship which subsisted between them, agreeable to the apostle's description of Timothy's affection. [Phil. ii. 22.] "But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel." If Mark was Peter's companion and fellow-labourer in the gospel, although he was

neither an apostle nor an eye-witness, he must have been well acquainted with our Lord's history, because he could not but learn it from the conversation and sermons of Peter, who was both. Wherefore, to use the words of Luke, since these evangelists took in hand to write the history of our Lord's life according to the information which they had received from the eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, and executed their design while they accompanied the persons from whom they received those informations, we may reasonably suppose they would submit their works to their examination. Accordingly, Clemens Alexandrinus, quoted by Euseb. vi. 14, tells us, that Mark's gospel was revised by Peter. And Mr. Jones, in support of this opinion, has collected eight particulars from the other gospels, all tending to the honour of Peter, which are entirely omitted by Mark, because Peter's humility, as he supposes, would not allow him to tell these things to that historian. But if it be true that Mark and Luke wrote according to the information of the apostles, and had their gospels revised by them, it is evidently the same as if the gospels had been dictated by the apostles.

However, though none of all the suppositions just now mentioned should be granted, there is one unquestionable matter of fact which fully establishes the authority of the two gospels under consideration, namely, that they were written by the persons whose names they bear, and while most of the apostles were alive. For, in that case, they must have been perused by the apostles, and approved, as is certain from their being universally received in the earliest ages, and handed down to posterity as of undoubted authority. The apostolical approbation was the only thing, without the inspiration of the writers, which could give these books the reputation they have obtained. And had it been wanting in any degree, they must have shared the fate of the many accounts which Luke speaks of in his preface; that is, must have been neglected either as imperfect or spurious, and so have quickly perished. But if the gospels of Mark and Luke were approved by the apostles immediately upon their publication, and, for that reason, were received by all christians, and handed down to posterity as of undoubted authority, it is the same as if they had been dictated by the apostles. Hence they are justly reckoned of equal authority with the other books of scripture, and admitted into the canon together with them. Such proofs as these, drawn from the sacred writings themselves, are sufficient to make all christians reverence the gospels as the word of God; and therefore they are fitly produced for the confirmation of our faith. But in arguing with infidels who look on the sacred writings as the works of impostors, the reasoning must proceed upon different topics.

The history of Jesus Christ, contained in the writings of the

evangelists, may be proved to be credible for the following reasons.

These writings were published very near the times in which Jesus Christ, whose history they contain, is said to have lived. There are three arguments which prove this.

I. The writers of the age immediately following that in which our Lord lived, and of the subsequent ages down to our times, have mentioned the four gospels expressly by their names, have cited many passages out of them, and made numberless allusions both to facts and expressions contained in them, as unto things known and believed by all christians, which they could not possibly have done had the gospels not been extant at the time we affirm. Farther, by the same succession of writers still remaining, it appears, that at and from the time when we suppose the gospels were published, peculiar regard was paid to them by all christians; they believed them to contain the only authentic records of Christ's life, and read them with the other scriptures in all their public assemblies. Hence translations of them were very early made into many different languages, some of which are still remaining. Moreover, exhortations to the people were drawn from them, every doctrine claiming belief was proved out of them, whatever was contrary to them was rejected as erroneous, they were appealed to as the standard in all the disputes which christians had among themselves, and by arguments drawn from them they confuted heretics and false teachers. That we learn these particulars concerning the gospels from the writings of christians does not weaken the argument in the least; because if those writings are as ancient as is commonly believed, be their authors who they will, they necessarily prove the gospels to have been written at the time we suppose. If it is replied that the writings appealed to for the antiquity of the gospels are themselves forged, the answer is, that, being cited by the writers of the age which immediately followed them, and they again by subsequent writers, they cannot be thought forgeries, unless it is affirmed that all the books that ever were published by christians are such, which is evidently ridiculous and impossible. Besides, an affirmation of this kind will appear the more absurd, when it is considered the enemies of christianity themselves bear testimony to the antiquity of the gospels, particularly Porphyry, Julian, Hierocles, and Celsus, who draw several of their objections against the christian religion from passages of our Lord's history contained in the gospels. The truth is, these books, being early written, and of general concernment, were eagerly sought after by all, the copies of them multiplied fast, spread far, and came into the hands both of friends and foes; which is the reason that we have more ancient manuscript copies of the gospels still remaining, than of any other part of the sacred writings, or even of any other ancient book whatsoever.

2. The gospels were published very near the times in which Jesus is said to have lived ; because the authors of the gospels call themselves his contemporaries, and affirm that they were eye and ear-witnesses of the transactions they relate, that they had a chief hand in several of them, and that all of them had happened but a few years before they wrote. Had these things been false, as soon as the books which contained them came abroad, every reader must at once have discovered the fraud, and, by that means, the books themselves must have been universally condemned as mischievous forgeries, and altogether neglected. Whereas, it is well known that they gained universal belief, that they were translated into many different languages, and that copies of them were preserved with the greatest care by those into whose hands they came.

3. In every instance where the evangelists had occasion to mention the manners and customs of the country which was the scene of their history, they have accurately described them ; and as often as their subject led them to speak of Jewish affairs, they have done it in such a manner as to show that they were perfectly acquainted with them. But, considering how extremely fluctuating the posture of affairs among the Jews was in that period, by reason of their intercourse with the Romans, such an exact knowledge of all the changes which happened could not possibly have entered into the supposititious work of any recent impostor. To have acquired such knowledge, the historian must both have been on the spot, and have lived near the times that are the subjects of his history, which is what we contend for in behalf of the evangelists.

These arguments prove that the gospels were published very near the time wherein they say our Lord lived. If so, they must be acknowledged to contain a true history of his life. For had any thing been told of him that was not consistent with the knowledge of his countrymen then living, it was in every one's power to have discovered and exposed the fraud. The great transactions of Christ's life, as they stand recorded in the gospels, were of the most public nature, and what the whole inhabitants of Judea were concerned in, especially the rulers and priests. His miracles are affirmed to have been performed openly, oftentimes before crowds, and in the great towns as well as in remote corners ; nay, in the temple itself, under the eye of the grandees, and that during the space of four years. Persons of all ranks and of all sects are introduced, acknowledging the truth of them. His enemies, however bitter, did not deny them, but ascribed them to the assistance of demons. Even the chief priests and Pharisees themselves are said to have confessed to one another that he did many miracles, and that if they let him alone all men would believe on him. In some instances, the subjects of his miracles were carried before the magistrates, whose examination rendered those miracles more public and

unquestionable. On one occasion, ten thousand people, and, on another, eight thousand, are said to have been miraculously fed by him, many of whom must have been still alive when the gospels appeared. He was tried by the supreme council of the Jews, examined by the tetrarch of Galilee and his captains, condemned by the Roman governor, and put to death in the metropolis at the chief religious solemnity of the Jews, before all the people who had come up from the different quarters of the country to worship. If these and the like particulars, found in the gospels, had been fictitious, it is natural to think that the Jews, not only in their own country, but every where else, would have disclaimed the facts, both in conversation and writing, immediately upon the first appearance of the books which asserted them, when they could easily have confuted them, the persons of whom such falsehoods were told being many of them then alive; and, by so doing, might have suppressed the christian religion at once, which most of them looked upon with abhorrence, as an impious schism, diametrically opposite to the institutions of Moses. Yet it does not appear that any of them went this way to work, neither Jew nor Gentile, in the earliest ages, attempting to fix the stain of falsehood on the evangelists, or to disprove any of the facts contained in their histories. The truth is, the gospels were permitted to go abroad every where without being called in question by any person; which could be owing to no cause whatsoever, but to the general belief which then prevailed, and to the particular persuasion of every individual capable of judging in such matters, that all the passages of the gospel history exhibited things certain and indubitable.

In the second place, the gospels are credible for this reason, that the principal facts contained in them are vouched, not only by all the christian writers now remaining from the earliest ages down to the present time, but by the Jewish writers also, and even by the heathens themselves. For that Jesus Christ lived in Judea under the reign of the emperor Tiberius, both Tacitus and Suetonius, and the younger Pliny testify. That he gathered disciples, was put to death in an ignominious manner by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, and that after his death he was worshipped as a god, the same authors affirm. Nor does Porphyry himself, nor Julian the emperor, nor any other of the ancient enemies of christianity, deny these things. On the contrary, they plainly acknowledge that miracles were done by Jesus and his apostles: and, by ascribing them to the power of magic, or to the assistance of demons, which was the solution given by Christ's enemies in his own life-time, they have left us no room to doubt of the sincerity of their acknowledgments. The writers, likewise, of the Talmudical books among the Jews acknowledge the principal transactions of Christ's life; for they durst not contradict, nor even pretend to doubt of facts so uni-

versally known. But they ridiculously imputed them to his having the true writings of the name JEROVAN in his possession, which they said he stole out of the temple. In short, as Grotius has well expressed it, there is no history in the world more certain and indubitable than this, which is supported by the concurring testimony, not to say of so many men, but of so many different nations, divided indeed among themselves in other particulars, but all agreeing in acknowledging the truth of the matters contained in the gospels.

In the third place, the gospels are credible, because the principal facts contained in them are confirmed by monuments of great fame subsisting in every christian country at this very day. For instance, baptism, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the rite by which, from the beginning, men have been initiated into the profession of christianity, keeps up the remembrance of Christ's having taught those sublime truths concerning the Father Almighty, the Eternal Son, and the Holy Spirit the Comforter, with which the world is now enlightened, as the gospels inform us. The Lord's supper, celebrated frequently by all believers, prevents the memory of Christ's death from being lost in any age or country of the world. The stated observation of the first day of the week, in honour of Christ's resurrection from the dead, hinders that grand event from falling into oblivion. And as these monuments perpetuate the memory, so they demonstrate the truth of the facts contained in the gospel-history. For if Jesus Christ neither lived, nor taught, nor wrought miracles, nor died, nor rose again from the dead, it is altogether incredible that so many men, in countries so widely distant, should have conspired together to perpetuate such a Leap of falsehoods by beginning the observation of those institutions of baptism, and the Lord's supper, and the sabbath: incredible likewise, that by continuing the observation of them, they should have imposed those falsehoods upon their posterity. Nor is this all: the truth of the gospel-history is demonstrated by a monument of greater fame still, namely, the sudden conversion of a great part of the world from Judaism, and from the many different forms of heathenism, to christianity, effected in all countries, notwithstanding the sword of the magistrate, the craft of the priests, the passions of the people, and the pride of the philosophers, were closely combined to support their several national forms of worship, and to crush the christian faith. Had this total overthrow of all the religions then subsisting been brought to pass by the force of arms, the influence of authority, or the refinements of policy, it had been less to be wondered at. Whereas, having been accomplished by the preaching of twelve illiterate fishermen and their assistants, who were wholly destitute of the advantages of birth, learning, and fortune, and who, by condemning the established religions of all countries, were every where looked upon as the most flagitious of men, and

opposed accordingly with the utmost virulence by all, it is inconceivable how the world could be converted, if the facts recorded in the gospels were false. And what makes this monument of the truth of our Lord's history very remarkable is, that the world was thus converted in an age justly celebrated for the height to which learning and the polite arts were carried by the Greeks and Romans, the renowned masters of the sciences. Nay, which is still more remarkable, almost the very first triumphs of the christian religion were in the heart of Greece itself. For churches were soon planted at Corinth, at Thessalonica, and at Philippi, as is evident from Paul's epistles directed to the churches in these cities. Even Rome itself, the seat of wealth and empire, was not able to resist the force of truth, many of its inhabitants embracing the christian faith. Nor was it the lower sort of people only in those cities which first became christians. Among the early converts, we find men of the highest rank and character, such as Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus; Erastus, treasurer of Corinth; Dionysius, a member of the senate of Areopagus in Athens; nay, and the domestics of the emperor himself; all of them persons whose education qualified them to judge of an affair of this kind, and whose offices and stations rendered them conspicuous. In process of time, it was not a single person of figure in this city or that nation who obeyed the gospel, but multitudes of the wise, the learned, the noble, and the mighty, in every country, who, being all fully convinced of the truth of the gospel, and impressed with the deepest sense of Christ's dignity, worshipped him as God, notwithstanding he had been punished with the ignominious death of a malefactor, and they themselves had been educated in the belief of other religions, to desert which they had not the smallest temptation from views of interest; but strongly the contrary, inasmuch as by becoming christians they denied themselves many sensual gratifications which their own religions indulged them in, lost the affections of their dearest friends who persisted in their ancient errors, and exposed themselves to all manner of sufferings in their persons, reputations, and fortunes. Add to this, that although the conversion of the world was sudden, it was not on that account unstable, or of short continuance. For the christian religion has remained to this day in full vigour, during the course of above eighteen hundred years, notwithstanding its enemies every where strenuously attacked it both with arguments and arms. Upon the whole, monuments so remarkable still subsisting in the world loudly proclaim the truth of the gospel history, because their original cannot be accounted for on any supposition but this, that the reports contained in the gospel concerning the doctrines, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, after the strictest scrutiny which those who lived nearest to the time and place of action would make, were found to rest on

proofs not to be gainsayed. And to entertain the least suspicion of the contrary is to suppose, that when the gospel was first preached, all mankind in every country had renounced the common principles of sense and reason, or, in other words, were absolutely mad.

In the fourth place, the character of the evangelists, both as writers and men, renders their history credible in the highest degree. They were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, that is, of the things which they preached and wrote of, relating scarce any thing but what they either saw, or heard, or performed themselves. Now these being all matters obvious to sense, in judging of them, neither acuteness of genius nor depth of learning were necessary; but only a sound understanding, a faithful memory, and organs of sense rightly disposed. Wherefore, though the evangelists were vulgar and illiterate men, the subject of their gospels being, for the most part, matters falling under the cognizance of sense, and in many of which they were themselves actors, they could not possibly be mistaken in them. And as they could not themselves be deceived in the things of which they wrote, so neither can it be imagined that they had any design to deceive the world. For it is well known that impostors always propose to themselves some reward of their fraud; riches, it may be, or honours, or power. If so, those who think the evangelists impostors ought to show what advantages they promised to themselves by imposing upon the world such a story as their gospels. It is well known that these men set themselves in opposition to all the religions then in being, and required the express renunciation of them under the severest penalties, and, by so doing, made all the world their enemies. Hence it came to pass, that, instead of amassing riches, or wallowing in luxury, the first christians, but especially the ringleaders of the sect of the Nazarenes, as they were called, the apostles and evangelists, were every where oppressed with poverty, hunger, nakedness, and wretchedness. Instead of high offices of trust and power, the bitterest persecutions awaited them in all places, and death itself in its most terrible forms. Nor did these things befall them beyond their own expectations, by reason of cross accidents thwarting well-laid schemes. They knew what was to happen; their Master foretold it to them [Matt. x. 16—28; xxiv. 9; Luke xii. 11; John xvi. 1—4.]; and they themselves expected no other things. [Acts xx. 22—24; 1 Cor. iv. 9, &c.] Now can it be imagined, that with the known loss of all that is dear in life, with the constant peril of death, and with the certain prospect of damnation, a number of men in their right wits should have propagated what they were sensible was a gross falsehood, and have persisted in the fraud even to death, sealing their testimony with their blood? No: this is a pitch of folly of which human nature is not capable. And therefore

we must acknowledge that the evangelists, and all the first witnesses of our Lord's miracles and doctrine, who, by the providence of God, were generally thus brought to seal their testimony with their blood, were fully persuaded of the truth of what they published in their sermons and writings. It is not to the purpose to reply, that enthusiasts have suffered persecution, and even death, in support of false opinions. For although a person's dying for his opinions does not prove their truth, it certainly proves the martyr's persuasion of the truth of his opinions. Let this be granted in the case of the evangelists, and the controversy is at an end. For if they themselves really believed what they wrote, and could not possibly have any intention to deceive us, their gospels must doubtless be true, the things contained in them being generally matters obvious to sense, which enthusiasm could by no means discolour, and in judging of which persons of the meanest capacities could not be deceived.

In the last place, the perfect agreement subsisting between the gospels rightly understood, is a circumstance which heightens their credibility not a little. The apparent inconsistencies observable in some of the narrations, when compared, prove undeniably that the evangelists were in no combination to make up their histories and deceive the world. In many instances, these inconsistencies are of such a kind, as would lead one to believe that the subsequent historians did not compare the accounts of particular transactions which they were about to publish with those that were already abroad in the world. Each evangelist represented the matters which are the subjects of his history as his own memory, under the direction of the Spirit, suggested them to him, without considering how far they might be agreeable to the accounts of his brethren historians. At the same time, the easy and full reconciliation of these inconsistencies, which arises from a proper knowledge of the gospels, and of the manners and customs of antiquity, proves that the writers were directed by the sober spirit of truth.

By the force of these and such-like arguments has the gospel history gained a belief next to universal in ages past; and by these it stands at present firmly established against the violent attacks of its enemies, who, with unwearied application, are assailing it on all quarters. In a word, founded upon these arguments, it can never be overturned in any age to come; but while men are capable of discerning, truth will be believed and received to the end of the world.

We shall now proceed to collect what hints we may meet with either in the New Testament or in ecclesiastical writings, relating to the history of the four evangelists after their writing of the gospels.

Of Matthew it is related upon doubtful authority, that, after

having preached the gospel with great success in Egypt and Ethiopia, he was thrust through with a spear.

Mark is asserted by Eusebius to have made many converts in Egypt, whom he supposes to have been remarked by Philo on account of the extraordinary severity of their lives. He is said to have suffered martyrdom in the city of Alexandria, having been first dragged about the streets with ropes, and then consumed in the fire.

Concerning Luke we know certainly, that, besides his gospel, he wrote another very valuable history, entitled the Acts of the Apostles. The exact time of his writing this book is not known; but it must have been at least two years after Paul's arrival at Rome, because he informs us that Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house. Perhaps he wrote it while he remained with the apostle during his imprisonment. Luke, says a modern writer, is pure, copious, and flowing in his language, and has a wonderful and entertaining variety of select circumstances in his narration of our Saviour's divine actions. He acquaints us with numerous passages of the evangelical history not related by any other evangelist: both in his gospel and apostolical Acts, he is accurate and neat, clear and flowing, with a natural and easy grace: his style is admirably accommodated to the design of history; it has a very considerable resemblance to that of his great master St. Paul; and, like him, he had a learned and liberal education, and appears to have been very conversant with the best classics; for many of his words and expressions are exactly similar to theirs. He is supposed to have died a natural death in the eightieth or eighty-fourth year of his age, about the year of our Lord 70; but some assert him to have been hanged.

John is believed to have been the writer of the three epistles which bear his name, and the Revelations. It is remarkable, that none of the three epistles which are ascribed to John contain the name of that apostle. The reader may therefore be desirous of ascertaining by what arguments they are proved to be his writing, and upon what authority they are received into the sacred canon. To these questions we reply, 1. That which is called the first epistle of John has been universally ascribed to him by the most ancient christian writers, who, from the time in which they lived, were the most capable of deciding concerning its genuineness. This is confirmed by the conduct of the ancient Syriac translator, who rendered the first of John into that language for the benefit of the Jewish believers. 2. On a careful comparison of the epistle and gospel, the most striking resemblance in style and sentiment will be found to exist between them. To discover similarity of sentiment, let the reader compare at his leisure the following passages: John i. 1, with I John i. 1; John xiv. 23, with I John ii. 5; John xv. 4, with I John ii. 6; John xiii. 34, with I John ii. 8,

and iii. 11; John i. 12, with 1 John iii. 1; many other passages also to the same purpose might be enumerated. Of his style it is easy to trace two peculiarities, both in his gospel and epistles; first, that he not only affirms the truth which he means to establish, but denies the contrary, for example, 1 John ii. 4, "He who saith I have known him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him:" secondly, that to express things emphatically, he frequently uses the pronoun this, as "this is the condemnation, this is the promise, this is life eternal," &c. 3. The most exact resemblance of style and sentiment may be traced between the two last epistles and the first; it is even asserted by Dr. Whitby, that out of the thirteen verses of which the second epistle is composed, no fewer than eight are to be found, at least in substance, in the first. 4. A very ancient tradition in the church has ascribed the two latter epistles, as well as the former, to the apostle John. 5. The only grounds on which this opinion appears to have been controverted are these, that being very short, they have not been much quoted by very ancient writers; that, being directed to particular individuals, it was some time before they became generally circulated; and that John, speaking of himself as an elder, it has been imagined by some that he was a different person from the apostle. Of the weakness of the last-mentioned supposition, it is unnecessary to say more than that Peter exhorts as an elder, and Paul as such an one as Paul the aged. On the whole, therefore, it appears, that it was on the best and most solid grounds that these three epistles have been received as the divine word, and, as such, publicly read for the edification of the churches.

In the first epistle, the leading design of John appears to be to demonstrate the vanity of that superficial and mistaken faith which does not produce obedience, to excite a spirit of christian affection, and to arm his readers against the snares and efforts of antichrist. In conformity with these designs, he first testifies the holiness and mercy which are exhibited in Christ Jesus to all that truly repent. [i. 1, to the end.] Then he urges the propitiation and intercession of Christ, as arguments to obedience, brotherly love, and victory over the world. [ch. ii. 1—17.] He proceeds to forewarn them of the many antichrists who were springing up in the world, directing them to the best preservatives against their ensnaring doctrines. [verse 18—28.] He then discourses of those exalted privileges to which the children of God are entitled, and urges the necessity of holiness both in heart and life, to prove that we are in that blessed number. [verse 29; iii. 10.] He employs the remainder of the third chapter in the enforcing of brotherly love, as an essential characteristic of the christian. In the fourth, [verse 1—12.] he cautions them particularly against deceivers, and instructs them in what manner to distinguish between truth and false-

hood. At length, drawing near to a conclusion, he declares his general design to be the confirmation of their faith; reminds them of the ground they had to hope that their prayers would be heard both for themselves and others, who had not sinned unpardonably; and closes the whole with a reflection on the happy difference between those that know God, and an ignorant and ungodly world. [verse 13, to the end.]

The Cerinthians, Ebionites, and other heretics who early disturbed the church, are supposed to have given occasion to this epistle. Where, or when it was written, and to whom it was addressed, is extremely uncertain. As probable an opinion as any seems to be that of Dr. Macknight, that it was published in Judea for the benefit of the Jewish christians, a little before the destruction of their capital city.

An almost endless variety of opinions have been formed concerning the antichrist here mentioned. He appears to be the same with the man of sin characterized by Paul in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, and described in terms which apply literally to the excesses of papal power. Grotius maintains that Caligula was antichrist; others have affirmed the same of Nero; but the date of those emperors' reigns does not agree with his appearance at the end of the world. A favourite idea among the catholics has been, that he is to be a Jew of the tribe of Dan; and the whole history of his reign, wars, vices, doctrine, miracles, persecutions, and death, has been written by a Spanish jesuit. Hippolitus and others held that the devil himself was the true antichrist, and would become incarnate in human shape before the consummation of all things. Lastly, Oliver Cromwell, in the seventeenth century, and Napoleon Buonaparte, in the present, have found writers desirous of exalting them to this bad eminence.

Of the time of writing the second and third epistles of John, nothing, as Lardner observes, can be said with certainty. It is not unlikely that they were written between the years eighty and ninety, when John might very fitly take the distinguishing epithet of the elder or aged apostle.

Some have supposed that the person to whom the second epistle is addressed ought not to be called the *elect Lady*, but that one of these words being left untranslated, the passage should be read the Lady Eclecta, or the Elect Kuria. It is thought to have been written to confute the error of Basilides and his followers, who affirmed that Christ was not a man in reality, but only in appearance.

The third epistle is addressed to one Gaius, or Caius, a christian eminent for hospitality; but whether the same as is mentioned by Paul in his epistle to the Romans is uncertain. A principal design of its being written was to oppose the practices of one Diotrephes, who was fond of distinction in the church, and unfriendly to christian strangers.

The authority of the Apocalypse, or book of the Revelations of St. John, appears to have been universally admitted during the two first centuries, though it was questioned in the beginning of the third, in consequence of a mistaken opinion, that it encouraged the expectation of the temporal reign of Christ on the earth. It was evidently written in the island of Patmos, whither John appears to have been banished for his adherence to the cause of his Master. Its date is generally fixed to the year ninety-six; but others place it earlier, even before the destruction of Jerusalem. It may be divided into three parts: the first, which is contained in the first chapter, gives an account of a vision of our Lord, which John saw while engaged in the devotions of the Lord's day. The second part contains the epistles of Christ to the seven churches in Asia. [chap. ii. and iii.] The third part, which occupies the remainder of the book, describes the condition of the church in succeeding times. This commences with a sublime description of the deity enthroned in glory, surrounded with saints and angels, and proceeds to represent a sealed book of God's decrees which none could open but the Lamb, our Lord Jesus Christ. The opening of these seven seals makes the first period which is described at length in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters. The second period is that of the trumpets, which are given to seven angels, and six of them sounded, each of their blasts being followed by the most awful consequences. [ch. viii.] The third period is introduced by the measuring the temple, the vision of a woman clothed with the sun and opposed by a dragon, the vision of two savage beasts which should make great desolation among the saints of God, that of an angel flying through the midst of heaven with the everlasting gospel in his hand, and several other mystical representations. The seven angels then pour out their seven vials full of the wrath of God upon his enemies in earth, and Babylon is at length declared to have sunk beneath his vengeance. [chap. xiii. to xix.] The fourth period represents the flourishing state of the church during the space of a thousand years, [chap. xx. 1—6.] In the fifth period Satan makes a fresh, but unsuccessful attempt for the establishment of his kingdom. [verse 7—10.] The sixth period represents the universal judgment. [verse 11, to the end.] And the seventh describes the happiness of the saints of God. [chap. xxi. xxii.] It is scarcely necessary to observe, that no book of the New Testament has been so variously interpreted.

The history of John after his return from banishment is thus recorded by Eusebius, in the third book of his Ecclesiastical History.

'At this time, there remained alive in Asia that same apostle and evangelist, John, whom Jesus loved; and, having returned from his banishment to the island after the death of Domitian, he again governed the churches. That he yet remained

alive, is proved by the testimony of two very credible witnesses, both of them zealous defenders of the orthodox faith, namely, Irenæus and Clement of Alexandria. The former of whom, in his second book against heresies, writes thus word for word: 'All the presbyters who were acquainted in Asia with John, the disciple of our Lord, testify that John delivered it to them; for he remained with them until the time of Trajan.' And in the third book, upon the same subject, he manifests the same thing in these words: 'Moreover, the church at Ephesus was founded indeed by Paul, but John, continuing among them until Trajan's time, was a faithful witness of the apostolic traditions.' Clement, also, having pointed out the time, adds also a history very necessary for them who like to hear good and profitable things, it is in that book which he has written under the title, *Who that rich man is that shall be saved*. Let us therefore take his book, and read the story, which is thus, 'Hear a fable, and not a fable; but a true story, which is related concerning John the apostle, and delivered unto us and kept in remembrance. For when, after the tyrant was dead, he had returned from the island of Patmos to Ephesus, being requested so to do, he departed for the neighbouring countries, in some places ordaining bishops, in others regulating whole churches, and in others again choosing into the clergy those who were pointed out by the Spirit. When he had come to a certain city not far distant, and of which some have related the name, (the author of the *Chronicon Alexandrinum* calls the name of this city Smyrna,) and, moreover, having refreshed the brethren, seeing a very young man, of goodly stature of body, comely countenance, and lively disposition, he looked stedfastly upon him whom he had ordained bishop, and said, I commit him to thee with all diligence, in the presence of the church and of Christ, as witness. And when he had received him, and promised that he would perform all things, John, having again charged him with these things, and taken him to witness, afterwards returned to Ephesus. The presbyter, having received him, took home the young man who had been delivered to him, brought him up under due restraint, cherished him as his own, and, at length, enlightened, i. e. baptized him; but after that, he relaxed something of his great care and watchfulness over him, because he had placed upon him, as it were, the perfect and secure seal of the Lord. But he, having received his liberty too early, became corrupted by certain idle and dissolute young men abandoned to all evil, who, being his equals, associated themselves with him, invited him to sumptuous entertainments, afterward engaged him to go with them by night to rob and stop travellers, and, at length, allured him to still greater villany. He became gradually accustomed to crimes: and, on account of the violence of his spirit, like a strong and ungovernable horse, flies from the right way, and, furiously champing the bit, hastens to precipitate

himself into an abyss of ruin. At last, rejecting the salvation of God, he determined nothing less with himself than to commit some enormous crime; for, having now become desperate, he scorned to suffer the common punishment of other thieves. Taking, therefore, his accomplices, and forming them into a troop of robbers, he readily became their leader, being the most violent, bloody, and cruel of them all. In the mean time, on some necessary occasion, the christians of that city sent for John. He, after that he had set in order those things on account of which he had come, said, O bishop, restore to us that charge which I, and indeed Christ, committed unto thee, in the presence of that church over which thou art ordained. He, truly, was at first astonished, supposing that he was falsely accused of money which he had not received; yet, while he could not believe himself to have had those things which he had not received, so neither could he dare entirely to disbelieve John. But when John had said, I demand the young man, and the soul of our brother, the elder, groaning deeply, and also weeping, replied, He is dead. How? and what kind of death? To God, said he, he is dead; for he proved wicked and completely abandoned, and, at length, became a thief; and now, instead of continuing in the church, he hath betaken himself to the mountain with a troop of armed men. The apostle then rent his garments, and exclaimed with a bitter lamentation, I have left a good keeper of his brother's soul! but furnish me with a horse and a guide for the way. So he hastened immediately out of the church; and, coming to the place, is taken by the watch which the thieves had set, when he neither flies, nor endeavours to avoid them; but cries out with a loud voice, I am come for this purpose, bring me to your captain. The captain, armed as he was, for awhile stood still; but as soon as he knew that it was John who was approaching, being filled with shame, he betook himself to flight. But the apostle vigorously pursued him, forgetful of his age, and exclaimed, Why dost thou flee from me? shall a son flee from his father, an unarmed old man? Pity me, my son; do not fear; thou hast yet hope of eternal life. I will intercede with Christ for thee; if it were necessary, I would readily undergo death for thy sake, as Christ hath died for us. I will pay my soul for thine; stand still; believe me; Christ hath sent me. Hearing these things, the young man at first stood motionless, looking on the ground, then threw away his weapons, and, at length, trembled and wept bitterly. Embracing the old man, who came to him, he apologized for himself with groans as well as he could, and became baptized a second time with his tears, all but his right hand, which he continued to conceal. The apostle, promising and swearing that he would obtain for him the remission of his sins from our Saviour, having kneeled down and kissed his right hand, now purified by repentance, brought him back into the church again. Then,

making intercession for him with frequent prayers, agonizing with him in continual fastings, composing his mind with comfortable passages, he did not leave him, as they say, before he had established him in the church, thus giving a great example of true repentance, an illustrious proof of regeneration, and a trophy of a blessed resurrection.'

There are several other stories related concerning John, which do not seem to have been so well authenticated as the preceding. Thus he is reported to have turned pieces of wood and stone into gold, in order to satisfy the avarice of some, who, having renounced their riches for the sake of the christian religion, afterwards repented of their choice; to have been placed in a vessel of boiling oil without being scalded; and to have drank poison without receiving any pernicious effect. He died, according to Jerom, in the third year of Trajan, in the hundredth year of his age, according to the opinion of Lampe, and just at the end of the first century. His name has constantly been held in the most profound veneration, for the simplicity, love, and meekness, which equally distinguished his character and his writings.

CHAPTER XIX.

The history of other persons mentioned in the New Testament.

The Virgin Mary—Peter—review of his two epistles—his preaching at Rome—his martyrdom—Andrew—his martyrdom—James the Elder—Philip the apostle—Bartholomew—Thomas—his preaching and martyrdom—spurious writings attributed to him—James the Less—review of his epistle—account of his death—Jude—his epistle—the pretended embassy to Abgarus, king of Edessa—Simon Zelotes, or the Canaanite—Matthias—badges of the apostles—Philip the Deacon—Nicanor—Timon—Parmenas—Nicholas—Barnabas—Apollos—Timothy—observation on his second epistle—Titus—remarks on the epistle directed to him—character of the Cretans—Philemon—Onesimus—Linus—Clement—Hermas—Dionysius the Areopagite—conclusion.

IN the prosecution of our present undertaking, a considerable variety of objects has passed before us in review. Our first employment was to trace the blessed Sun of Righteousness from the earliest dawning of his light, till, having arrived at his meridian splendour, a cloud received him from the sight of mortals, and he ascended to dispense the blessings of his rays upon the inhabitants of a world to us unseen, though not entirely unknown. We then beheld the Eternal Spirit descend like tongues of cloven flame, rest on the heads of the disciples, and communicate to them that rich abundance of divine instruction which

enabled them to shine in their generation like stars in the firmament of heaven. The most distinguished, though the last called of these holy men, was Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles. Throughout that portion of his life which elapsed between his conversion and his death, he appears superior to most of the weaknesses of human nature; and, having fixed his view steadily on the advancement of his Redeemer's kingdom, regretted no labour or suffering which was necessary for the attainment of this purpose. The celebrity of the four evangelists, especially of the three former, is derived not so much from the excellences of their own characters, as from the exalted dignity of that Saviour whose history they have recorded. There now remains a number of venerable persons concerning whose lives we possess but scanty information, yet whom it would be unjust to pass over in silence. Such are Mary, the mother of our Lord, the remainder of the twelve apostles, the seven deacons, Barnabas, Timothy, Titus, and several others to whose labours the Gentile world is greatly indebted. Of these we shall proceed to speak in their order.

Of the Virgin Mary nothing further is known with certainty than what is recorded in the New Testament. From that most authentic source, we learn that she was a maiden of Galilee, of exemplary piety and modesty. She does not appear to have been lifted up by the message of Gabriel; but, retiring as much as possible from the world, expected with humble solicitude the fulfilment of the divine prediction. She watched, no doubt, over the infant Jesus with the most tender and unremitting care, delighting to observe his progress in wisdom and in stature, and cherishing the belief that he would one day effect the deliverance of Israel. Her affectionate expostulation with him when he remained among the doctors at Jerusalem affords a remarkable instance of her maternal care. From the silence of the evangelists concerning Joseph, it is probable that Mary became a widow before the commencement of our Lord's ministry. At his death, he commended her to John, on whose affectionate disposition he had the most implicit reliance. Neither her own danger, nor the sadness of the spectacle, nor the reproaches and insults of the people, could restrain her from witnessing the sufferings of her son upon the cross. In this, she exhibited, as Grotius justly observes, a noble example of fortitude and zeal. Now a sword, according to Simeon's prophecy, [Luke ii. 35.] struck through her tender heart, and penetrated her soul; and, probably, the extremity of her sorrow did so overwhelm her spirits, as to render her incapable of attending at the sepulchre. Nothing more concerning her is mentioned in the sacred story, or in early antiquity, except that she continued among the disciples, and united in their worship after our Lord's ascension. [Acts i. 14.] Andrew of Crete, a writer of the seventh century, tells us that she died with John at Ephesus, in an extreme old

age; and it appears, from a letter of the council of Ephesus, in the fifth century, that it was then believed she was buried there. But they pretend to show her sepulchre at Jerusalem; and many ridiculous tales are forged concerning her death and assumption, or being taken up into heaven, of which the best catholic authors are themselves ashamed.

Simon Peter was a native of Bethsaida, a town situated on the western shore of the lake of Gennesareth. He was by trade a fisherman, and had a brother named Andrew; but whether he was elder or younger than Simon is not known. Their father was named Jonah, or John; and, probably, was of the same occupation with his sons. Andrew was a disciple of John Baptist, [John i. 35, 41.] and heard him point out Jesus as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." This good news Andrew communicated to his brother Simon, and brought him to Jesus, who, foreseeing the fortitude he would exercise in preaching the gospel, honoured him with the name of Cephas, or Peter, which is, by interpretation, a stone, or rock. [John i. 42.]

Andrew and Peter now became the disciples of Jesus, and often attended him. Yet they still followed their trade of fishing occasionally, till he called them to a more constant attendance, promising to make them "fishers of men." [Mat. iv. 19.] Afterwards when he chose twelve of his disciples to be with him always, and to be his apostles, Peter and Andrew were of the number. About that time, Peter had left Bethsaida, and had gone to Capernaum with his wife, who is thought to have been of that town. From Andrew's accompanying his brother thither, and living with him in the same house, it may be conjectured that their father was dead. With them, Jesus also abode, after he took up his ordinary residence in Capernaum; for he seems to have been pleased with the disposition and manners of all the members of the family. This house is sometimes called Peter's house, [Mat. viii. 14.] and sometimes the house of Simon and Andrew. [Mark i. 29.] Thus, as Lardner observes, it appears, that before Peter became an apostle, he had a wife, was the head of a family, had a boat and nets, and a furnished house, and maintained himself by an honest occupation. To these things Peter alluded when he told his Master, "Behold, we have left all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" [Mat. xix. 27.] The apostle Paul seems to insinuate, that Peter's wife attended him in his travels after our Lord's ascension. [1 Cor. ix. 5.]

Peter, now made an apostle, showed on every occasion the strongest faith in Jesus as the Messiah, and the most extraordinary zeal in his service, of which the following are examples. The night after the miracle of the loaves, when Jesus came to his disciples walking on the sea, they were affrighted, supposing that they saw a spirit. But Peter, taking courage, said,

“Lord, if it be thou, bid me come to thee on the water. And he said to him, Come.” [Matt. xiv. 28.] The next day, when many of our Lord’s disciples, offended at his discourse in the synagogue of Capernaum, left him, Jesus said to the twelve, “Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom should we go? for thou hast the words of eternal life: and we know and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” In returning this answer, Peter was more forward than the rest, because his faith was strengthened by the late miracle of his walking on the water. The same answer Peter gave when Jesus in private asked his disciples, first, what opinion the people entertained of him; next, what was their own opinion. [Matt. xvi. 16.] “Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Having received this answer, Jesus declared Peter blessed on account of his faith; and, in allusion to the signification of his name, added, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth,” &c. Many think these things were spoken to Peter alone, for the purpose of conferring on him privileges and powers not granted to the rest of the apostles. But others, with more reason, suppose, that though Jesus directed his discourse to Peter, it was intended for them all, and that the honours and powers granted to Peter by name were conferred on them all equally. For no one will say that Christ’s church was built upon Peter singly. It was “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.” As little can any one say that the power of binding and loosing was confined to Peter, seeing it was declared afterwards to belong to all the apostles. [Matt. xviii. 18, John xx. 23.] To these things add this, that as Peter made both his confessions in answer to questions which Jesus put to the whole of the apostles, these confessions were certainly made in the name of the whole. And therefore what Jesus said to him in reply was designed for the whole without distinction; excepting this, which was peculiar to him, that he was to be the first who, after the descent of the Holy Ghost, should preach the gospel to the Jews, and then to the Gentiles; an honour which was conferred on Peter in the expression, “I will give unto thee the keys,” &c.

Peter was one of the three apostles whom Jesus admitted to witness the resurrection of Jairus’s daughter, and before whom he was transfigured, and with whom he retired to pray in the garden the night before he suffered. He was the person who, in the fervour of his zeal for his Master, cut off the ear of the high-priest’s slave, when the armed band came to apprehend him. Yet this same Peter, a few hours after that, denied his Master three different times in the high-priest’s palace, and with oaths. After the third denial, being stung with deep remorse,

he went out and wept bitterly. This offence Jesus pardoned. And, to testify his acceptance of his lapsed but penitent apostle, he ordered the women to carry the news of his resurrection to Peter by name, and appeared to him before he showed himself to any other of his apostles. And at another appearance, he confirmed him in the apostolical office, by giving him a special commission to feed his sheep. From that time forth Peter never faltered in his faith; but uniformly showed the greatest zeal and courage in his Master's cause.

Soon after our Lord's ascension, in a numerous assembly of the apostles and brethren, Peter gave it as his opinion that one should be chosen to be an apostle in the room of Judas. To this they all agreed; and, by lot, chose Matthias, whom, on that occasion, they numbered with the eleven apostles. On the day of Pentecost following, when the Holy Ghost fell on the apostles and disciples, Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice in the name of the apostles, as he had done on various occasions in his Master's life-time, and gave the multitude an account of that great miracle. [Acts ii. 14.] When Peter and John were brought before the council to be examined concerning the miracle wrought on the impotent man, Peter spake. It was Peter who questioned Ananias and Sapphira about the price of their land; and, for their lying in that manner, punished them miraculously with death. It is remarkable also, that although by the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were wrought, it was by Peter's shadow alone that the sick, who were laid in the streets of Jerusalem, were healed as he passed by. Lastly, it was Peter who made answer to the council for the apostles' not obeying their command, to preach no more in the name of Jesus.

Peter's fame was now become so great, that the brethren at Joppa, hearing of his being in Lydda, and of his having cured Eneas miraculously of a palsy, sent, desiring him to come and restore a disciple to life, named Tabitha: which he did. During his abode at Joppa, the Roman centurion Cornelius, directed by an angel, sent for him to come and preach to him. On that occasion, the Holy Ghost fell on Cornelius and his company while Peter spake. Peter, by his zeal and success in preaching the gospel, having attracted the notice of the inhabitants at Jerusalem, Herod Agrippa, who, to please the Jews, had killed James, the brother of John, still farther to gratify them, cast Peter into prison. But an angel brought him out; after which, he concealed himself in the city, or in some neighbouring town, till Herod's death, which happened about the end of the year. Some learned men think Peter at that time went to Antioch, or to Rome. But if he had gone to any celebrated city, Luke, as *L'Enfant* observes, would probably have mentioned it. Besides, we find him in the council of Jerusalem, which met not long after this to determine the famous question concerning the cir-

cumcision of the Gentiles. The council being ended, Peter went to Antioch, where he gave great offence by refusing to eat with the converted Gentiles. But Paul withstood him to the face, rebuking him before the whole church for his pusillanimity and hypocrisy. [Gal. ii. 11—21.]

From the foregoing history, it appears that Peter very early distinguished himself as an apostle; that his Master greatly esteemed him for his courage, his zeal, and his other good qualities: that he lived in peculiar habits of intimacy with Peter, and conferred on him various marks of favour, in common with James and John, who likewise distinguished themselves by their talents and good dispositions. But that Peter received from Christ any authority over his brethren, or possessed any superior dignity as an apostle, there is no reason for believing. All the apostles were equal in office and authority, as is plain from our Lord's declaration, "one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." The only distinction among the apostles was that which arose from personal talents and qualifications, a distinction which never fails to take place in every society. Because, if one distinguishes himself by his superior ability in the management of affairs, he will be respected in proportion to the idea which his fellows entertain of him. In this manner, and in no other, Peter, whose virtues and talents were singularly conspicuous, acquired a pre-eminence among the apostles. But it was only of the sort founded on personal esteem. And therefore, in their meetings to deliberate on any important affair, the brethren may have wished to hear him speak first; and he commonly did so: but that was all. In like manner, in their intercourses with their adversaries, Peter often spake in the name of such of the apostles and brethren as were present: which they willingly allowed, perhaps desired, as thinking him best qualified for the office. The evangelists also, who wrote their gospels a considerable time after Peter had raised himself in the esteem of the apostles and brethren, added their suffrage to his character, by mentioning him first in the catalogues they gave of the apostles. And as two of them were themselves apostles, by acknowledging, in that manner, their respect for him, they have shown themselves entirely free from envy. Lastly, it appears from Peter's epistles, that he did not think himself superior in authority to the other apostles. For if he had entertained any imagination of that sort, insinuations of his superiority, if not direct assertions thereof, might have been expected in his epistles, and especially in their inscriptions. Yet there is nothing of that sort in either of his letters. The highest title he takes to himself in writing to the elders of Pontus, is that of their *fellow-elder*. [1 Pet. v. 1.]

To the foregoing account of Peter's rank among the apostles, Dr. Macknight adds, from Lardner on the canon, page 102,

that Cassian, supposing Peter to be older than Andrew, makes his age the ground of his precedence among the apostles; and that Jerom himself says, "The keys were given to all the apostles alike, and the church was built on them all equally. But for preventing dissension, precedence was given to one. And John might have been the person; but he was too young. And Peter was preferred on account of his age."

In the history of the Acts, no mention is made of Peter after the council of Jerusalem. But from Gal. ii. 11, it appears, that, after the council, he was with Paul at Antioch. He is likewise mentioned by Paul, 1 Cor. i. 12; iii. 22, from which Pearson infers that Peter had been in Corinth before the first epistle to the Corinthians was written. But this does not follow. In these passages Paul speaks of certain Jews in Corinth who had been converted by Jesus and Peter. But he does not say they were converted in Corinth. Probably their conversion happened in Judea. If Peter had preached in Corinth before Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he would not have said, "I have planted, Apollos hath watered;" overlooking the labours of Peter. When Paul wrote his epistle to the Romans, it may be presumed that Peter was not in Rome: for, in that epistle, Paul saluted many of the brethren there by name, without mentioning Peter. Farther, during his two years' confinement at Rome, Paul wrote four letters to different churches, in none of which is Peter mentioned. Neither is any thing said or hinted in these epistles, from which it can be gathered that Peter had ever been in Rome. Probably, he did not visit that city till about the time of Paul's martyrdom.

It is generally supposed, that after Peter was at Antioch with Paul, he returned to Jerusalem. What happened to him after this is not told in the scriptures. But Eusebius informs us, that Origen, in the third volume of his exposition on Genesis, wrote to this purpose: "Peter is supposed to have preached to the Jews of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia. And, at length, coming to Rome, was crucified with his head downwards, himself desiring that it might be in that manner." Some learned men think that Peter, in the latter part of his life, went into Chaldea, and there wrote his first epistle, because the salutation of the church at Babylon is sent in it. But their opinion is not supported by the testimony of ancient writers. Lardner, *Can.* vol. iii. p. 169, saith, "It seems to me, that when he [Peter] left Judea, he went again to Antioch, the chief city of Syria. Thence he might go into other parts of the continent, particularly Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, which are expressly mentioned at the beginning of his first epistle. In those countries he might stay a good while. It is very likely that he did so; and that he was well acquainted with the christians there, to whom he afterwards

wrote two epistles. When he left those parts, I think he went to Rome; but not till after Paul had been in that city, and was gone from it.'

The authenticity of his first epistle was never called in question. It has been supposed, that as Peter was the apostle of the circumcision, it was intended only for the Jewish christians who were scattered abroad throughout various provinces of Asia Minor, which the apostle enumerates in the first chapter and verse. There is, however, reason to suppose, from some passages which seem more particularly to refer to the abominations of the Gentiles, that it was written also for the instruction of Gentile converts, and that both Jews and Gentiles are comprehended under the general name of strangers, because all the true followers of Christ are pilgrims and strangers in this present world.

From Peter's sending the salutation of the church at Babylon to the christians in Pontus, it is generally believed that he wrote his first epistle in Babylon. But as there was a Babylon in Egypt, and a Babylon in Assyria, and a city to which the name of Babylon is given figuratively, [Rev. xvii. xviii.] namely, Rome, the learned are not agreed which is the Babylon there meant. It is very remarkable, that the Roman Catholic writers universally claim that honour for the seat of their mother church. It is believed to have been written in the year sixty-six or sixty-seven, a little after the death of Paul.

It is evidently the design of the first epistle of Peter, 'to induce the christian converts in many parts of the world to maintain a conversation, not merely inoffensive to all men, but in all respects worthy of the gospel, and to support them under the severe persecutions and fiery trials they already endured, or were likely to endure by the noblest considerations which their religion could suggest.'

The first branch of this design the apostle seems to keep particularly in view, from chap. i.—iii. 7. And, in pursuance of it, after having congratulated his brethren who were dispersed abroad through various countries, on their happiness in being called to the glorious privileges of the gospel, which was introduced into the world in so sublime a manner by the prophets and apostles, [chap. i. 1—12.] he exhorts them to watchfulness, to sobriety, to love, and to universal obedience, by an affectionate representation of their relation to God, their redemption by Christ's invaluable blood, and the excellence and perpetuity of the christian dispensation, and of its glorious fruits and consequences, compared with the vanity of all worldly enjoyments. [verse 13 to the end.] Urging them, by the like considerations, to receive the word of God with meekness, to continue in the exercise of faith in Christ as the great foundation of their eternal hopes, and to maintain such a behaviour as would

adorn his gospel among the unconverted Gentiles. [chap. ii. 1—12.] For the same end, he exhorts them to the exercise of a due care as to relative duties, and particularly a subjection to civil governors and to masters, even when their dispositions and injunctions might be hard and severe; enforcing all by the consideration of that patience with which our Lord Jesus Christ endured his most grievous sufferings. [verse 13, to the end.] He likewise exhorts christian wives to submit themselves to their husbands, and to study the ornament of their minds rather than of their persons; and husbands to treat their wives in a becoming and honourable manner, from a tender sense of those infirmities to which the sex is peculiarly liable. [chap. iii. 1—7.]

In the ensuing part of the epistle, the apostle's arguments and exhortations more immediately and directly refer to those dreadful sufferings and persecutions to which the christian converts were exposed, or which they actually endured from the malevolence and rage of their implacable enemies. And here, well knowing that such treatment, unmerited and unprovoked, is apt to embitter and narrow men's spirits, and inflame their resentments, in which case the religion of the meek and lowly Jesus would be greatly dishonoured, and its spread and influence in the world retarded by the indiscreet behaviour of its friends and advocates, therefore St. Peter urges many arguments on the christian converts, in order to engage them to an inoffensive, benevolent, and useful life and conversation, and to a steady courageous adherence to their religion amidst all opposition. [verse 8—17.] And then, animating them to endure their sufferings with patience and resignation, from the endearing consideration of what their divine Saviour had suffered for them, he expiates on his atonement, resurrection, and exaltation; on the obligation of their baptismal covenant; and on the awful solemnity of the last judgment; as powerful arguments to a life of mortification and holiness, whatever discouragement and opposition they might be called to encounter. [verse 18; iv. 6.] And as eminent vigilance, fidelity, and courage, would be requisite for highly improving their talents, and for discharging the duties of their respective stations in the church at all times, but especially in times of imminent danger and persecution, he distinctly inculcates these several virtues; and, by way of inference, from the trials to which good men were exposed, he observes, that a tremendous, inevitable destruction will overwhelm the impenitent and unbelieving. [verse 7—19.] And, at the close, he addresses some particular cautions both to ministers and private christians; urging on the former, humility, diligence, and watchfulness; and exhorting the latter to a steadfast and faithful discharge of their several duties, animated by this sublime consideration, that the God of all grace had

called them to his eternal glory, and would, after they had suffered awhile, make them perfect, according to the apostle's earnest prayer for them. [chap. v. throughout.]

From this imperfect delineation of this admirable epistle, the production of an eminent apostle, it is no unnatural or improper remark, that all the principles of our holy religion, as here represented, are perfectly consistent with the analogy of faith, and with the whole tenor of the New Testament; that they are directly levelled against all manner of corrupt affections and immoral practices, as well as urged in the light of motives, to all those virtues and graces in which our conformity to God and the true glory of our nature consists. And (which, if it were the only circumstance that could be pleaded, would exalt our religion to an infinite superiority to the institutions of the most renowned heathen philosophers and law-givers; and, in connection with its amazing progress, is a demonstration of its divine original) christians are here instructed to encounter outrageous violence and persecution, only with the hallowed weapons of patience, meekness, and charity; and to silence the cavils and blast the machinations of their own and their Master's bitterest enemies, with the lustre of a pure and holy life, and the fervour of a generous and invincible benevolence. How amiable, how elevated, how divine, how worthy of all acceptance is the religion of Jesus! In delineating, as we have seen, the grand and essential branches of which even Peter and Paul, notwithstanding all their contention about things of inferior moment, or of a personal and private nature, are perfectly consistent and harmonious.

The second epistle is supposed to have been written about a year after the former, and was certainly directed to the same persons. Its authenticity was doubted by some of the first christians, on account of its not being very generally known in the world. It has also been observed, that the style of a part of it, at least, is different from that of the first epistle; but this difference has been supposed to have arisen wholly from the nature of the subject treated of, and the peculiar situation of the apostle, who was animated with the most sublime conceptions of that immortal world of happiness into which he was soon to enter.

The general design of the epistle is, to conform the doctrines and instructions delivered in the former, 'to excite the christian converts to adorn and stedfastly adhere to their holy religion, as a religion proceeding from God, notwithstanding the artifices of false teachers, whose character is at large described, or the persecution of their bitter and inveterate enemies.'

The apostle, with this view, having first congratulated the christian converts on the happy condition into which they were brought by the gospel, exhorts them, in order to secure the

blessings connected with their profession, to endeavour to improve in the most substantial graces and virtues. [chap. i. 1—11.] And that their attention might be more effectually engaged, he reminds them, both that he spoke to them in the near view of eternity, it being revealed to him that he should shortly put off his earthly tabernacle; and that the subjects on which he discoursed were not cunningly-devised fables, but attested by a miraculous voice from heaven, and by divinely inspired prophecies. [verse 12, to the end.] And, that this exhortation might not fail of producing the most genuine effects, he cautions them against the false teachers whose character he describes, reminding them of the judgments executed on the apostate angels, on the old world, and on Sodom; and, at the same time, of the deliverance of Noah and of Lot, as suggesting considerations which, on the one hand, should terrify such ungodly wretches, and, on the other, comfort and establish the hearts of upright and pious christians. [chap. ii. 1—9.] He then further describes the character of these seducers; warning all true christians of the danger of being perverted by them, and then of the dreadful destruction to which they exposed themselves. [verse 10, to the end.] And that the persons to whom he was writing might more effectually escape the artifices of those who lay in wait to deceive, they are directed to adhere steadily and closely to the sacred scriptures, and to consider the absolute certainty and awful manner of the final destruction of this world; and then the whole is concluded with several weighty and pertinent exhortations. [chap. iii. throughout.]

Eusebius asserts that Peter's labours at Rome were eminently successful in opposing Simon Magus, who had procured to himself divine worship in that city. It is generally believed that he suffered martyrdom at Rome during the persecution of Nero, being crucified with his head downward near the gate of the Vatican. It is asserted by Eusebius, that, seeing his wife, as he was yet hanging upon the cross, going to her martyrdom, he was greatly rejoiced, and cried out to her with a loud voice that she should remember the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the ancient heretics handed about a gospel, to which they gave the name of this apostle.

The accounts which antiquity affords us respecting Andrew are probably mixed with fable. He is said to have preached the gospel, during the reign of Vespasian, to the Scythians, the Sogdians, the Sacæ, and in a city called Augustia, which was inhabited by a nation who were called the Ethiopians. His death is said to have happened at Patris, a city of Achaia, where, through his diligent preaching, many had been converted to the faith of Christ. Egeas, the governor, being a very zealous pagan, resorted thither for the express purpose of inducing the christians to renounce their profession, and sacrifice to those idols which were acknowledged in the country. Andrew, thinking it

proper to resist this attempt, and confirm by his example the fortitude of the brethren, spoke to Egeas to the following purpose: It becomes you, who are the judge of men, first to know your judge, who dwelleth in heaven; and then to worship him, being thus known; and so, in worshipping the true God, to recal your mind from false gods and blind idols. Egeas became very angry, and demanded of the apostle whether he were the same Andrew who did, by his teaching, overthrow the temples of the gods, and persuade men to embrace that superstition which the Romans had lately commanded to be abolished and rejected. Andrew, in answer, plainly affirmed that the princes of the Romans did not understand the truth; and that the Son of God, who came down from heaven for the sake of sinful men, had taught and declared how their idols, whom they honoured as gods, were indeed cruel devils, bitter enemies to mankind, teaching the people no other doctrine but that which offended God, and caused him to give them up to all manner of wickedness. The proconsul, upon this, determined to crucify Andrew after the example of Jesus. On being threatened with this punishment, Andrew firmly replied, that he would never have preached the honour and glory of the cross if he had feared the death of the cross. The sentence of condemnation was now passed, that Andrew teaching pernicious doctrine, endeavouring to found a new sect, and taking away the honour of their gods, should be led forth to crucifixion. Coming to the place of execution, he was not at all disturbed at the sight of the cross, but spake forth with a fluency which much astonished the spectators. His words are said to have been, O! welcome and long looked-for cross, willingly and joyfully do I come to thee, being the scholar of him who did hang upon thee. I have always loved thee, and desired to embrace thee. Thus being crucified, he yielded up the ghost, and fell asleep. There was anciently attributed to him a spurious book, entitled the Acts of St. Andrew.

James the Elder appears to have been one of the most zealous of the disciples, and was therefore singled out by Herod as the first object of his persecuting fury. His martyrdom is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the sixteenth chapter of the present work.

Philip, the apostle, is said, by late writers, after having preached among the barbarous nations, to have been crucified and stoned to death at Hierapolis, a city of Phrygia.

Bartholomew is said to have preached the gospel to the Indians, and to have translated into their language the gospel of Matthew, as well as to have wrought many miracles for the confirmation of their faith. At last, in Albania, a city of the Greater Armenia, he is said to have suffered a most cruel death, being first beaten down with stones, then crucified, then flayed alive, and lastly beheaded.

Thomas is said, by Eusebius, to have preached the gospel in Parthia; he is also mentioned, by the same author, as having a hand in the very questionable affair of Abgarus. He is said to have suffered martyrdom at Calamina, a city of Judea, being slain with a dart. There was a spurious gospel attributed to him.

James the Less, the son of Alphaeus, being not only the Lord's near relation, but an apostle, whom, as is generally supposed, he honoured in a particular manner, by appearing to him alone after his resurrection. [1 Cor. xv. 7.] These circumstances, together with his own personal merit, rendered him of such note among the apostles, that they are supposed to have appointed him to reside in Jerusalem, and to superintend the church there. This appointment, Lardner says, was made soon after the martyrdom of Stephen; and, in support of his opinion, he observes, 'that Peter always speaks first, as president among the apostles, until after the choice of the seven deacons. Every thing said of James after that, implies his presiding in the church of Jerusalem.' Canon, vol. iii. p. 28. For example: when the apostles and elders came together to consider whether it was needful to circumcise the Gentiles, after there had been much disputing, Peter spake [Acts xv. 7.]; then Barnabas and Paul [verse 12.]; and, when they had ended, James summed up the arguments, and proposed the terms on which the Gentiles were to be received into the church, [verse 19, 20, 21.] to which the whole assembly agreed, and wrote letters to the Gentiles conformably to the opinion of James. [verse 22—29.] From this it is inferred that James presided in the council of Jerusalem, because he was president of the church in that city. Chrysostom, in his homily on Acts xv. says, 'James was bishop of Jerusalem, and therefore spake last.'

In the time of this council, Paul communicated the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles to three of the apostles, whom he calls pillars; and tells us, that when they perceived the inspiration and miraculous powers which he possessed, they gave him the right hands of fellowship, mentioning James first. [Gal. ii. 9.] "And knowing the grace that was bestowed on me, James, Cephas, and John, who were pillars, gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." This is supposed to imply, that James, whom, in the first chapter, he had called "the Lord's brother," was not only an apostle, but the presiding apostle in the church of Jerusalem. In the same chapter, Paul, giving an account of what happened after the council, says, [verse 11, 12.] "When Peter was come to Antioch, before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles; but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them who were of the circumcision." This is considered as showing that James resided at Jerusalem, and presided in the church there, and was greatly respected by the Jewish believers.

The same circumstance appears from Acts xxi. 17; where, giving an account of Paul's journey to Jerusalem, with the collections for the saints in Judea, Luke says, [verse 18.] "Paul went with us to James, and all the elders were present." Farther, the respect in which James was held by the apostles appears from two facts recorded by Luke. The first is, when Paul came to Jerusalem three years after his conversion, Barnabas took him, and brought him to Peter and James as the chief apostles. [Compare Acts ix. 27, with Gal. i. 19.] The second fact is, after Peter was miraculously delivered out of prison, about the time of the passover, in the year forty-four, "he came to the house of Mary, where many were gathered together praying. [Acts xii. 12.] And when he had declared to them how the Lord had brought him out of prison, he said, Go show these things to James and to the brethren." [verse 17.] These particulars are mentioned by Lardner, and, before him, by Whitby and Cave, to show that James, the Lord's brother, was really an apostle in the strict acceptation of the word; consequently, that Eusebius was mistaken when he placed him among the seventy disciples, E. H. lib. i. c. 12.

In the history of the Acts, there are some circumstances which, as learned men have remarked, lead us to conclude that the apostles, by common agreement, allotted to each other the offices and duties which they were to perform. Thus, Acts viii. 14, "When the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John." [Acts xi. 22.] "Then tidings of these things (namely, that a number of the Hellenist Jews in Antioch had received the word) came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem, and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch." [Gal. ii. 9.] "When James, Cephas, and John perceived the grace which was given to me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcision." Wherefore, if James, the Lord's brother, was really president in the church of Jerusalem, as was formerly mentioned, and as the ancients universally affirm, he was, in all probability, placed in that station by the appointment or with the approbation of the other apostles, as an ancient tradition, preserved by Eusebius and Jerom, informs us. But Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Œcumenius, and Photius think he was raised to that office by our Lord himself. That one of the apostles should reside constantly in Jerusalem, to whom the faithful might apply for advice in any difficult case, was very proper; because circumstances might make it necessary for the greatest part of the apostles to leave Jerusalem, and go to other countries. Wherefore, as James, the Lord's brother, was a person of singular prudence and great authority, as well as an apostle, he was well qualified for that important station, and may have been ap-

pointed to it by common consent. And as every apostle, by virtue of his superior character and illumination, had a right to direct the affairs of the church where he happened to reside, the apostle James, by constantly residing in Jerusalem, became the perpetual president and director of the church there, on which account the ancients called him the bishop of Jerusalem.

Lardner's character of James deserves a place here. "Though we do not allow ourselves to enlarge of every thing said of him in the history of the council of Jerusalem, and his reception of Paul when he came up to Jerusalem, and was imprisoned; yet I suppose that every one may have discerned marks of an excellent character, and of his admirably uniting zeal and discretion, a love of truth, and condescension to weak brethren. His epistle confirms that character. I think, likewise, that the preservation of his life in such a station as his, to the time when he is mentioned last by Luke, may induce us to believe that he was careful to be inoffensive in his behaviour to the unbelieving part of the Jewish nation, and that he was had in reverence by many of them." *Can.* vol. iii. p. 20.

James, the Lord's brother, was surnamed the Less, [John xix. 25.] either because he was younger than James, the son of Zebedee, or because he was a person of small stature, which is the literal meaning of the original term. James was likewise surnamed the Just, not indeed in the New Testament, but by the ancients, who gave him that appellation on account of his singular virtue. Some, indeed, have supposed James the Just to be a different person from James the son of Alphaeus, and have ascribed the epistle to him, but Dr. Macknight thinks without foundation. For as there are only two persons of the name of James mentioned in scripture as apostles, and as the most ancient christian writers have given James, our Lord's brother, the surname of the Just, there is no reason to believe that there was any third person of the name of James who was surnamed the Just, and who was the writer of the epistle. See Euseb. E. H. lib. ii. c. 1. Lardner, *Can.* vol. iii. p. 26.

The occasion of his writing the epistle which bears his name is said to have been, that a very pernicious opinion prevailed in the latter part of the apostle's time, arising from a misinterpretation of Paul's writings, namely, that there subsisted a kind of faith sufficient for the salvation of the soul, without effecting a complete change on the heart and life. The apostle enters on his subject by endeavouring to fortify their minds under those trials wherewith they would be exercised, by suitable representations of the benefit of these trials, of the readiness of God to communicate all necessary supplies of wisdom and grace in answer to the fervent prayer of faith, and exposing the vanity of all worldly enjoyments, which often prove the means of ensnaring and ruining the possessors. [chap. i. 1—16.] And

then, as a means of their stedfastness, notwithstanding the most powerful temptations to apostasy, he exhorts them to remember and acknowledge the manifold goodness of God in the various blessings bestowed upon them, more especially in that of his regenerating grace, which should constrain them to the exercise of every virtue, especially to an ingenuous and candid reception of his word, and a concern resolutely and constantly to adhere to its directions, particularly by bridling their tongues, and succouring such as were afflicted. [verse 17, to the end.] And then the apostle, by an easy transition, having glanced at some of their particular failings, takes the occasion of introducing cautions on sundry other articles in which they needed reprehension, particularly against showing an undue respect to men's external circumstances, and resting satisfied in a partial observation of the divine precepts, especially where the royal law of charity or universal benevolence was in question. [chap. ii. 1—13.] After this, as several of the Jewish christians discovered a disposition to rest in an external and empty profession of religion, probably from an abuse of the doctrine of justification by faith, he largely descants on the inefficacy of a mere ineffective faith, and evinces, by most striking instances and illustrations, the utter insufficiency of it for our justification and eternal salvation. [verse 14, to the end.] And, as such a barren profession is apt to inspire men with conceited and vain-glorious sentiments of themselves, while they are destitute of every divine habit and attainment, he deems it expedient to subjoin a caution to the Jewish christians against their being too forward in assuming the office and character of teachers: and, as spiritual pride tends to inflame men's unbridled passions, and to set on fire their licentious tongues, he resumes and expatiates on a subject which he had before only slightly touched upon, recommending a strict government of the tongue as a matter, though of great difficulty, yet of the highest importance. [chap. iii. 1—12.] And, in close connection with such a topic, it was very natural to inculcate, as the apostle does, a candid benevolent disposition, guarding them against censoriousness and animosities, and that love of the world which tends to excite them, to restrain which, he recommends an humble application to God for divine influences [verse 14, to iv. 10.]; suggesting particular cautions against evil speaking and vain confidence in the events of futurity, or in any worldly possessions, which often prove a temptation to luxury, and an occasion of ruin. And then, as to afflicted and oppressed christians, he encourages and exhorts them to wait patiently for the coming of the Lord. [verse 11, to v. 8.] And concludes the epistle with condemning profane and vain swearing, with recommending moderation, fortitude, and prayer, a ready acknowledgment of our faults, and a solicitous concern for the common salvation. [verse 9, to the end.]

Eusebius informs us, that after Paul had appealed to Cæsar, and been conveyed to Rome, the Jews, having lost their opportunity of destroying him, directed all their hatred against James, the brother of our Lord, and bishop of Jerusalem. Therefore, leading him forth into the midst of a large assembly, they required of him that there he would renounce his profession of the Lord Jesus Christ. They found, however, that all their expectations of overawing him were entirely vain; for he boldly confessed his faith in the Son of God, and declared to them that Jesus of Nazareth was the only true Messiah, a disappointment which so exceedingly irritated them, that they immediately proceeded to murder him, taking advantage, for this purpose, of a vacancy in the government. They are said to have cast him down headlong from the battlements of the temple, and to have beat him to death with a club. The same author recites a long story from Hegesippus, which, beside relating some additional and rather dubious circumstances of his murder, asserts that he lived the life of a Nazarite, abstaining also from all animal food, and neither anointing his head nor using the bath. The mention which Josephus has made of this transaction will be noticed in the ensuing chapter.

None of the evangelists have said any thing of Judas after he became an apostle except John, who tells, that when our Lord spoke what is recorded, John xiv. 21, "Judas saith to him, [verse 22.] Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us and not unto the world? [23.] Jesus answered and said to him, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him;" meaning that after his resurrection he would show himself alive to his apostles; and that he and his Father, by the spiritual gifts bestowed on them, would make their abode with them; that is, as Dr. Macknight interprets it, would show that they were present with them in all their ministrations. Accordingly, Judas the apostle was one of those to whom Jesus appeared at different times after his resurrection. He was also one of the hundred and twenty upon whom the Holy Ghost descended in the visible shape of flames of fire on the memorable day of Pentecost. Being, therefore, an eye-witness, and endowed with the Holy Ghost, he, no doubt, as Lardner remarks, joined his brethren apostles in witnessing their Master's resurrection from the dead, and shared with them in the reproaches and sufferings which befell them on that account.

Lardner conjectures that Judas the apostle was an husbandman before he became Christ's disciple, founding his conjecture on a passage of the apostolical institutions, where the apostles are made to say, 'Some of us are fishermen, others tent-makers, others husbandmen.' He adds, 'undoubtedly

several of the apostles were fishermen; but by the latter part of the sentence no more may be meant than that there was among them one tent-maker, even Paul; and one husbandman, intending, perhaps, St. Jude. For Hegesippus, as quoted by Eusebius, writes, 'That when Domitian made inquiries after the posterity of David, some grandsons of Jude, called the Lord's brother, were brought before him. Being asked concerning their possessions and substance, they assured him that they had only so many acres of land, out of the improvement of which they both paid him tribute, and maintained themselves with their own hard labour. The truth of what they said was confirmed by the callousness of their hands,' &c. On this passage Lardner's remarks are, 'Hence some may argue that St. Jude himself had been an husbandman; and, from this account, if it may be relied upon, we learn that this apostle was married and had children.' Lardner on the Canon, vol. iii. chap. 21, p. 325. Much dispute has been excited in consequence of the mention which Jude has made concerning the prophecy of Enoch. Some have supposed that he quoted from an apocryphal book, which is known to have existed early under the name of Enoch and others; that he referred only to a traditional account which had been preserved among the Jews, though not recorded in the Mosaic history. It is probable that the epistle of Jude was composed just before the death of that apostle, after that most other parts of the New Testament were written; and that its great design was to draw the attention of christians from the various absurd speculations which were at that time indulged in, and to fix their thoughts more on the practical influences of apostolical religion. As Jude sustains an important part in the very doubtful story of Abgarus, king of Edessa, we shall submit to the reader the account at full length, as it is given us by Eusebius in the first book of his Ecclesiastical History.

A HISTORY concerning the PRINCE of the EDESSENS.

'The divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,' says Eusebius, 'being every where talked of, by reason of his wonderful power in working miracles, it drew after him many people from other countries, and some very remote from Judea, who were filled with hopes of relief under all sorts of pains and sicknesses. For which reason, king Abgarus, who, with honour, governed the nations beyond the Euphrates, labouring under a grievous distemper, incurable by human skill, when he heard of the fame of Jesus, which was much celebrated, and his wonderful works attested by the unanimous testimony of all men, sent a letter to him by a messenger, entreating him to cure his distemper; but he did not then comply with his request; yet he vouchsafed to write to him a letter, wherein he promised

to send one of his disciples, who should cure his distemper, and also bring salvation to him and to all with him, which promise was not long after fulfilled; for, after the resurrection of Christ, and his ascension to heaven, Thomas, one of the twelve apostles, moved by a divine impulse, sent Thaddeus, one of Christ's seventy disciples, to Edessa, to be a preacher and an evangelist of Christ's doctrine, by whom all things promised by our Saviour were fulfilled. The evidence of this we have from the records of the city of Edessa; for among the public records, wherein are entered the antiquities of the city, and the actions of Abgarus, these things are still found preserved unto this day. It will therefore be worth the while to attend to the letters as taken by us (or for us) from the archives, and translated word for word from the Syriac language.

‘The copy of the letter which was written by ABGARUS, the toparch, to JESUS, and sent to him at Jerusalem by the courier ANANIAS.

“Abgarus, toparch (or prince) of Edessa, to Jesus, the good Saviour, who has appeared at Jerusalem, sendeth greeting. I have heard of thee, and of thy cures performed without herbs or other medicines: for it is reported that thou makest the blind to see, and the lame to walk; that thou cleansest lepers, and castest out unclean spirits and demons, and healest those who are tormented with diseases of a long standing, and raisest the dead. Having heard of all these things concerning thee, I concluded in my mind one of these two things, either that thou art God come down from heaven to do these things, or else thou art the Son of God, and so performest them. Wherefore, I now write unto thee, entreating thee to come to me, and to heal my distemper. Moreover, I hear that the Jews murmur against thee, and plot to do thee mischief. I have a city, small indeed, but neat, which may suffice for us both.” Now let us attend,’ says Eusebius, ‘to the letter which Jesus returned by the same courier, short indeed, but very powerful. It is in these words.

‘The rescript of JESUS to the toparch ABGARUS, sent by the courier ANANIAS.

“Abgarus, thou art happy, forasmuch as thou hast believed in me, though thou hast not seen me. [John xx. 29.] For it is written concerning me, that they who have not seen me might believe and live. As for what thou hast written to me, desiring me to come to thee, it is necessary that all those things for which I am sent should be fulfilled by me here; and that after fulfilling them, I should be received up to him that sent me. When, therefore, I shall be received up, I will send to thee some

one of my disciples, that he may heal thy distemper, and give life to thee and to those who are with thee.'

'To these epistles,' as Eusebius goes on to say, 'are subjoined the following things, and in the Syriac language— That after Jesus had been taken up, (or after his ascension,) Judas, called also Thomas, sent the apostle Thaddeus, one of the seventy, who, when he came to Edessa, took up his abode with Tobias, son of Tobias. When his arrival was rumoured abroad, and he had begun to be known by the miracles which he wrought, it was told to Abgarus, that an apostle was sent to him by Jesus, according to his promise. Thaddeus, therefore, by the power of God, healed all sorts of maladies, so that all wondered. But when Abgarus heard of the great and wonderful works which he did, and how he healed men in the name and by the power of Jesus Christ, he was induced to suspect that he was the person about whom Jesus had written to him, saying, 'When I am taken up, I will send to thee some one of my disciples, who shall heal thy distemper. Sending, therefore, for Tobias, at whose house he was, he said to him, 'I hear that a man endowed with great power, and come from Jerusalem, is at thy house, and that he works many cures in the name of Jesus.' To which Tobias answered, 'Yes, Sir, there is a stranger with me who performs many miracles.' Abgarus then said, 'Bring him hither to me.' Tobias coming to Thaddeus, said to him, 'The prince Abgarus has bid me bring thee to him, that thou mayest heal his distemper.' Whereupon Thaddeus said, 'I go; for it is upon his account chiefly that I am sent hither.' The next day, early in the morning, Tobias, taking Thaddeus, came to Abgarus. As he came in, the nobles being present, there appeared to Abgarus somewhat extraordinary in the countenance of Thaddeus, which when Abgarus saw, he worshipped Thaddeus, which appeared strange to all present; for they did not see that brightness which was discerned by Abgarus only. He then asked Thaddeus if he were indeed the disciple of Jesus, the Son of God, who had said to him, 'I will send to thee some one of my disciples, who shall heal thy distemper, and give life to all with thee.' Thaddeus answered, 'Forasmuch as thou hast great faith in the Lord Jesus, therefore am I sent unto thee; and if thou shalt increase in faith in him, all the desires of thy heart will be fulfilled according to thy faith.' Then Abgarus said to him, 'I have so believed in him, that I would go with an army to extirpate the Jews who have crucified him, if I were not apprehensive of the Roman power.' Then Thaddeus said, 'Our Lord and God Jesus Christ has fulfilled the will of his Father; and, having fulfilled it, he has been taken up to his Father.' Abgarus then said, 'I have believed in him and in his Father.' And thereupon said Thaddeus, 'Therefore I put my hand upon thee in the name of the Lord Jesus.' And upon so doing, Abgarus was

healed of his distemper. And Abgarus wondered that as it had been reported concerning Jesus, so it had been done by his disciple and apostle Thaddeus, insomuch as he had healed him without herbs or other medicines. Nor did he heal him alone; but also Abdus, son of Abdus, who had the gout: for he came to him, and fell down upon his knees before him; and, by the laying on of his hands with prayer, he was healed. The same apostle healed many other citizens of the same place, and wrought many and great miracles as he preached the word. After which, Abgarus spoke to this purpose: 'Thou, Thaddeus, doest these things by the power of God, and we admire thee; but I beseech thee to inform me about the coming of Jesus, how it was, and of his power, and by what power he did all those things we have heard of.' To which Thaddeus answered, 'Now I forbear, though I am sent to preach the word; but to-morrow gather together all the citizens, and then, in their hearing, I will preach the word, and sow in them the word of life; and will inform them of the coming of Christ, how it was; and concerning his mission, and for what cause he was sent by the Father; and concerning the power of his works, and the mysteries which he spoke in the world; and by what power he did these things; and concerning his new doctrine; and about the meanness and despicableness of his outward appearance; and how he humbled himself, and died, and lessened his deity; how many things he suffered from the Jews; and how he was crucified, and descended into hell, and rent asunder the inclosure never before separated, and arose, and raised up the dead who had been buried many ages; and how he descended alone, but ascended to his Father with a great multitude; and how he is set down on the right hand of the Father with glory in the heavens; and how he will come again with glory and with power to judge the living and the dead.' Abgarus, therefore, issued out orders that all the citizens should come together early the next morning, to hear the preaching of Thaddeus. And, after that, he commanded that gold and silver should be given to him; but he did not receive it, saying, 'When we have left our own things, how should we receive those which belong to others?' This was done in the four hundred and thirtieth year. These things, translated from the Syriac language word for word, we have placed here, as we think, not improperly.'

Dr. Macknight observes, that if Judas the apostle was the same person with Judas the author of the epistle, of which opinion he entertains no doubt, he lived to a great age. And his life being thus prolonged, we may suppose that, after preaching the gospel, and confirming it by miracles, he went into other countries for the same purpose. Lardner tells us that some have said that Jude preached in Arabia, Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, and that he suffered martyrdom in the last-mentioned country. But these things are not supported by any well attested history.

With respect to his being a martyr it may be doubted; because none of the ancients have mentioned his having suffered martyrdom. It is therefore generally believed that he died a natural death.

Various and contradictory accounts are delivered concerning Simon Zelotes, or the Canaanite; some asserting that he was bishop of Jerusalem after James, and was crucified in Egypt; others, that he was slain in a tumult in Persia; and others again, that after having preached in several parts of Africa, he came over into Britain, and was there crucified.

It is reported of Matthias, that after having preached the gospel to the Jews, he was, at length, stoned and beheaded. He is also said to have insisted much upon the abusing, that is, the mortifying of the flesh. There is attributed to him a spurious gospel.

It may, perhaps, be not unentertaining to remark, that the several apostles are usually distinguished in paintings by the following badges or attributes: Peter is represented with the keys; Paul, with a sword; Andrew, with a cross in the form of a Roman X; James the Less, with a fuller's pole; John, with a cup, and a winged serpent flying out of it; Bartholomew, with a knife; Philip, with a long staff, whose upper end is formed into a cross; Thomas, with a lance; Matthew, with a hatchet; Matthias, with a battle-axe; James the Elder, with a pilgrim's staff, and a gourd-bottle; Simon, with a saw; and Jude, with a club.

The seven deacons who were chosen by the church at Jerusalem, were, as the reader may recollect, Stephen, Philip, Procoras, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas. Of several of these some brief account may be given. The excellent character of Stephen, his noble defence, his cruel death, and the persecution which followed it, have been already treated of in the sixteenth chapter of this work.

Concerning Philip the Deacon, Eusebius has collected several accounts, in which he is confounded with Philip the apostle. His daughters, who are said to have remained single to their death, are reported to have died in extreme old age, and to have been buried at Hierapolis, a city of Asia, where also their father died a natural death. One of them, however, is reported to have been buried at Ephesus.

Nicanor is asserted by Dorotheus to have suffered with a thousand other believers on the same day with Stephen, a story utterly incredible.

Timon is said, by the same author, to have been bishop of Bostrum in Arabia, and there to have been buried.

Parmenas is also said to have died a martyr.

A foolish story is told concerning Nicholas; that, being suspected of entertaining an improper jealousy over his wife, he gave her leave to marry whom she would. It is added,

that he taught much concerning abusing, that is, mortifying the flesh, which his disciples interpreted in a bad sense, and thus laid the foundation of an impious heresy.

Barnabas deserves a distinguished place among those whose labours were rendered instrumental for the conversion of the Gentiles. Some suppose him to have been the same with Joseph, surnamed Justus and Barsabas, candidate with Matthias for the apostolic office; and the authority of a various reading in the Cambridge manuscript favours this opinion. He was a Cyprian Levite of distinguished liberality, who sold his paternal estate, and placed the produce in the hands of the apostles; and received, from his disposition to comfort the afflicted, the surname of Barnabas, the son of consolation. [Acts iv. 36, 37.] He is asserted, by ancient authors, to have been one of the seventy disciples. He became acquainted with Paul soon after the conversion of that eminent servant of God, and took pains to introduce him to the apostles, who were afraid to associate with him on account of his former enmity to the cause of Christ, [Acts ix. 27.] Whether he was an old acquaintance of Paul, or had been informed concerning him by Ananias, or some other christian at Damascus, or whether he acted thus by the especial direction of the Spirit of God, is utterly uncertain. He was sent by the apostles and elders from Jerusalem to Antioch, after that they had received the pleasing intelligence of the work of God in that city; soon after which he went to Tarsus in Cilicia to find Paul, that he might have the benefit of his labours in that important station of usefulness in which he was now placed. [Acts xi. 22—26.] After he had resided about a year at Antioch, in which his labours, with those of Paul, were attended with great success, these two holy men were made the bearers of a present to the saints at Jerusalem. [Acts xi. 30.] From this time, Barnabas and Paul continued to labour together, until a dispute arising between them respecting their taking John Mark on a journey with them, they agreed to separate, and Barnabas employed himself more particularly for the benefit of his native country, the island of Cyprus. There is every reason to believe, from the friendly mention which Paul makes of Mark, that this breach was afterwards closed, and that the most cordial union subsisted between them. Further particulars of his life are unknown. Dr. Lardner inclines to think him the author of an epistle which bears his name, but which was not reckoned among apostolical writings, because he had not received a commission immediately from Jesus Christ.

The history of Apollos is chiefly given in the eighteenth chapter of the Acts. We are there informed, that while Paul was employed in diffusing the light of the gospel through several provinces of the Lesser Asia, a certain Jew, whose name was Apollos, a native of Alexandria in Egypt, an eloquent

man, and powerful in the scriptures of the Old Testament, which he had diligently studied, and had an excellent faculty of expounding, came to Ephesus. This person was, in some measure, already instructed in the way of the Lord; and, being fervent in spirit, and earnestly desirous to promote the progress of the truth and the conversion of souls, he spake and taught the things of the Lord with great accuracy and exactness, to the best of his knowledge, though as yet he had but an imperfect knowledge of the gospel, being only acquainted with the baptism of John; so that he insisted upon the doctrine of repentance and faith in a Messiah, who was quickly to be revealed, for the reception of whom he showed that it was necessary they should have their hearts prepared. And, to this purpose, he began to speak boldly in the synagogue, pleading the cause of God and real vital religion with an earnestness becoming the importance of the subject, as well as reproving the Jews for those evils which were so commonly found among them, and battering down those vain hopes which, as the seed of Abraham and disciples of Moses, they were so ready to entertain. And Aquila and Priscilla being then at Ephesus, and hearing him express so upright and so good a spirit, were desirous to promote his further improvement in knowledge and usefulness, and accordingly they took him with them to their house, and there explained to him the way of God in a more complete and perfect manner.

And shortly after, when he intended to go over to Achaia, that he might preach the word at Corinth, and other places in that province, the brethren at Ephesus wrote to the disciples there, exhorting them to receive him with all affection and respect, as a person whose character well deserved it. And being arrived there, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace, and was evidently serviceable in establishing and confirming those who had embraced the gospel. For he strenuously debated with the Jews, and that in the most public manner, and upon all proper occasions; making it evident, and clearly showing by the scriptures, not only that a glorious spiritual deliverer was there foretold, but that Jesus of Nazareth, though so ungratefully treated by their rulers at Jerusalem, was, and is indeed the only true Messiah; so that the salvation of men depends upon receiving and submitting to him.

He is supposed by Locke to have been the false apostle who troubled the Corinthian church; but in this opinion we cannot concur, as he is mentioned respectfully in the epistle to Titus.

The following brief history of the evangelist Timothy is given by Dr. Macknight. Paul and Barnabas, in the course of their first apostolical journey among the Gentiles, having come to Lystra, a city of Lycaonia, in the lesser Asia, [Acts xiv. 6.] preached there some time, and converted a pious Jewish wo-

man, named Lois, with her daughter Eunice, whose husband, it is thought, was then dead. [2 Tim. i. 5.] Soon after this, Timothy, Eunice's son, who had been brought up by his mother and grandmother in the Jewish religion, and in the knowledge of the scriptures, [2 Tim. iii. 15.] being greatly affected by the apostles' discourses, believed. From the time of his conversion, Timothy made such proficiency in the knowledge of the gospel, and was so remarkable for the sanctity of his manners, as well as for his zeal in the cause of Christ, that he attracted the esteem of all the brethren in those parts. Accordingly, when the apostle came from Antioch in Syria to Lystra the second time, they so praised Timothy, that him would Paul have to go forth with him. [Acts xvi. 2, 3.] The testimony of the brethren, however, was not the only reason of this choice. Timothy was pointed out as a fit person to be ordained an evangelist, by a revelation made either to Paul himself, or to some of the christian prophets in Lystra. [1 Tim. i. 11.] In the mean time, Timothy, though a Jew, not having been circumcised by reason that his father was a Greek, or Gentile, it was proper he should bear that mark of his descent; because, without it, the Jews would have looked on him as a Gentile, and have despised his instructions. This, and not any opinion that circumcision was necessary to salvation, determined the apostle to propose, and Timothy to receive, the rite by which the Jews, from the earliest times, had been distinguished from the rest of mankind. Afterwards, the eldership at Lystra, the more strongly to impress Timothy with a sense of the importance of the function he had undertaken, solemnly set him apart to the office of an evangelist by the laying on of their hands, [1 Tim. iv. 14.] and by prayer. This was followed by the laying on of the apostle's hands, for the purpose of communicating to Timothy the gifts of the Holy Ghost. [2 Tim. i. 6.]

Timothy, thus prepared to be the apostle's fellow-labourer in the gospel, accompanied him and Silas when they visited the churches of Phrygia, and delivered to them the decrees of the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, freeing the Gentiles from the law of Moses, as a term of salvation. Having gone through these countries, they, at length, came to Troas, where Luke joined them, as appears from the phraseology of his history. [Acts xvi. 10, 11, &c.] In Troas, a vision appeared to Paul, directing them to go into Macedonia. Loosing, therefore, from Troas, they all passed over to Neapolis, and from thence went to Philippi, as appears from his changing the phraseology of his history at verse 40. We may therefore suppose, that, at their departing, they committed the converted at Philippi to Luke's care. In Thessalonica, they were opposed by the unbelieving Jews, and obliged to flee to Berea, whither the Jews from Thessalonica followed them. To elude their rage, Paul, who was most obnoxious to them, departed from Berea by

night to go to Athens, leaving Silas and Timothy in Berea. At Athens, Timothy came to the apostle, and gave him such an account of the afflicted state of the Thessalonian brethren, as induced him to send Timothy back to comfort them. After that, Paul preached at Athens; but with so little success, that he judged it proper to leave Athens, and go forward to Corinth, where Silas and Timothy came to him, and assisted in converting the Corinthians. And when he left Corinth, they accompanied him first to Ephesus, then to Jerusalem, and after that to Antioch in Syria. Having spent some time in Antioch, Paul set out with Timothy on his third apostolical journey, in which, after visiting all the churches of Galatia and Phrygia in the order in which they had been planted, they came to Ephesus the second time, and there abode long. In short, from the time Timothy first joined the apostle as his assistant, he never left him, except when sent by him on some special errand. And, by his affection, fidelity, and zeal, he so recommended himself to all the disciples, and acquired such authority among them, that Paul inserted his name in the inscription of several of the letters which he wrote to the churches, to show that their doctrine was one and the same.

Some account of the first epistle of Timothy has been given in a preceding chapter, where also it was observed, that the second epistle was written to him by Paul a little before the martyrdom of that apostle. We are not furnished with any further authentic accounts of this evangelist's history.

The second epistle to Timothy, being written by Paul to an intimate friend and companion in the work of the gospel, under the miseries of a jail, and in the near prospect of death, it is natural to think, that if the facts which he had every where preached concerning Christ had been falsehoods, and the gospel scheme of salvation which he and his brethren apostles had built thereon had been a delusion, he would, at such a time as this, have made reparation to mankind for the injury he had done them, in persuading them to believe on Jesus of Nazareth, for whose name so many had already suffered, and were likely to suffer death; and that he would have made this reparation, by acknowledging to Timothy, that the things which he had related concerning the character, miracles, and resurrection of Jesus were fables; and by ordering him to undeceive the world. Or if vanity, or regard to his own fame, or obstinacy in wickedness, or any other cause, prevented him from doing justice to the world and to truth, it might have been expected, that, in this private correspondence with so intimate a friend and associate, some expression would by accident have dropped from his pen, betraying the falsehood and wickedness of the cause they were engaged in; or that some word or circumstance would have escaped him which might have led to a discovery of the fraud.

Nothing, however, of either kind appears throughout the whole epistle. On the contrary, almost every sentence in it exhibits the most unambiguous proofs of the apostle's strong conviction of the truth of our Lord's pretensions, and of all the things he had told concerning him. For example, he begins his letter with affirming that, by preaching the gospel, he served the God of his forefathers with a pure conscience; and says he thanked God, in his private prayers, continually, for Timothy's faithfulness in preaching the gospel. Then ordered him to stir up the spiritual gift which he had conferred on him, and to be courageous in the work he was engaged in; because the effect of that gift was not to fill those who possessed it with fear, but with courage and love, and self-government, and not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me, said he, the Lord's prisoner; but to suffer evil jointly with me for the gospel, of which I am an herald, and for which I suffer such things. Next, he expressed the highest satisfaction in suffering for Christ; because he knew he was really the Son of God, and would reward him in the end. And ordered Timothy to guard, by the power of the Holy Ghost which dwelt in him, the good doctrine concerning Christ, which had been committed to him in trust; and to be strong in the honourable office of an evangelist, which was bestowed on him; and to deliver all the particulars of the doctrine concerning Christ which he had heard from the apostle, confirmed by many witnesses, to faithful men capable of teaching that doctrine to others, that it might be continued to the end; and more especially to publish and affirm every where that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead, and thereby proved to be the Son of God; for preaching which facts he was himself now suffering as a malefactor, even unto bonds. But he told him it was not in the power of the enemies of the gospel to keep it in bonds; do what they would, they could not hinder it from being preached, and believed in the world. And, with respect to himself, he assured Timothy, that he suffered imprisonment and every evil patiently, and with the greatest joy for the gospel; because he knew that if he were put to death with Christ, he should also be raised from the dead with him, and reign with him in the life to come. Whereas, any preacher of the gospel, who, from the love of ease, or the fear of death, either concealed or denied the things concerning the Lord Jesus, him will Christ deny at the day of judgment. Then charged Timothy to put the teachers at Ephesus in mind of these things; and, in the mean time, to strive to present himself to God an approved, unashamed workman in the gospel. And, being deeply impressed with a sense of the importance of the gospel doctrine to the happiness of the world, the apostle severely condemned two false teachers whom he mentioned by name, whose corrupt doctrine concerning Christ, he told Timothy, was as destructive to the souls of men

as a gangrene is to their bodies. What stronger proofs can any one desire of the apostle's sincerity in the things which he preached? If he had been carrying on an imposture, would not these wicked teachers, one of whom he had enraged by delivering him to Satan for blaspheming Christ, have published the imposture to the world? In the mean time, that Timothy and others might not entertain harsh thoughts of God for permitting corrupt teachers to arise in his church, he told him, that in a church, as in a great house, there are vessels appointed to a dishonourable use; thereby insinuating, that these corrupt teachers, when driven out of the church for wicked practices, not being able to make any discoveries to the prejudice of the gospel or of its ministers, that circumstance, though originating in the vices of these men, and dishonourable to them, was a strong proof of the truth of the gospel, and of the sincerity of its ministers in what they preached. Next, that Timothy might not follow the corrupt teachers, but strenuously oppose them, the apostle commanded him to flee youthful lusts, and to practise assiduously the duties of piety and morality; and put him in mind that the servant of the Lord must use no violent nor improper methods with those who oppose themselves, but be gentle to all men, meekly instructing the enemies of the gospel, if by any means God will give them repentance. And, that posterity might have undoubted evidence of the apostle's inspiration, he foretold the state in which the church would be in after-ages, through the base practices of hypocritical teachers; but that a stop would, in due time, be put to their delusions. Then, conscious of his own faithfulness as an apostle, he appealed to Timothy's perfect knowledge of his doctrine, his manner of life, his purpose in teaching that doctrine, the virtues which he exercised, and the persecutions which he suffered for the gospel, particularly at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra; but God delivered him out of them all; so that if Timothy showed himself equally faithful, he might expect the like deliverances. Having further informed him that all who adhered to truth should suffer persecution, he charged him, notwithstanding, to continue in the profession of the things which he had learned of him, and been assured of, knowing from whom he had learned them, and that they were agreeable to the ancient scriptures, in the knowledge and belief of which he had been educated from his childhood. Then he solemnly charged him, in the presence of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, the judge of the world, to preach all the things which he had mentioned, without considering whether the doing so was seasonable or unseasonable with respect to himself; because the church was soon to lose the benefit of the apostle's labours, the time of his departure being nearly come. This charge the apostle accompanied with a high expression of joy, on the reflection that he had fought the good fight, had finished the race, had preserved the faith,

and was sure of a crown of righteousness from Christ, his Master, at the day of judgment. And, to encourage Timothy to follow his example, he informed him, that though no man appeared with him when he made his first answer, yet the Lord Jesus stood by him, and strengthened him to declare boldly the doctrine concerning the salvation of the Gentiles by faith; and that though he had no hope of deliverance at the tribunal of Cæsar, yet he knew that Christ would deliver him from betraying his cause, and from every evil work, and would preserve him safe to his heavenly kingdom. In which persuasion, he directed to him a doxology, which, on other occasions, he ascribed to God the Father.

These strong asseverations of the truth of those things which he had uniformly preached, these earnest charges to Timothy to preach the same things plainly to the world, these high expressions of joy in the sufferings which he had endured for preaching them, and these confident expectations which he expressed of receiving a full reward in the life to come, being the apostle's dying words to his intimate friend, conveyed in a private letter, no judge of human nature can read them without feeling a strong conviction that the apostle was thoroughly persuaded of the things which he had constantly preached without the least variation. And, seeing the most important of these were facts which he had learned from his own senses and experience, such as the appearing of Christ to him on the road to Damascus, his endowing him with supernatural powers, his revealing to him the particulars of his history and of the gospel doctrine, and his having been enabled to persuade multitudes in many countries to embrace and profess the gospel, is such a proof of the reality of these facts, and of the truth of the gospel history, as can never be shaken.

Titus is mentioned by Eusebius as the bishop of Crete. He is not once mentioned by Luke in his book of the Acts: so that his history must consist of such particulars as are related of him in the apostle Paul's epistles, where, indeed, he is often mentioned with great respect, and of such probable conjectures as these particulars naturally suggest.

That Titus was converted by Paul, appears from his calling him "his own son in the common faith," [Tit. i. 1.] Yet at what time, and in what place Paul converted him, he hath no where told us. They who think Titus was a religious proselyte before his conversion, are of opinion that he was converted at Antioch, soon after Paul and Barnabas came to that city from Tarsus, as mentioned, Acts xi. 25. But others supposing him to have been originally an idolatrous Gentile, conjecture that his conversion happened in some of the countries of the Lesser Asia, through which Paul travelled in the course of his first apostolical journey, the history of which is given, Acts xiii. xiv. What is certain, is, that Titus was with Paul in Antioch before

the council of Jerusalem ; and that, having distinguished himself by his piety and zeal, he was one of those whom the church at Antioch sent to Jerusalem to consult the apostles and elders concerning the circumcision of the converted proselytes, fourteen years after Paul's own conversion, that is, in the year forty-nine. [Gal. ii. 1, 2.] When the messengers from the church at Antioch came to Jerusalem, the apostles, elders, and brethren, assembled ; and, after reasoning on that question, decreed that it was not necessary to circumcise the converted Gentiles. Nevertheless, the judaizers in Jerusalem zealously endeavoured, on that occasion, to have Titus circumcised. So the apostle insinuates, Gal. ii. 3, where he saith, " not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised." Here it is proper to remark, that the Jews called all the idolatrous Gentiles Greeks ; for, in their manner of speaking, Jews and Greeks comprehended the whole of mankind. [See Rom. i. 16.] According to this interpretation of the appellation, from the apostle's calling Titus a Greek it may be inferred, that before his conversion he was an idolatrous Gentile. The same thing appears likewise, from the attempt of the judaizers to force him to be circumcised. For, after the decree of the council was passed, freeing the converted proselytes from obedience to the law of Moses, if Titus, before his conversion, had been one of that denomination, the judaizers could not, with any show of reason, have insisted on his circumcision. Yet, as the council had determined nothing respecting the converts from among the idolatrous Gentiles, some of the zealous judaizers, who, by stealth, introduced themselves into the private meeting in which Paul explained to James, Peter, and John, the gospel which he had preached among the Gentiles, when they found out that Titus, before his conversion, was an idolater, might insist to have him circumcised, on pretence that he was not freed from circumcision by the council's decree. But this attempt to subject a Gentile convert to the law of Moses, Paul resolutely withstood, that the truth of the gospel might continue with the Gentiles. [Gal. ii. 5.]

After the council, when Paul and Barnabas, accompanied by Judas and Silas, returned to Antioch to give the brethren an account of what had happened at Jerusalem, Titus seems to have returned with them ; and, from that time forth, seems to have accompanied Paul in his travels as one of his assistants. For when the apostle set out from Antioch to visit the churches which he had gathered among the Gentiles in his first apostolical journey, and to confirm them, by delivering to them the decrees of the council, Titus went with him all the way to Corinth, and laboured with him in the conversion of the inhabitants of that city. This appears from 2 Cor. viii. 23, " If any inquire concerning Titus, he is my partner and fellow-labourer in the gospel towards you." The reason is, the apostle,

before he wrote to the Corinthians, having not visited them since their conversion, the fellow-labouring of Titus towards the Corinthians must have happened at the time they were converted. If this reasoning be just, it must follow, that after the council, when Paul set out from Antioch with Silas to visit the churches, Titus either went with them, or was sent away before them with the apostle's letter to the Galatians, which is supposed, by Dr. Macknight, to have been written at Antioch soon after the council. In that case, when the apostle went through Galatia with the decrees, he may have met Titus, and have taken him along with him. Or, during his eighteen months' abode at Corinth, he may have sent for Titus to come and assist him at Corinth.

After the apostle had planted the gospel in Corinth, he went to Jerusalem; but whether Titus abode at Corinth, or accompanied him to Jerusalem, is not said. This, however, we know, that he came to the apostle, as many others did, during his long residence at Ephesus, mentioned, Acts xix. 10. For, by him, he sent his first epistle to the Corinthians, which was written at Ephesus about the time of the riot of Demetrius. This service the apostle assigned to Titus; because, being well known to, and much respected by, the Corinthians, on account of his former labours among them, he hoped he might have influence in composing the disturbances which had taken place in their church. On his return from Corinth, Titus met the apostle in Macedonia, and gave him such an account of the good disposition of the Corinthians, as filled him with joy, and induced him to write to them a second letter, which he employed Titus likewise to carry. At the same time, he requested him to excite the Corinthians to finish their collections for the saints in Judea, which they had begun during Titus's former visit to them. In prosecution of this design, Titus abode at Corinth till the apostle himself came and received their collections, and the collections of the other churches of Achaia. On that occasion, Paul spent three months at Corinth, [Acts xx. 3.] then set out for Jerusalem, taking Macedonia in his way. His companions in his journey to Jerusalem are mentioned, Acts xx. 4; and though Titus is not named as one of them, it does not follow that he was not one of the number. He is not said by Luke to have been with the apostle in Macedonia in his way to Corinth; yet, from the apostle's sending him from Macedonia to Corinth with his second epistle to the Corinthians, we learn that he was one of his chief assistants at that time. Wherefore, notwithstanding Luke, in his account of the apostle's return from Greece, hath not mentioned Titus among those who accompanied him to Jerusalem with the collections, he may have been one of them; and, having gone with him to Jerusalem, he may have ministered to him during his imprisonment there and in Cæsarea; nay, he may even have sailed with him to Rome. These, however,

are only conjectures ; for, from the time Titus delivered the apostle's second letter to the Corinthians, in the year fifty-eight, we hear nothing of him till the year sixty-two, when he was left by the apostle in Crete, to set in order the things that are wanting, and to ordain elders in every city. [Titus i. 4.]

Among the three thousand who were converted by Peter on the memorable day of Pentecost, Cretes, that is, Jews natives of Crete, who had come up to Jerusalem to worship, are mentioned, Acts ii. 11. These being of the same disposition with the Jewish converts, who, after the death of Stephen, preached the word to none but to the Jews only, [Acts xi. 19.] would, after their return home from Jerusalem, confine their preaching to the Jews, who, as Josephus informs us, were very numerous in Crete. We may therefore believe that the first christians in Crete were mostly of the Jewish nation. It is true, Barnabas went into Cyprus after he separated himself from Paul ; but it is not said that he went into Crete, either on that or on any other occasion. And even though he had preached in Crete, as he had not the power of imparting the spiritual gifts to his converts, it cannot be thought that his preaching in that country would be attended with very great success. The same may be said of any other evangelist or christian prophet who happened to preach the gospel to the Cretans. It is therefore thought, the numerous conversions of the inhabitants of Crete, which made it necessary that elders should be ordained in every city, must be ascribed to the labours of some apostle, who, by working miracles, and conferring the spiritual gifts on his converts, made such an impression on the minds of the Cretans, that many of the idolatrous inhabitants, and some of the Jews, embraced the christian faith.

Now that St. Paul was this apostle, seems probable from his leaving Titus in Crete, to set in order the things wanting among the christians there, and to ordain elders in every city. The modelling and governing the christian churches certainly belonged to the persons who had planted them. Accordingly, most of the churches in the Gentile countries having been planted by the apostle Paul, he modelled, corrected, and governed the whole, either in person, or by his assistance, without any interference from his brethren apostles ; just as the apostles of the circumcision modelled, corrected, and governed the churches planted by them, without any interference from him.

The first converts to the christian faith in Crete being those Cretan Jews to whom Peter preached on the memorable day of Pentecost, and those Jews in Crete to whom Peter's converts preached the gospel on their return from Jerusalem, they were all, or most of them at least, very zealous for the law of Moses. Wherefore, when Paul came into Crete and converted numbers of the idolatrous inhabitants, we may believe that the more early christians in Crete would address the new converts with great

warmth, and insist on their obeying the law of Moses, as absolutely necessary for their salvation. Moreover, to render the law acceptable to these new converts, they, no doubt, followed the course in which their brethren in other churches walked. They amused the new converts with vain talking, and Jewish fables, and commandments of men, and foolish questions about the law. Nay, they went so far as to affirm that the sacrifices and purifications enjoined by the law, duly performed, would procure pardon for them, though they continued in the practice of sin. To this doctrine the Cretans, many of whom were very wicked, lent a willing ear; insomuch that these corrupt teachers, who seem to have been natives of Crete, and to have been infected with the vices of their countrymen, subverted whole families. [Tit. i. 11.]

The errors and bad practices of the judaizing teachers and of their disciples, the apostle, when he came into Crete, observed, and opposed by wholesome instructions and sharp rebukes. But, well knowing how diligent they were in spreading their errors, Paul left Titus in Crete to restrain them. And, that he might have a number of fit persons, clothed with proper authority, to assist him in opposing the judaizers, and in maintaining the truth, he ordered him, at parting, to ordain elders in every city. But that he might be at no loss to know who were fit to be invested with the offices of bishop and deacon, and what line of conduct he himself was to pursue in discharging the duties of his ministry, the apostle, when he came to Colosse, wrote to him the epistle which bears his name, in which he described the qualifications of the persons who were worthy to be ordained elders, commanded him to rebuke the judaizers sharply, and mentioned the errors he was particularly to oppose, the doctrines he was earnestly to inculcate, and the precepts he was constantly to enjoin; that none of the Cretans, whether teachers or people, might fail in their duty through want of information.

By comparing the epistle to Titus with the two epistles to Timothy, we learn that the judaizing teachers were every where indefatigable in propagating their erroneous doctrine concerning the necessity of obedience to the law of Moses as the only means of obtaining salvation; and that, in the most distant countries, they uniformly taught the same doctrine, for the purpose of rendering the practice of sin consistent with the hope of salvation; and that, to draw disciples after them, they encouraged them in sin by the vicious practices which they themselves followed, in the persuasion that they should be pardoned through the efficacy of the Levitical sacrifices. Only, from the apostle's so earnestly commanding Titus in Crete, and Timothy at Ephesus, to oppose these errors, it is probable that the judaizing teachers were more numerous and successful at Ephesus and in Crete than in other places. However, as Titus was a Gentile convert, whose interest it was to maintain the freedom of the

Gentiles from the law of Moses, and a teacher of long standing in the faith, the apostle was not so full in his directions and exhortations to him as to Timothy, neither did he recommend to him meekness, lenity, and patience in teaching, as he did to Timothy, but rather sharpness. [ch. i. 13; ii. 13.] Perhaps Titus was a person of a soft and mild temper; whereas, Timothy, being a younger man, may have been of a more ardent spirit, which needed to be somewhat restrained.

The leaving of Titus in Crete is supposed to have happened in the year sixty-two, after the apostle was released from his first confinement in Rome. He is believed to have remained there some time, until visited by the apostle Paul, who is thought to have heard of Nero's persecution while he abode in that island, and to have hastened thither in company with Titus, in consequence of his receiving that information. Titus seems to have remained with Paul during his second imprisonment, till he came to answer before Cæsar, and then to have fled to Dalmatia. Whether he did this with or without the apostle's approbation is unknown, nor have we any further account concerning him in scripture. Some ancient writers assert that he died in Crete, in the ninety-fourth year of his age.

Philemon, to whom the epistle was written, seems to have been no stranger to the apostle Paul. For, in the first and second verses, the apostle addressed all the members of Philemon's family, as being well acquainted with them; and, verse 19, he insinuates that Philemon himself was his convert. Philemon's respect for his apostle is mentioned, verse 17. He was an inhabitant of Colosse, as appears from the epistle to the Colossians, chap. iv. ver. 9, where Onesimus, Philemon's slave, is called one of them. And, in verse 17, the brethren at Colosse are desired to say to Archippus, (the person mentioned, Philemon, verse 2,) "take heed to the ministry which thou hast received." Besides, the ancients believed that Philemon was an inhabitant of Colosse. So Theodoret says expressly in his commentary upon Philemon; and tells us that his house was still remaining at Colosse in his time, that is, in the beginning of the fifth century. And Jerom also, in his commentary upon this epistle, says Philemon was of Colosse. And Theophylact calls him a Phrygian.

Philemon seems to have been a person of great worth as a man, and of some note as a citizen in his own country; for his family was so numerous, that Dr. Macknight supposes that it made a church by itself, or, at least, a considerable part of the church at Colosse. [verse 2.] He was likewise so opulent, that he was able, by the communication of his faith, that is, by his beneficence, to refresh the bowels of the saints. [verse 6, 7.] According to Grotius, Philemon was an elder of Ephesus. But Beausobre speaks of him as one of the pastors of Colosse, in which he is followed by Doddridge. From the apostle's em-

ploying Philemon to provide him a lodging at Colosse, Michaelis conjectures that he was one of the deacons there. These authors were led to think Philemon a minister of the gospel, because, in the inscription of the epistle to him, the apostle calls him his fellow-labourer; but that appellation is of an ambiguous signification, being given not only to those who preached the gospel, but to such pious persons, whether men or women, as assisted the apostles in any manner while they were employed in preaching. See Rom. xvi. 8; 3 John, verse 8.

The ancients differed as much as the moderns in their opinion concerning Philemon's station in the church. Some of them reckoned him a bishop; but others, fancying that Apphia was his wife, contended that he had no ecclesiastical character whatever; for they became very early to esteem celibacy in ecclesiastical persons. In particular, Hilary the deacon saith expressly that he was one of the laity. Theodoret, Œcumenius, and Theophylact, seem also to have been of the same opinion.

Onesimus, a slave, on some disgust, having run away from his master Philemon, came to Rome; and, falling into want, as is supposed, he applied to the apostle Paul, of whose imprisonment he had heard, and with whose benevolent disposition he was well acquainted, having, it seems, formerly seen him in his master's house. Or the fame of the apostle's preaching and miracles having drawn Onesimus to hear some of the many discourses which he delivered in his own hired house in Rome, these made such an impression on him, that he became a sincere convert of the christian faith. For the apostle calls him, verse 9, "his son whom he had begotten in his bonds." After his conversion, Onesimus abode with the apostle, and served him with the greatest assiduity and affection. But, being sensible of his fault in running away from his master, he wished to repair that injury by returning to him. At the same time, being afraid that, on his return, his master would inflict on him the punishment which, by the law or custom of Phrygia, was due to a fugitive slave, and which, as Grotius says, he could inflict without applying to any magistrate, he besought the apostle to write to Philemon, requesting him to forgive and receive him again into his family. The apostle, always ready to do good offices, very willingly complied with Onesimus' desire, and wrote this letter to Philemon; in which, with the greatest softness of expression, warmth of affection, and delicacy of address, he not only interceded for Onesimus' pardon, but urged Philemon to esteem him, and put confidence in him as a sincere christian. And, because restitution, by repairing the injury that hath been done, restores the person who did the injury to the character which he had lost, the apostle, to enable Onesimus to appear in Philemon's family with some degree of reputation, bound himself, in this epistle, by his hand-writing, not only to repay all that Onesimus owed to Philemon, but to make full

reparation also for whatever injury he had done to him by running away from him.

The apostolical institutions, a book of questionable authority, asserts that Onesimus was bishop of Berea. When Ignatius wrote his epistle to the Ephesians, their bishop's name was Onesimus; and Grotius thought he was the person for whom Paul interceded. But, as Lardner observes, this is also uncertain. Mill has mentioned a copy, in which, at the conclusion, it is said, that Onesimus died a martyr at Rome, by having his legs broken.

Linus and Clement, who are mentioned by Paul, are each of them said to have been bishops of Rome. Concerning the latter of these we shall mention several particulars in the History of Martyrs.

Hermas is reported to have written a book of visions, which Dr. Lardner believes to be genuine.

Dionysius the Areopagite is also spoken of as an author, but the works ascribed to him are generally believed to have been of later origin.

The scantiness of the information with which we are furnished concerning the lives of the first followers of Christ, though it may disappoint our curiosity, tends to the confirmation of our faith. It proves that those illustrious men, to whom the world is indebted for the diffusion of evangelical light, did not seek to repay their loss of all things by the accumulation of fame, since they took so little pains to transmit their own names, or those of each other, to an admiring posterity.

CHAPTER XX.

An account of the troubles of the Jews, particularly those calamities which fell upon them at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem.

General view of the genealogy and history of the Herodian family—division of the land of Palestine in the time of our Saviour—the religious privileges of the Jews—the Jewish sects, Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Herodians, and Galileans—the Targums—Pilate's report of our Lord's death—he is recalled—his death—Vitellius favours the Jews—interesting history of Herod Agrippa—ruin of Herod Antipas—embassy of Philo to Caius Caligula—reign and death of Herod Agrippa—government of Fadus—Alexander succeeds him—insults offered to the Jews—concourse at the passover—quarrel with the Samaritans—dispute of the Jews and Syrians at Cæsarea—Felix—dreadful government of Florus—Massada seized by the rebels—the Jews massacred in various parts of the country—Jerusalem besieged by Cestius Gallus, who is obliged to retreat—the christians retire to Pella—conduct of Josephus in Galilee—Vespasian takes the command of a large Roman army—war in Galilee—observations on the discipline of the Roman armies—Gadara taken—memorable defence of Jotapata—Josephus taken prisoner—Jophtha taken—revolt of the Samaritans—Joppa reduced—fight on the sea of Tiberias—Giscala taken—intestine troubles of Jerusalem—an army of Idumeans assist the zealots—dreadful massacre—Zechariah murdered—the zealots divide into factions—Jerusalem besieged—war suspended—history of Simon, the factious leader—all the castles but three reduced by Vespasian—dissensions between Simon and John—Vespasian declared emperor, and Josephus liberated—Vespasian takes Rome—Titus sent against Jerusalem—three factions in that city—Titus reconnoitres the city, and is exposed to great danger—the Romans are repulsed—the factions are reduced to two—Titus levels the country—siege regularly formed—description of Jerusalem—the factions unite—first wall taken—subtilty of Castor, a Jew—second wall taken—Roman army reviewed—Fort Antonia attacked—famine in the city—great numbers crucified—Titus offers mercy—Roman machines burnt—a wall built round the city—the famine becomes more severe—new works raised by the Romans—Josephus wounded by a stone—John plunders the temple—dreadful mortality—devastation throughout the country—Fort Antonia taken—speeches of Josephus to the Jews—temple gallery burnt—a child eaten by its mother—the temple burned—various horrible massacres—exertions of the priests—they surrender—the lower town taken and burned—distress of the rebels—Jews sold for slaves—impregnable forts abandoned—final massacre—a calculation of the numbers that were slain—the city razed to the ground—soldiers rewarded—Titus leaves Judea—Simon is taken—the triumph of Titus and Vespasian—death of Simon—temple of peace erected—Macherus taken by stratagem—subsequent slaughter of the Jews—poll-tax—dreadful tragedy transacted at Massada—the sufferings of the Jews in Egypt and Cyrene—conclusion.

AS the history on which we are now about to enter is uncommonly interesting, there is a peculiar propriety in our recapitulating such circumstances as may be necessary for our more perfect understanding of it. The reader will easily recollect, that, from the time of Judas Maccabeus, the Jewish nation was

governed by the Asmonean family, who united the sanctity of the priesthood with the authority of the chief magistrate, till, in consequence of domestic dissensions, they were reduced to a state of subjection to the Roman republic, an event which took place in the sixty-third year before the christian era. They still, however, retained some shadow of royalty till the year A. C. 37, when Jerusalem was taken by Herod, and Antigonus, the last of the Asmonean race, committed to a close imprisonment. The reign of Herod, splendid, vigorous, and bloody, continued till a little after the birth of Christ, that is, about three years before the commencement of the common account.

Herod had nine wives; the first of whom, named Doris, was the mother of Antipater, who is stigmatized as the worst of all Herod's sons, and was put to death for treason during the last sickness of his father. The second of them was Mariamne, the daughter of Simon, the high-priest. By this excellent princess he had a son, whom Josephus names Herod, and Luke, Philip, the husband of that Herodias on whose account John the Baptist was beheaded. The third, who was his brother's daughter, and the fourth, who was his first cousin, both of them died childless. The fifth wife was Martac, a Samaritan, by whom he had Archelaus and Antipas; the former succeeded him in the half of the kingdom, under the name of tetrarch; and the latter, called also Philip, was tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and married Salome, the daughter of Herodias, who demanded the head of John Baptist as the reward of her dancing. This prince died without issue. Herod's sixth wife, Cleopatra, who was a native of Jerusalem, had two sons, Herod Antipas and Philip. Herod Antipas was he that married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, ordered the execution of John, and commanded his soldiers to insult our Saviour. Pallas, the seventh wife, had a son named Phasael. The eighth was Phædra, by whom he had only one daughter, named Roxana. And, by the last, called Elpis, he had another daughter called Salome.

Aristobulus, the son of the beloved Mariamne, left two sons, Agrippa, who is in the Acts called Herod, and noted as the persecutor of the christians; Herod, king of Chalcis, a province of Syria; and a daughter, named Herodias. Agrippa was the father of that king Agrippa before whom Paul pleaded, his sister Berenice, and Drusilla, the wife of Felix.

It has been already mentioned that the land of Israel was now considered as an appendage of Syria, and divided into four parts, called tetrarchies. Of these, Herod Antipas governed Galilee and Perea, or the country beyond Jordan. Philip, the son of Martac, occupied Iturea and Trachonitis, a rocky country, which afforded great shelter to robbers. Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene; and Pontius Pilate was the procurator, or Roman governor, of Judea.

The government of Pilate appears to have been uncommonly

bloody and oppressive; yet, as Dr. Lardner observes, that they had, according to the sacred writers, the free exercise of their religion, is evident from the whole tenour of the history contained in the gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles: they had their synagogues; the law and the prophets were read there; our Saviour taught in the synagogues; whenever he healed any lepers, he bade them go and show themselves to the priests, [Matt. viii. 4.] and offer the gifts that Moses commanded. [Luke v. 14.] There appears to have been a great resort to the temple at Jerusalem from Galilee and other parts at all their usual great feasts; they were at full liberty to make what contributions they saw fit to their sacred treasury [Mark xii. 41, 44; Luke xxi. 1.]; and so secure were they, that they used indirect practices to enrich it. [Matt. xv. 5; Mark vii. 11, 12.] There is no mention made in the history of our Saviour's ministry of any restraint or obstruction they met with, save that one of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. [Luke xiii. 1.]

That they might thus freely perform all the services of their religion, though they be supposed to have been then under the Roman government, is not at all improbable; for the Romans had ever permitted the people they conquered to practise their own religious rites in their own way; and that the Jews were now at full liberty to worship God according to the institution of Moses, we are assured by Josephus, who has left us the history of these times. The Roman presidents did, indeed, for some time, put in and turn out their high-priests at pleasure; the Roman governors did, indeed, sometimes offer them abuses, or suffer abuses to be committed in the country contrary to the institutions of the law, as they did also injure them in their civil properties; but these abuses seem not to have been very numerous. When any were committed, it was without the emperor's authority, and usually the Jews, at length, obtained satisfaction.

As a proof of their perfect freedom in matters of religion, Dr. Lardner produces the instance of their being allowed to follow their own customs, though contrary to those of all other nations, in the matter of divorce. "It has been said, that whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: but I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, save for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery." [Mat. v. 31, 32.] It is evident, from the manner in which our Lord condemns all divorces, save those made for the cause of fornication, that they did, at this time, put them in practice on other accounts. This appears also from the questions put to him concerning this matter, and the answers he gave to them, and the surprise and uneasiness which the disciples express at the decision, when he forbade such licentious divorces as those made for every cause.

The Jews were, at this time, divided into several sects, among which the most distinguished were the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes.

The Pharisees are generally supposed to have derived their name from a Chaldaic word, which signifies, to separate; because they separated themselves from the rest of the Jews, leading a more austere life, and professing a greater degree of holiness, and more religious observation of the law. It is difficult to fix their precise origin. While some suppose they existed in the time of Ezra, and others, that they sprung up but a little before the christian era, a third party have embraced a more probable opinion, which fixes their rise in the reign of the Maccabees. Dr. Lightfoot thinks that Pharisaism rose up gradually, from a period which he does not assign, to the maturity of a sect. It is certain, from the account given by Josephus, that, in the time of John Hyrcanus, about one hundred and eight years before Christ, the sect was not only formed, but made a considerable figure. According to Basnage, one Aristobulus, an Alexandrian Jew, and Peripatetic philosopher, who flourished about one hundred and twenty-five years before Christ, and wrote some allegorical commentaries on the scriptures, was the author of those traditions, by an adherence to which the Pharisees were principally distinguished from other sects. They paid great deference to their elders, whom they never presumed to contradict, and possessed a high reputation on account of their supposed equity, temperance, and wisdom. They held that fate governed all things, but not in so absolute a manner as to exclude the operations of the human will: that the soul was immortal, and reserved for a future state of rewards and punishments. Most of the Jews of the present day adhere to the Pharisaic doctrine, though they do not generally practise their extreme austerity of life.

The Sadducees generally consisted of persons of the greatest opulence and distinction; and though they attended on the temple worship, were generally considered as a kind of deists, or free-thinkers. They are supposed, by some, to have taken their rise from Dositheus, a Samaritan sectary, and to have allowed no books of scripture, unless the pentateuch; but Josephus does not charge them with this, but only with rejecting the traditions of the elders. Some think they derived their name from an Hebrew word signifying just; and others, from one Sadoc, a disciple of Antigonus Sochæus, president of the sanhedrim, about two hundred and sixty years before Christ, who frequently inculcated upon his scholars that God is to be served for his own sake, not out of view to any reward from him in the next world, as slaves serve their masters merely for recompence. Sadoc, they add, putting a false interpretation on these words of his master's, published that there was no reward allotted to good actions done in this world. They held, according to Jo-

sephus, that the soul and body die together, and that the only obligation people are under is to keep the law. They accustomed themselves to investigate every thing, and dispute freely with their teachers. He says, that when they were advanced to public offices, they were obliged to conduct themselves as Pharisees, in order to secure the favour of the people.

The Essenes were less ambitious of public distinction than either of the other sects; and, in consequence, are not mentioned in the New Testament. As to their origin, Pliny asserts, without mentioning his authority, that they had subsisted for several thousand years. The most probable opinion is, that this sect was formed by Jewish exiles, who, a little before the time of the Maccabees, were forced to retire into caves and deserts, in order to avoid the persecution of their enemies. Philo and Josephus agree that their number in Judea was about four thousand; but the latter writer asserts that they were much more numerous in Egypt. They have been much commended by Jews, christians, and pagans. They held, according to Josephus, that the world is absolutely governed by the providence of God without any other interference. They acknowledged the immortality of the soul, and proved, by their practice, that they considered justice as the chief of all virtues. They did not personally attend at the temple, but sent their gifts, and sacrificed among themselves with much ceremony. They followed no business but husbandry, never married, nor kept servants; but had all their possessions in common, and knew no distinction between rich and poor. They are said to have been divided into the laborious and contemplative; the first of whom divided their time between prayer and labour, and the second between prayer and study. They were not, however, all equally strict in observing their rules of abstinence. Mr. Lampe, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, compares the Pharisees with the Platonists, the Sadducees with the Epicureans, and the Essenes with the Stoics and Pythagoreans.

The critics and commentators upon the New Testament are much divided with regard to the Herodians, some making them to be a political party, and others a religious sect. The former opinion is favoured by the author of the Syriac version, who calls them the domestics of Herod; and also by Josephus, who passes them over in silence, though he professes to give an account of the several religious sects of the Jews. The latter opinion is countenanced by our Lord's caution against the leaven of Herod, which apparently implies that the Herodians were distinguished from the other Jews by some doctrinal tenets. Dr. Prideaux is of opinion that they derived their name from Herod the Great, and that they were distinguished from the other Jews by their concurrence with Herod's scheme of subjecting himself and his dominions to the Romans, and likewise by complying with many of the heathen usages and customs. It is pro-

bable that they were chiefly of the sect of the Sadducees; because the leaven of Herod is also denominated the leaven of the Sadducees.

Directly opposed to the Herodians were the Galileans, who are considered by Josephus as the fourth Jewish sect. They derived their origin from a bloody insurgent, Judas of Galilee, who rebelled about the time of the taxing, and excited the people to resist the payment of any tribute to the Romans. They were nearly akin to the Pharisees, being principally distinguished by their holding the maxim of uncontrollable liberty. They acknowledged no superior but God; and, rather than call any man master, were ready to submit to the most excruciating death.

While we are thus treating on the religion and learning of the Jews, it may not be improper to observe, that they had at this time certain Chaldee paraphrases, which are believed to have been read in their synagogues as early as the time of Christ. It is remarkable that they interpret many of the prophecies concerning the Messiah in the same way in which they are now understood by christians, and therefore are very helpful in the Jewish controversy. These Chaldee paraphrases are known by the name of Targums.

Such was the religious state of the Jews under the government of Pilate. In our Life of Christ we continued his history till the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God. An opinion prevailed among the ancient christians, that, as Pilate consented unwillingly upon that occasion, so he transmitted to the emperor Tiberius a very favourable account of our Saviour's character. This opinion has been much controverted; but we shall content ourselves with transcribing what Eusebius has observed upon the subject.

‘When the wonderful resurrection of our Saviour, and his ascension to heaven, were in the mouths of all men, it being the ancient custom for the governors of provinces to write to the emperor, and give him an account of new and remarkable occurrences, that he might not be ignorant of any thing, our Saviour's resurrection being much talked of throughout all Palestine, Pilate informed the emperor of it, as likewise of his miracles, which he had heard of; and that, being raised up after he had been put to death, he was already believed by many to be a god. And it is said that Tiberius referred the matter to the senate; but that they refused their consent, under a pretence that it had not been first approved of by them, there being an ancient law that no one should be deified among the Romans without an order of the senate, but, indeed, because the saving and divine doctrine of the gospel needed not to be confirmed by human judgment and authority. However, Tiberius persisted in his former sentiment, and allowed not any thing to be done that was prejudicial to the doctrine of Christ. These things are related by Tertullian, a man famous on other ac-

counts, and particularly for his skill in the Roman laws. I say, he speaks thus in his apology for the christians, written by him in the Roman tongue, but since translated into Greek. His words are these : ' There was an ancient decree, that no one should be consecrated as a deity by the emperor, unless he was first approved of by the senate. Marcus Æmilinus knows this by his god Alburnus. This is to our purpose ; forasmuch as among you divinity is bestowed by human judgment. And if God does not please man, he shall not be God. And, according to this way of thinking, man must be propitious to God. Tiberius, therefore, in whose time the christian name was first known in the world, having received an account of this doctrine out of Palestine, where it began, committed that account to the senate, giving in, at the same time, his own suffrage in favour of it. But the senate rejected it, because it had not been approved by themselves. Nevertheless, the emperor persisted in his judgment, and threatened death to such as should accuse the christians.' ' Which,' adds Eusebius, ' could be no other than a disposal of Divine Providence, that the doctrine of the gospel, which was then in its beginning, might be preached all over the world without molestation.'

To leave, however, this matter undetermined, we proceed to observe, that the conduct of Pilate still continued to be the most atrocious and bloody imaginable. An event soon after happened which brought his tyranny to a conclusion. An impostor appeared in Samaria in the year A. D. 35, a little after the death of Stephen, who gave out to the multitude, that if they would meet him at mount Gerizim, he would show them the sacred vessels which they believed Moses had concealed in that place. Vast numbers of ignorant people immediately assembled in arms, and laid seige to Tirathaba, a village in that vicinity, waiting for others to join them there, who would, they expected, enable them to form a sufficient body to go up and take possession of the pretended holy treasure. Pilate, who had received timely information, collected a large body of cavalry and infantry, and took possession of the mountain, whence he attacked the Samaritans, routed them with great slaughter, and brought off a considerable number of prisoners, the most distinguished of whom he ordered to be beheaded. Chagrined by this defeat and its bloody consequences, the chief persons among the Samaritans made application to Vitellius, governor of Syria, insisting that Pilate had been guilty of murder, in putting to death men that had not armed to oppose the Roman authority, but only to resist his outrageous oppression. On receiving this complaint, Vitellius despatched his friend Marcellus to take upon him the government of Judea, and commanded Pilate to repair immediately to Rome, to answer for his conduct at the tribunal of Cæsar. Josephus has informed us nothing further concerning Pilate, than that Tiberius died while he was per-

forming his voyage, and that the loss of his government was only the forerunner of greater evils. There is, however, an ancient tradition that he was banished to Vienne in Gaul; and Eusebius asserts, from the authority of some Greek annalists, that he became his own executioner.

On the feast of the passover, this same year, 35, Vitellius was present at Jerusalem, where he was received with the greatest distinction by the Jews, whose favour he took the utmost pains to conciliate, by remitting the whole duty which was levied on the fruits that were exposed to sale. His liberality did not stop here; for, being informed that the Jews were very uneasy that the pontifical habits were kept in the Fort Antonia, under the custody of a Roman officer, he commanded these vestments to be delivered up to the priests, to be disposed of at their pleasure, and released the governor from all responsibility for their safety. Not long after, he deprived Caiaphas of the priesthood, and bestowed it on Jonathan, the son of Ananas. At this period, which was in the twentieth year of the reign of Tiberius, died Philip, the brother of Herod, after having been tetrarch of Trachonitis, Gaulanites, and Batania, for the space of thirty-seven years. He was a man distinguished by his moderation, and devoted to the quiet enjoyment of his ease, his whole life being spent within the district over which he was appointed to preside. He very seldom left his own house; and, when he did, it was in company with a few select friends; and he had a chair carried after him, which, on particular occasions, he used to convert into a seat of justice. As it sometimes happened that he met persons on the road who had need of his judicial assistance, it was his custom not to lose any time, but to hear the cause immediately, and to acquit or condemn the party according to the strength of the evidence. His death happened at Chorazin; and he was interred, with the utmost pomp and magnificence, in a monument which he had caused to be erected for his reception. As he left no children behind him, the emperor decreed that his estate should be annexed to Syria, but on the condition that the country should not be deprived of the tributes hereafter to be raised in the tetrarchy.

In a former chapter of this work we mentioned that a war was carried on between Herod and Aretas, in consequence of Herod's divorcing the daughter of Aretas, that he might gratify his passion for Herodias. The army of Herod being defeated by the Arabian prince, Vitellius was commanded to assist the former, and accordingly marched towards Petra with two legions of Roman auxiliaries. When he had got as far as Ptolemais, and was on the point of crossing Judea, he was met by the principal people of the country, who most earnestly solicited him that he would take a different route; for that the Jewish law was insulted, and their religion profaned, by the images that the Romans usually carry in their colours. This reason had its

proper weight with the general, who directed that his army should march about by the way of a large plain; and, in the mean time, he took with him Herod the tetrarch, and several other friends, who went up to Jerusalem to worship on occasion of a solemn festival which was then approaching. He made three days' stay in this city; during which time he was treated with all possible marks of honour and respect; and while he remained there, he deprived Jonathan of the office of high-priest, and conferred it on his brother Theophilus; and, on the fourth day he received letters which announced the death of Tiberius: whereupon he caused the people to swear allegiance to his successor, Caius Caligula; and this being done, he gave orders for the recal of his troops, and directed that they should go into winter quarters, the change in the government having determined him to put a period to the war; and after this he returned to Antioch.

A tradition is current, that when this expedition of Vitellius was talked of, Aretas consulted the wizards and fortune-tellers respecting what should be the issue of the affair, and that the answer which he received was to the following purpose: "That the army then on the march should never arrive at Petra; for that either one of the princes should die, or he that commanded the army, or the person that was deputy in the command, or the party against whom the war was levied."

Josephus here introduces the history of Herod Agrippa, which he justly considers as affording a striking instance of divine protection, though we cannot regard it as any proof of the virtues of Herod.

Some small time previous to the death of Herod the Great, Agrippa, residing at Rome, and being often in the family of the emperor, became a very great favourite of his son Drusus, and also obtained the good opinion of Antonia, the wife of the elder Drusus, through the interest of his mother Berenice, for whom Antonia had a most particular esteem. Agrippa was, by nature, rather inclined to extravagance; but, during the life of his mother, he restrained himself within some reasonable bounds: her death, at length, making him master of his own conduct, he began to give expensive treats, and make profuse and costly presents, particularly to the dependants and domestics of the court, where it was that he hoped to raise his fortune. By these means he involved himself in debt to such a degree, that he could no longer make his appearance at Rome: besides, at this time, Tiberius having the misfortune to lose his son, he could not now endure the sight of any of the favourites of Drusus, lest he should be reminded of the loss he had sustained.

Agrippa having thus squandered his money and destroyed his reputation by the irregularity of his conduct, and his creditors being anxious with him to discharge their demands, which it was not in his power to do, he returned to Judea;

and, when there, seeing no hope of retrieving his fortune, and blushing for the folly he had been guilty of, he retreated to Malta, a castle in Idumea, having conceived an intention, that, in that place, he would put an end to an existence that was no longer supportable. Cypros, observing the desponding humour of her husband, and remarking that his melancholy seemed to forebode the most fatal consequences, exerted her utmost endeavours to prevent the misfortune which she dreaded; and particularly wrote to her sister Herodias a circumstantial account of the lamentable situation in which he lived, and most earnestly urged her, by all the ties of honour and consanguinity, to afford him some immediate relief; she said that she did every thing that was in her own power, and hoped that her example would be followed by her sister.

Herodias was so much affected by this representation, that she joined with her husband in sending a message, desiring that Agrippa would attend them; when they gave him a pension, and bestowed on him the government of Tiberias for his immediate support; but Herod did not long continue in this generous disposition, nor was Agrippa very well contented with his present situation. Now it happened, that, on a certain time, when they were drinking at Tyre, Herod made many ungenerous reflections on Agrippa on account of his poverty, and intimated, among other things, that he was supported by his bounty.

This insult was too great to be borne by one of Agrippa's spirit: he therefore repaired to visit Flaccus, an old particular friend of his when at Rome, who was at that time governor of Syria. Flaccus received him in the most free and hospitable manner; but, at this time, Aristobulus, the brother of Agrippa, was a visitor in the same house: the former was his enemy, though his brother; yet Flaccus divided his favours and civilities indifferently between them, as if no animosity had subsisted. Aristobulus, however, urged by the most implacable malice, still kept up the quarrel, and would not rest till he inspired Flaccus with a bad opinion of Agrippa, which was effected in the following manner: The inhabitants of Damascus, and those of Sidon, had a violent dispute between them respecting the boundaries of their territories, and Flaccus was fixed upon to hear and determine the cause. Now the people of Damascus, being informed that Flaccus and Agrippa were on terms of the utmost intimacy, thought that it would be a stroke of good policy previously to engage the interest of Agrippa, by bribing him with a sum of money. The bargain being made, and promises of mutual secrecy given, Agrippa exerted all his interest for the people of Damascus against those of Sidon.

Now Aristobulus, having discovered that Agrippa had received a bribe to transact this business, went to the governor,

and complained of the conduct of his brother; and Flaccus examining into the merits of the affair, and finding proof against Agrippa, dismissed him from his favour, and left him to seek a support in the best manner he was able. Hereupon Agrippa went back to Ptolemais; and, being in absolute want of the necessaries of life, he came to a resolution to return into Italy. Thus distressed, he gave directions to Marsyas, a freed-man of his, to apply to the brokers to raise a sum of money, on any terms whatever, to answer his present demand. In consequence of these directions, Marsyas went to Protus, a freed-man of Berenice, (the mother of Agrippa, his late patroness, who, by her last will, had recommended him to the service of Antonia,) and proposed to him to advance a sum of money to Agrippa on his own bond. Protus said that he was already in his debt; yet Marsyas prevailed upon him to lend twenty thousand Attic drachmas on the security above mentioned; but of this sum he gave no more to Agrippa than seventeen thousand five hundred pieces, retaining the other two thousand five hundred to himself for the trouble taken in procuring this advance; nor was Agrippa in circumstances to dispute about this extortion.

As soon as he was possessed of this money, Agrippa proceeded to Anthedon, where he met with a ship calculated for his service, and made preparations for going to sea; but Herennius Capito, the procurator of Jamnia, hearing of this circumstance, sent a number of soldiers to him, to demand the payment of three hundred thousand pieces of silver, the property of the king, which he had borrowed when at Rome. This circumstance occasioned some little delay in Agrippa's proceeding; but he amused the soldiers with fair promises, and, when night came on, cut his cable and slipped out to sea, steering his course towards Alexandria. On his arrival at that city, he made application to Alexander, the principal officer of the revenue, requesting that he would lend him two hundred thousand pieces of money on his bond. To this the officer replied, 'With regard to yourself, I have not faith enough in you to credit you with such a sum; but your wife appears to be a woman of exemplary character and amiable deportment, and she shall have the money if she will give her security for it.' In this manner the matter was settled; and Cypros becoming bound for the sum wanted, Alexander furnished Agrippa with five talents on the spot, and gave him letters of credit to receive the rest at Puteoli; for he was unwilling to trust the whole sum with him at once, lest he should apply it to improper purposes. By this time Cypros was convinced that there was no possibility of preventing her husband's proceeding; wherefore she and her children went over land to Judea.

When Agrippa arrived at Puteoli, he sent a letter to Tiberius Cæsar, who was then at Capræa, informing him that he

had come so far to pay his humble respects to him, and requesting his permission to wait on him. Tiberius did not hesitate to send him an answer replete with kindness, in which he informed him that he should be happy to see him at Capræ. Thither Agrippa went; and, on his arrival, Tiberius received him with open arms, and welcomed him to the palace, where he entertained him in the most generous and hospitable manner, thereby proving his sincerity when he gave him the invitation. But, on the following day, letters to Tiberius arrived from Herennius Capito, complaining of the conduct of Agrippa, and stating, 'That when he demanded payment of a bond for three hundred thousand pieces, which had been long since due to the emperor, Agrippa departed in a secret manner, so that the money would probably be lost.'

This conduct was so highly offensive to Tiberius, that he commanded the officers of his bed-chamber not to permit Agrippa to depart till the debt was discharged. On the contrary, Agrippa did not seem to remark the displeasure of the emperor; but immediately applied to Antonia, mother of Germanicus and Claudius, who was afterwards advanced to the sovereign power. To her he related his distresses, and told her that he was likely to lose the favour of the emperor, for want of the above-mentioned three hundred thousand pieces; whereupon she lent him the money in honour of the memory of Berenice, and the mutual friendship they had entertained for each other; exclusive of which Agrippa had been the companion and play-fellow of her son Claudius almost from his earliest infancy. Having received this money, he discharged his debt, and was reinstated in the favour of Tiberius. This conduct had such an effect on the emperor, that he committed his grandson, Tiberius Nero, the son of Drusus, to the care and government of Agrippa, requesting that he would be constantly in his company, and regulate his whole conduct. Agrippa, however, had so strong an idea of his obligations to Antonia, that he paid his principal attention and respect to her grandson Caius, for whom the people in general had the highest esteem, not only respecting his personal virtues, but on account of the reverence which they entertained for the memory of his father Germanicus. At this period, a Samaritan, one of Cæsar's freed-men, lent Agrippa a million of pieces, with part of which he discharged his debt to Antonia, and employed the remainder in paying the expense incurred on the attendance of Caius, with whom he had now contracted the utmost friendship.

It happened that, on a particular day, Caius and Agrippa were riding out in a chariot, without any other company, when Tiberius became the subject of conversation, on which Agrippa exclaimed, 'From my heart I wish it would please God that Caius was in his place.' Now Eutyclus, a freed-man of Agrippa, who, at that time, drove the carriage, heard these words

spoken, but took no notice of them for the present. Some little time afterwards, Eutychus was charged with robbing Agrippa, and carrying off some of his clothes. The man was really guilty of the offence, and was apprehended and carried before Piso, the governor of the place, to undergo the examination. Among other questions, Piso asked him how it happened that he ran away; to which he replied, 'That the life of Tiberius was in danger, and he was going to make a discovery of the plot.' On this declaration, he was sent bound to Capræ, where Tiberius still kept him in chains; for the emperor, in all affairs of state, was certainly the most dilatory man that ever existed. Ambassadors could not obtain an audience of him without a tedious delay, nor would he nominate people to succeed to governments of provinces till he had certain knowledge of the death of the former possessors.

Eutychus being kept so long in chains, was evidently the consequence of this disposition of Tiberius; but the emperor, at length, coming from Capræ to Tusculanum, distant only one hundred furlongs from Agrippa, he requested Antonia to solicit that Eutychus might be examined, that what he had to say against his patron might be known at once. Now Tiberius entertained a singular respect for Antonia, partly on account of affinity, (for she was his sister-in-law, and the widow of Drusus,) and partly for her steady virtue in refusing a second marriage in the prime of her life, to which she had been earnestly pressed by Augustus himself. In fact, her whole life exhibited a pattern of the most exemplary virtue. Exclusive of the above considerations, Tiberius was under personal obligations to Antonia, which he could not forget; since her wisdom, fidelity, and diligence, had saved his life from the desperate machinations of Sejanus; for he was possessed of great power and credit, a captain of the guards, and had engaged in the conspiracy a number of the most eminent senators, many of Cæsar's freed-men, several of the favourites at court, and some of the military officers. The escape, therefore, of Tiberius was rather extraordinary, and the effects of the treasonable intention were evidently defeated by the resolute industry of Antonia; for no sooner was she informed of the horrid intention, than she wrote down a narrative of all the particulars of the plot as they came to her knowledge, and sent them from time to time to Tiberius at Capræ, by the hands of Pallas, who was an approved and confidential servant of the emperor; and, in consequence of this discovery, the confederacy and those concerned in it being made known, Sejanus and his accomplices received the reward due to their demerits.

It may be presumed, that if Antonia's merit was great with Tiberius before she had rendered him this piece of service, it was much greater afterwards; so that when, at the request of Agrippa, she had repeatedly urged the emperor to hear the

charge of Eutychus, he could not refuse to comply with her solicitations : but he addressed her to the following purport ; ‘ If this man has reported falsehoods concerning Agrippa, he has been already sufficiently punished in the length of his imprisonment ; but let Agrippa beware how he prosecutes this matter with too great a degree of rigour, lest, on a clear investigation of the affair, the punishment he intends for Eutychus should fall on his own head.’ Antonia reported the contents of this speech to Agrippa ; but the more earnest she was in advising him to decline all further thoughts of prosecution, the more resolved he seemed to have the matter determined by a full examination.

When she found that he refused to be advised, she took an opportunity, when the emperor was passing by in a chair after dinner, with Caius and Agrippa walking before him, to advance immediately to Tiberius, with a repeated request that Eutychus might be brought to an immediate examination ; on which he addressed her in the following manner : ‘ I call heaven to witness, that what I am now about to consent to is contrary to my own inclination, and merely in compliance with your urgent request.’ Having said this, he gave orders to Macro, who had succeeded Sejanus as captain of the guards, to direct that Eutychus should be immediately brought before him.

The prisoner having made his appearance, Tiberius interrogated him in the following manner : ‘ What have you to allege against your patron Agrippa, to whose bounty you owe the possession of your freedom?’ To this Eutychus made answer : ‘ One day, as I was driving Caius and Agrippa in a chariot, and sitting at their feet in the discharge of my duty, I heard the substance of the conversation that passed between them ; and, among other things, I particularly recollect that Agrippa addressed Caius in the following manner : ‘ Devoutly do I wish that the old man was but safely deposited in the grave, and you were left governor of the world ; for if he was departed, you might easily dispose of his grandchild Tiberius ; and, exclusive of the general advantage that would arise to mankind from this circumstance, we might reasonably hope to share in the particular blessing of the revolution.’

There wanted nothing to induce Tiberius to give credit to this information ; and he was inexpressibly chagrined to think, that after he had committed the education of his grandson Tiberius to the particular care of Agrippa, he should totally neglect that important charge, and devote his whole time to an attendance on Caius. The emperor, therefore, turning about to Macro, cried, ‘ Put him in chains ;’ but Macro, not knowing who it was that he meant, (for he could not think of such a circumstance respecting Agrippa,) hesitated awhile till he should be more fully informed of his intentions. In the interim,

Tiberius took a walk in the circus; and, observing that Agrippa was still at liberty, he again called to Macro, and said, 'Have I not given orders for the putting that man in chains?' Upon this Macro exclaimed, 'What man?' The emperor replied, 'Agrippa.'

Agrippa had now recourse to the most humble supplications and entreaties, beseeching Tiberius, by the regard he entertained for the memory of his son, who had conferred on him the honour of his acquaintance, and on account of the services he had been happy enough to render his grandson Tiberius, that he would grant him his pardon. But his solicitations had no effect; for he was immediately dragged away to prison by the guards in his robes of honour, as they found him. Now the weather being remarkably sultry, and Agrippa ready to perish through the intenseness of thirst, he observed one Thaumastus, a servant to Caius, who had a pitcher of water in his hand, and requested that he would give him a draught of it. Thaumastus readily complied with his request; and when Agrippa had quenched his thirst, he addressed his benefactor in the following manner: 'Since you, Thaumastus, have been so generous as to confer this obligation on me during my present disgraceful situation, with the same readiness that you formerly served me in a more elevated station of life, be assured that you shall never have cause to repent the liberality of your present conduct; for you may depend upon my word of honour, that as soon as my present difficulties shall be overcome, I will make use of my utmost interest with Caius that you shall be restored to your liberty.' And Agrippa was afterwards as good as his promise; for no sooner was he advanced to the crown than he begged Caius would make him a present of Thaumastus, to whom he gave his freedom, and entrusted him with the management of his affairs; and, when his death approached, he recommended him to his son and daughter Agrippa and Berenice, advising that he might continue in the same situation during the remainder of his life; and this he did with credit to himself, and possessing the esteem of all who knew him.

While Agrippa was standing bound with chains with other prisoners before the palace, leaning in a melancholy manner against a tree, an owl perched thereon; which being observed by a German prisoner, he asked a soldier who was the person dressed in purple; and, being told that he was a Jew of the first distinction, he begged the soldier would let him approach him; for he wished to know some things respecting his country. This request being complied with, and an interpreter being allowed, the German addressed Agrippa to the following effect: 'I perceive, young gentleman, that you are dejected by this sudden and amazing change in your fortune; yet it is not in your power to conceive, nor will you easily credit how very near your deliverance approaches, under the special care and

protection of that providence which is your peculiar guard. I now invoke all the gods which are worshipped either by your nation or ours, by whose permission we are thus imprisoned, to witness that I say not this to flatter you with idle hopes, by which you will be deceived; for I am not insensible that such prognostications, if the event should not prove answerable to the prophecy, are productive of more injury than service. But I conceive it to be my duty, at whatever risk to myself, to inform you that you will see such a surprising turn of affairs, as will elevate you from this distressful situation, and place you on such a summit of honour and power that you will become the envy of those who have heretofore affected either to despise or pity you. The remainder of your days will be prosperous, and your good fortune will be possessed by children whom you will leave behind you. I now entreat your particular attention to what I have further to say. When you shall again behold this bird, you shall die at the end of five days from that time. Thus much I am commissioned by heaven to give you to understand by this auspicious omen. What I declare is founded on fact; and I tell you the simple truth, that you may not be borne down by the weight of your present afflictions, but be happy in the prospect of future events. All I have further to desire of you is, that when you shall find these predictions verified by the event, you will not be unmindful of your fellow-prisoners; but procure the freedom of those you may leave in this place.' When Agrippa heard this prophecy of the German, it appeared to him altogether as ridiculous as it did afterwards wonderful when it came to be accomplished.

During this time, Antonia was exceedingly unhappy on account of the hard treatment of her friend; and, conceiving that the inflexibility of the disposition of Tiberius was such, that the making application to him would but be a mere loss of time, she took a different method, and applied to Macro to render his confinement as easy to him as possible, by directing that he should be attended by soldiers of a civil and humane disposition, that he should constantly sit down at table with the officer in whose immediate custody he was, that he should be permitted the use of the bath daily, and that the visits of his friends and freed-men should be admitted. All these favours were granted: whereupon he was visited by his friend Silas; and Marsyas and Stychus, two of his freed-men, constantly conveyed to him the food of which he was most fond; and, under pretence of carrying blankets to sell, they supplied him with those articles on which to repose in the night, the soldiers, agreeably to the hints they had received from Macro, making no opposition to these proceedings.

At the expiration of about six months from the commencement of Agrippa's imprisonment, Tiberius, on his return from

Capræa, was attacked with an illness that was, at first, but slight; but which gradually increasing, he grew worse till his life was despaired of. When he came to perceive that there were no hopes of his recovery, he despatched Evodus, his favourite freedman, to bring his children to him early on the following day to take a final leave of their dying parent. These were not his natural children, but his adopted children; his grandson Tiberius, the son of Drusus; and his nephew Caius, the son of Germanicus.

He now betook himself to fervent prayers to the gods of his country, that he might be directed, by some particular signal, which of the two he should make choice of for his successor, yet secretly wishing that Tiberius might be distinguished by the happy omen; however he did not dare venture to make a pre-judication in a matter of such high importance, but thought proper first to consult his oracle. Wherefore, he determined that he would be governed by this circumstance, that the young prince who should first wait upon him in the morning should succeed him in the government. Having formed this resolution, he gave particular orders to the tutor of his grandchild to bring the youth to him by day-break, not entertaining a doubt but that the gods would declare in favour of Tiberius: but the event proved the contrary; for the emperor sending out Evodus as soon as day-light appeared, to see if the young princes were at the door, and to bring into the palace the first he saw, he found Caius alone, informed him that he must wait on his father, and immediately introduced him. Now it happened, that Tiberius, being unapprized of the intention of the emperor, had stayed to breakfast, and thus missed the favourable opportunity.

The emperor was astonished when Caius entered the room, and wondered at that providence which had defeated his design in the disposal of the government, by thus settling it in a way totally contrary to what he had intended. Nor did he deem the present disappointment of his expectations the worst circumstance attending the affair; for he did not consider the loss of the empire as of equal consequence with the personal safety of his grandchild; since, where the acquiring of dominion is the object, the question will be decided by force; ambition is deaf to the calls of humanity; and where there is a rivalry for power, the ruin of one party is generally deemed the security of the other.

Being thus disappointed in the wish that he had formed respecting the succession, he was but ill disposed to congratulate the future emperor on the good fortune that awaited him; yet as, on this occasion, it was necessary that something should be said, he addressed the fortunate prince in the manner following: 'It is unnecessary, my son Caius, for me to inform you, that Tiberius is more nearly allied to me in blood than you

are; yet I now commit the government of the Roman empire into your hands, in consequence of having consulted the will of the gods, and debated on the affair in my own mind. But I command you that, in the exercise of the power with which you are invested, you constantly remember the obligations you are under to him who bestowed it on you; and that your gratitude to your patron be testified by every possible instance of affection and regard to your brother Tiberius. All that I have to request of you in grateful acknowledgment of the honour I have now conferred is, that in every particular you will treat him with the utmost kindness, since he is equally endeared to me by nature and affection. I would likewise wish to remark to you, that it is no less your interest than your duty to comply with the injunctions I have given; for on the life and happiness of your brother the dignity and security of your situation will in a great measure depend, and your unhappiness will speedily succeed the day of his death. The situation of a sovereign prince is equally dangerous and uncertain, he stands on a giddy and slippery elevation; nor will the divine vengeance fail to follow any actions he may be guilty of in violation of the laws of nature and consanguinity.

Tiberius having thus made his last address to Caius, he promised a punctual and exact obedience to every article of his commands; but he did not intend that his actions should correspond with his words; for no sooner did he come into the possession of power, than he caused his brother to be put to death; but within a few years he himself lost his life by assassination.

In a few days after having given these injunctions, Tiberius died, to the great joy of the Roman people, who detested him for his tyranny. The tidings of his death no sooner reached Marsyas, the freed-man of Agrippa, than he instantly hurried away with the good news to his patron, who was then going to bathe, and whispered him in the Hebrew language, 'The lion is dead.' Agrippa immediately comprehended his meaning, and exclaimed, 'How is it possible that I should requite you for this favour, and the many other obligations thou hast conferred on me, provided that thy present intelligence should prove true?' The officer to whose custody Agrippa had been committed, observing in what a hurry Marsyas delivered his message, and how well pleased the prisoner was with the news, immediately conjectured that the intelligence was of the satisfactory kind, and therefore desired Agrippa to inform him of the particulars. At first he made some kind of hesitation; but on being urged to discover what he knew, he related the plain matter of fact. The officer having congratulated him on the good news, invited him to partake of an elegant supper; but while they were in the midst of their entertainment, a messenger arrived with an account that Tiberius was out of danger, and would soon arrive in town.

This intelligence astonished the officer in the highest degree; and being apprehensive that his life must pay the forfeit for his having rejoiced with a prisoner on the news of the death of Tiberius, he pushed Agrippa violently from his seat, and exclaimed in a rage, 'Is it thus that you seek to impose upon me by lies and artifices, and could you find no other person to amuse with a pretended story of the death of Cæsar? Depend upon it that you shall severely pay for the liberties you have taken.' Saying this, he directed that he should be put in chains, and more closely watched than he was before. Agrippa having passed the night in this situation, the report of Cæsar's death prevailed in the morning, and the people offered sacrifices of joy on the event.

Soon after this report, two letters were brought from Caius, one to the senate, informing them that he was appointed successor to Tiberius; and another to Piso, governor of the city, to the same effect. These letters ordered that Agrippa should be discharged from prison, and allowed to live in his former house; so that, though still in a kind of custody, he was eased of all fearful apprehensions, and considered himself as in a state of enlargement. Soon afterwards Caius came to Rome, and brought with him the body of Tiberius, which was interred in a most sumptuous manner. The emperor would instantly have discharged Agrippa; but this was opposed by Antonia, not for want of affection to the party, but that she thought it would be rather indecent to hasten the discharge; and, as Tiberius had committed the prisoner, would be deemed a kind of insult on his memory. In a few days, however, Caius sent for him to his palace; and, having given directions that he should be shaved and properly dressed, he caused a crown to be put upon his head, as successor to the tetrarchy which had been possessed by Philip; he likewise created him king, bestowed on him the tetrarchy of Lysania, and gave him a chain of gold of the same weight as that of iron which he had worn in prison. Marcellus was now sent as governor of Judea by Caius.

When Caius Cæsar was in the second year of his reign, Agrippa entreated his permission to retire into his own country to adjust his private affairs, promising to return at a limited time. It was matter of astonishment to his countrymen to behold Agrippa with a crown on his head, as he appeared a singular instance of the instability of fortune, and the fluctuation of human affairs, having so changed his situation from one excess to the other. Some of them considered him as a wise and fortunate man, who could so firmly support himself against all difficulties; while others were so astonished at the revolution that had happened, that they could scarcely credit the evidence of their own senses.

Herodias, the detested wife of Herod Antipas, greatly envied the prosperity of her brother, and would not permit her husband

to enjoy any peace till he should consent to go with her to Rome, and there lodge an accusation against the prosperous Agrippa. Agrippa had, however, resided too long at the court of Rome to be ignorant of the arts of intrigue. He, therefore, being timely acquainted with their ambitious designs, had taken care to send to Rome one of his freed-men, to accuse Herod of having had a share in the late conspiracy of Sejanus; and, as a proof of it, to mention the arsenals which he had filled with arms sufficient to furnish seventy thousand men, and his having formed a league with Artabanus, the king of Parthia. Fortunatus presented his master's letter at the very time while Herod was enjoying his first interview with the emperor. Caius immediately inquired whether Herod had really collected such a store of arms; and finding that this fact could not be denied, banished him, and afterwards Herodias, to Lyons in France, confiscated their treasures, and conferred both the treasures and the tetrarchy on Herod Agrippa. Herod had been tetrarch forty-three years; so that this event happened in the year A. D. 39.

The character of Caius Caligula is well known to all who are in the slightest degree acquainted with the Roman history. It is scarcely too much to affirm that he had all the follies which could degrade, and all the vices which could contaminate, human nature. Yet his vanity was so great, that he was disposed to account himself a god, and lay claim to the honours which the heathen were accustomed to render to their deities of the first order, such as Mercury, Apollo, and Mars. He first determined to personate Mercury; and clothed himself in a mantle resembling the garment of that deity, carried a white rod in his hand, and wore buskins with wings affixed to them. He now divested himself of the ornaments and ensigns of Mercury, and assumed the appearance of Apollo, wearing a radiant crown representing the beams of the sun upon his head; and to convey an intimation that he would be slow to punish offences, and ready to execute benevolent offices, he carried a bow and arrow in his left, and the graces in his right hand. After this, he caused holy songs to be sung, and dances to be exhibited in honour of the new deity, though but a short time had elapsed since he had been contented with being distinguished by the names of Liber, Euius, and Lycæus. In order to counterfeit Mars, he provided himself with a costly head-piece, sword, and buckler, and marched with priests and bravoës attending him on each side, ready to obey his inhuman commands; for he ridiculously imagined, that by spreading destruction, and an indiscriminate spilling of blood, he should gain a more near resemblance to the god of war. The Gentile nations who were accustomed to worship as deities the most abominable of mankind, though they might smile at the folly of the emperor, made no hesitation to pay him divine adoration; and the chris-

tians were at this time too inconsiderable in their numbers to attract any very general notice. The Jews, therefore, were the only people who, by their tenacious opposition to the emperor's absurd requests, were likely to draw down upon their heads the tempest of his indignation. He accordingly made no secret of his enmity against them, and the animosity which he entertained soon diffused its influence through the different provinces of the empire.

The inhabitants of Alexandria no sooner gained intelligence of the emperor's disposition, than they began a most violent persecution. The houses of the Jews were forcibly entered and plundered of the most valuable contents. Many thousands of their men, women, and children, were confined in a small space like beasts in a pound, that they might either be forced to abandon the city, or perish for want of provisions, exercise, and fresh air. Such of them as attempted to remain in Alexandria, after they had escaped their confinement, were put to death with execrating tortures. Fires were made of the timber belonging to the Jewish merchants, while they themselves were cast in to perish in the flames; and many others were cruelly executed, by being dragged about the streets with ropes till such time as they expired. But what the surviving Jews most of all regarded was, that their places of public worship were first plundered by the heathen, and then polluted by the statues of the emperor being placed in them as objects of adoration.

In consequence of these accumulated evils, the Jews of Alexandria determined to send an embassy to Rome, to deprecate the wrath of Caligula; and, if it were possible without violating their religion, to regain his favour. At the head of this embassy was placed Philo, a Jewish philosopher, some of whose works remain to the present day, and are greatly valued among the learned. Caius was, however, so effectually wrought upon by Egyptian flatterers, who composed a part of his household, that he not only treated the ambassadors with the most mortifying contempt, but sent orders to Petronius, the governor of Syria, to erect his statue in the sanctuary at Jerusalem.

Petronius appears to have been a prudent and humane man; and, knowing the zeal of the Jews, as well as the impetuosity of his master, he determined to gain time by sending to distant parts for the best artists and materials, and to collect his army into the neighbourhood of Ptolemais. This last action having alarmed the nation, he was obliged to tell them the orders that he had received from Caligula; upon which he was addressed by all the heads of the Jews, who assured him, in the humblest manner, that they would sooner hazard the loss of all that was dear to them, even their lives, than suffer their temple to be thus profaned. The governor strove to bring them into a compliance, by reminding them of the danger of their opposing, or

of his not obeying the emperor's command; and that their resistance would be interpreted as a downright rebellion. They answered him, that the prayers and sacrifices they offered daily for the emperor were a sufficient token of their loyalty. However, added they, we are so far from designing to rise in arms upon this occasion, that we will suffer ourselves to be butchered in the most cruel manner, and this will be all the resistance you will meet with from us if you go on with your design.

Soon after this, Aristobulus, the brother of Agrippa, accompanied with some of the royal family, came to Petronius, and begged that they might have leave to try to mollify the emperor by an embassy, and that he would second it with a letter to that monarch in their behalf. Petronius at length consented to write to the emperor, but forbade them to send any embassy, or let their reluctance be so much as suspected at the Roman court. He wrote accordingly to the emperor, that he had met with difficulties in the execution of his orders through want of proper hands, and that the statue which he designed should be a master-piece of its kind was not yet reared, because he feared lest the taking so many men from their other labours should bring a scarcity on the land, and lower the tribute; with such other reasons, which, instead of appeasing, greatly exasperated the emperor. He was just reading the letter, and in the height of his resentment, when king Agrippa, who was then at Rome, came into his presence. He was greatly surprized to see such a mixture of passions in his looks and gestures, and began to fear he had either offended, or been in some way misrepresented to him; when Caius, who easily perceived his disorder, broke the secret to him in words to this effect: Your Jewish subjects are strange creatures to refuse to acknowledge me for a god; and, to provoke my resentment against them, I had commanded the statue of Jupiter to be set up in their temple, and they have, it seems, opposed it, and raised a kind of universal insurrection.

At these words, Agrippa, like one thunderstruck, after having in vain tried to keep himself up, fell into a swoon, and was carried off into his own palace, where he continued in that condition till the third day; when, having taken a little sustenance, he set himself about writing to the emperor the letter which the reader may see at length in Josephus. Caius, instead of being moved at the king's concern, was rather the more exasperated against the Jews, and against him, for his concern for such an ungrateful race as he called them, whom all his favours could not work into a compliance to his will. However, he began to relent when he read the letter; and Agrippa, who drew a good omen even from his not answering it, took the liberty to invite him to a sumptuous entertainment, which Caius, who really loved him, easily accepted. Here the Jewish king, having well warmed his guest with wine, began to extol the

great and signal favours he had heaped upon him ; and, by his large encomiums and expressions of gratitude, found means to get a fresh promise of whatever he should ask. To this Agrippa answered, Since it is your pleasure to add this new favour to all the rest, I will beg for such an one as will at once be an irrefragable proof of your goodness to me, and draw a plenty of heavenly blessings upon your head ; and that is, that you will lay aside your resolution of setting up the statue in the temple of Jerusalem. This petition, which showed not only the greatest disinterestedness, but also the most unfeigned love for his country and religion, even at the hazard of his life, had such an effect on that emperor, that he wrote immediately to his governor, that if his statue was not already set up, he should forbear doing it, adding, that he had altered his design out of friendship to Agrippa. However, the lightness of his temper soon made him repent of his complaisance to him, so that he designed to have made a second attempt unknown to him. At the same time, his resentment against Petronius being kindled afresh, he sent him an order to despatch himself ; but Caius was assassinated time enough to prevent either mischief taking effect.

Agrippa, who still remained at Rome, was very serviceable to Claudius in promoting his accession to the empire ; in consideration of which, the emperor confirmed to him all the grants of Caligula ; gave him Judea, Samaria, and the southern parts of Idumea ; entered into a solemn alliance with him ; and enacted several edicts in favour of the Jews. At his request, he likewise conferred the kingdom of Chalcis, which was situated in the north of Syria, near the river Orontes, on Herod, who was both the brother and son-in-law of Agrippa. He became possessed of all the dominions of Herod the Great, with the addition of greater influence in the senate than ever that monarch possessed.

Returning to Judea, he determined to practise every thing which could render him acceptable to the Jews. He first performed the solemn vow of the Nazarites, cutting off his hair, and offering sacrifices according to the most rigid forms of the law. Then he caused the golden chain which Caligula had given him to be suspended in one of the most conspicuous parts of the temple, as a testimony of his gratitude to God, and a monument of the instability of all human affairs. He next divested Theophilus, the son of Ananus, of the high-priesthood, which he conferred on Simon, the son of Boethus, who was denominated Cantharas. Afterward, however, he deprived him of this dignity, in order to bestow it on Jonathan, the son of Annas, who had already enjoyed it after Caiaphas ; but he modestly refused it, telling the king that he thought himself sufficiently honoured to have once enjoyed that office, upon which it was conferred on his brother Matthias. He also opposed,

through his interest, the erecting of a statue to Cæsar in a Jewish synagogue at Doris. He next directed his attention to fortifying the city, making the walls of what was called the New Town higher and stronger than they had formerly been; and would, in the opinion of Josephus, have rendered Jerusalem impregnable, had it not been for the interference of Marsus, governor of Syria after Petronius, who procured a command from Claudius that he should desist from his undertaking. Still further to gratify the Jews, we have already seen, in another part of this work, that he commenced a bloody persecution amongst the christians, but was cut off by providence in the midst of his pride, an awful monument of the divine displeasure. His reign afforded a short gleam of sunshine to the Jews, whose dark night of calamity was now rapidly approaching.

Agrippa's surviving family consisted of a son of his own name, aged seventeen years, and three daughters, of whom the eldest, Berenice, when sixteen years old, was married to her uncle Herod. The second, Mariamne, was ten years old; and the youngest, Drusilla, six years. Mariamne was contracted to Julius Archelaus, the son of Chelcias; and her sister to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, king of Comagena.

The death of king Agrippa was no sooner made known to the public, than the inhabitants of Cæsarea and Sebaste, instead of making a proper acknowledgment of the many obligations he had conferred on them, loaded his memory with the most scandalous and opprobrious epithets that their imaginations could possibly invent. It happened that, at this time, there was a number of soldiers at those places, who, in aid of the calumny, took the statues of Agrippa's three daughters from the palace, and conveyed them in triumph to public brothels, with brutish terms of reproach that are too infamous for repetition. They feasted, and played the tricks of buffoons in the streets; adorned their heads with flowers and garlands, perfumes and ointments, as if they were sacrificing to Charon; and likewise drank libations of thanks for the king's death. In this manner they entertained themselves, regardless of all the favours they had received from, and the obligations they owed to, Agrippa, or of those due to Herod his grandfather, who had founded those splendid cities, and the temples and ports appertaining to them.

At this time Agrippa, the son of the deceased king, was at Rome, being educated in the court of Claudius, who, when informed of the death of the father, and the horrid insults that had been offered to his memory by the ungrateful inhabitants of Cæsarea and Sebaste, expressed great concern at the loss of the king, and equal indignation at the ingratitude of the other parties: wherefore he formed an idea of immediately sending the present Agrippa to take possession of his father's kingdom, which was equally agreeable to an oath he had taken, as con-

sistent with common reason and equity. But the emperor was easily diverted from carrying his plan into execution, by the persuasion of a number of favourites who surrounded him. They urged that it was unsafe to trust so important a business into the hands of a man so young and inexperienced; for the commission was of so difficult a kind, that it would furnish ample employment for the most acute genius in the empire.

These artful insinuations induced Claudius to change his mind, and thereon he deputed Cuspius Fadus to the command; but paid so great a respect to the memory of the deceased, that he strictly charged him not to receive Marsus into the government, under the consideration that he had been the determined enemy of Agrippa; but he gave him still more particular directions to punish severely the inhabitants of Cæsarea and Sebaste, on account of the indignities they had offered to Agrippa and his daughters. He commissioned him likewise to despatch to Pontus five cohorts, and the other troops that were in those cities, and to cause that their places should be supplied by a select body of men from the Roman legions then in Syria. This last order, however, was not obeyed; for, on an earnest application, Claudius was induced to permit those troops still to remain in Judea. From this circumstance arose many great calamities, which were afterwards suffered by the Jews, and which gave rise to a series of wars when Florus had the command; so that Vespasian, though the conqueror, was obliged to compel them to quit the country.

Fadus, upon his arrival in Judea, was forced to suppress the banditti, who were by that time grown very numerous and powerful; and to quell an insurrection which the Jews had raised against the inhabitants of Philadelphia, which was the same city with Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites. In the mean time, Claudius, having recalled Marsus out of respect to the late king, had sent Cassius Longinus into that government, who came immediately to Jerusalem, and insisted upon the pontifical vestments being put into his possession, in order to be kept, as formerly, in the fortress of Antonia. The Jews, surprised at this new demand, begged leave that they might send a deputation to the emperor against it; and did not obtain it from that governor till some of the heads of the nation had put their sons as hostages into his hands. But upon the ambassadors applying to Claudius, in which they were backed by the young Agrippa, they obtained a grant that those sacred robes should be kept in the possession of the high-priest, in the manner Vitellius had granted it six years before. At the same time Herod, king of Chalcis, obtained of that emperor the superintendency of both the temple and sacred treasury, together with the authority of naming whom he would to the pontifical dignity; in pursuance of which, he deposed Cantharas, and raised Joseph, the son of Cami, to it. After Herod's death, young

Agrippa obtained the same grant for himself, and enjoyed it till the time of the Jewish war.

During Fadus's government, there arose a notable impostor named Theudas, who drew great numbers of the deluded Jews after him, bidding them follow him beyond Jordan, and promising them that he would divide the waters of that river, as Joshua had done, by his single word. Cuspius sent some troops of horse and foot against him and his followers, killed some of them, took others prisoners, and amongst them Theudas himself, whom he caused to be beheaded, and his head to be brought to Jerusalem. This, according to Josephus, is the most remarkable thing that happened during Fadus's government: he was soon after succeeded by Tiberius Alexander, an apostate Jew of sacerdotal race, and nephew to the famous Philo. One of his first exploits was the crucifying James and Simon, the sons of Judas, surnamed Galileus, head of the Gaulonitish sect; and, about the same time, Herod, king of Chalcis, having deposed Joseph, the son of Cami, gave the high-priesthood to Ananias, the son of Zebedeus, and died soon after in the eighth year of Claudius. That emperor gave his kingdom to young Agrippa, in prejudice of Aristobulus, the eldest son of the deceased.

Soon after this died Herod the governor of Chalcis, who left two sons, named Berenicianus and Hyrcanus, by Berenice, the daughter of his brother; and Aristobulus by Mariamme his former wife. Another brother, Aristobulus, died a private man, and left a daughter called Jotapa. It has been already mentioned that these were the children of Aristobulus, the son of Herod. But Mariamme bore to Herod two sons, named Alexander and Aristobulus, who were put to death by order of their father. After this, the children of Alexander were governors in Armenia the Greater.

Herod of Chalcis being dead, Agrippa, the son of Agrippa, was advanced by the emperor to the kingdom of his uncle; and that of Judea was governed by Cumanus, who succeeded Tiberius Alexander. During the administration of the latter, many fresh misfortunes overtook the Jews. While the people were assembled in prodigious numbers at Jerusalem, to celebrate the festival of unleavened bread, a guard of soldiers was stationed at the gate of the temple to prevent disorders, according to their usual custom. Among these soldiers was one who, turning up his bare posteriors in the midst of the company, made a disagreeable noise corresponding with the indecency of the action. This inflamed the multitude to such a degree, that, pressing in crowds to Cumanus, they demanded justice on the soldier for the insult; and, amongst the rest, some violent young men proceeded to high words and quarrelling, and struck the soldiers, and pelted them with stones. Cumanus, fearing the consequences of a popular insurrection, sent other soldiers to support the former, which occasioned such a terror to the Jews,

that they endeavoured all in their power to get out of the temple; but the throng was so great in the passages, that near ten thousand were pressed or trod to death. This circumstance turned the Jewish festival into mourning; there were tears and lamentations in every house; for the calamity was so general that almost every family shared in it.

No sooner was this misfortune ended, than it was succeeded by another. A domestic of Cæsar, named Stephen, being on a journey with some household goods belonging to his master, was attacked by a set of thieves, who robbed him near Bethoron. Hereupon Cumanus sent a party to seize the inhabitants of the adjacent villages, and bring them in bonds to answer for not apprehending the robbers. While searching for these people, a soldier, happening to meet with the books of Moses, tore and threw them in the fire. Affronted by this insult, the Jews assembled in multitudes, and, in the hurry of their zeal, repaired to Cumanus in Cæsarea, and urged him, in the most violent manner, to punish the author of so daring an outrage on the law of God. Cumanus, finding that the people would not be appeased, ordered the soldier to be brought forth, and put to death in their presence; and thus the tumult subsided.

At this period, an unhappy dispute likewise happened between the Jews of Galilee and those of Samaria. A Galilean Jew, being going to worship at a festival at Jerusalem, was killed as he was passing through the village of Geman, in the plain of Samaria. Hereupon the Galileans assembled in a body to take vengeance on the Samaritans by force of arms. Those of better rank applied to Cumanus, and advised him to go to Galilee before the matter went too far, and do justice on the murderers on a strict scrutiny. Cumanus, otherwise employed, would not interfere. The report of this violence reached Jerusalem, the people were beyond measure inflamed, and resolved to attack Samaria, notwithstanding all the arguments that could be used to restrain them. The ringleaders of these outrages were Eleazar, the son of Dineas, and Alexander, who, making inroads into the district of Aerabatena, destroyed men, women, and children, with the sword, and burnt the country.

Cumanus, hearing of these ravages, advanced with a party of horse from Sebaste to leave the country, and destroyed and made prisoners many of Eleazar's adherents. With regard to those who had made such ravages in Samaria, the officers and principal people in Jerusalem went after them in sackcloth and ashes, entreating them, by every persuasive argument, to abandon their design. "Do not," said they, "let your rage against Samaria destroy Jerusalem. Pity your country, temple, city, and wives; the fate of all being at stake in this contest: let not the idea of avenging one poor Galilean cost you all that you hold dear in the world." The Jews were at length pacified by these remonstrances.

Peace being naturally productive of sloth, robberies of every kind became now very common; the countries were infested with men of violence, and the greater villains preyed upon the less. At this time, Numidius Quadratus, being governor of Syria, was applied to at Tyre by the principal of the Samaritans, who represented how greatly their country was infested by robbers. Jonathan, the son of Ananus the high-priest, was present with a considerable number of Jews of distinction. Jonathan replied to their complaints, by blaming the Samaritans as the authors of the insurrection by the death of the Galilean; and likewise hinted that Cumanus's neglect of properly punishing the offenders had produced all the fatal consequences.

When Quadratus had heard thus much of the affair, he postponed the further consideration of it till he should arrive in Judea, where he might obtain further information respecting it. He now went to Cæsarea, and ordered the execution of those persons whom Cumanus had made prisoners, and then proceeded to Lydda; when he again heard the cause, and ordered eighteen of the principal Jews who were proved to have been concerned to be beheaded. He sent some of the noble Samaritans to Cæsar; likewise Jonathan and Ananias, high-priests of the Jews; Ananus, son of Ananias; and other Jews of distinction. Cumanus and Celer the tribune he also sent to Rome, to answer for their conduct to the emperor. Having thus adjusted affairs, he went to Jerusalem; but retired to Antioch, on finding that the people were in the peaceable celebration of their feast of unleavened bread.

The trial coming on at Rome, Agrippa was now an advocate for the Jews, and Cumanus had many friends to support him; but when Cæsar had heard his defence, and that of the Samaritans, he ordered three of the most eminent of the latter to be beheaded; Cumanus to be banished; Celer the tribune to be sent in chains to Jerusalem, dragged through the city, and beheaded, and the Jews to see the sentence executed. This done, he constituted Felix, brother of Pallas, governor of Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and Perea. He advanced Agrippa from the kingdom of Chalcis to a better government, giving him likewise Trachonitis, Batanea, with the tetrarchy that Varus had held, and the kingdom of Lysanias.

This happened in the year fifty-four, soon after which the emperor Claudius died, and was succeeded by Nero.

Agrippa, after his last-mentioned promotion, gave his sister Drusilla, who is mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, to Azizus, king of the Emesenes, who had been converted to the Jewish religion. Drusilla had been betrothed to Epiphanes, the son of Antiochus, on the condition of his professing Judaism; but upon his refusal to comply with the terms, the contract was dissolved. Another sister, named Mariamme, he espoused to Archelaus, the son of Chelcias, to whom she had been promised

by her father Agrippa; and a daughter, named Berenice, was the issue of this marriage.

Soon after their union, a separation took place between Drusilla and Azizus. She was admired as the most beautiful woman of her time, and Felix, the governor of Judea, became violently enamoured of her. He informed a Jew, named Simon, who was his particular friend, and a man highly celebrated as a magician, of the passion he had conceived; enjoining him to exert his endeavours to prevail upon Drusilla to desert her husband and marry him, and to assure her, that if she consented he would make her the happiest woman upon earth. Drusilla was prevailed upon to renounce her religion, abandon her husband, and marry Felix: and to this she was partly induced by the desire of avoiding all future uneasiness from her sister Berenice, who envied her the possession of the superior attractions of her person. By Felix, Drusilla had a son, named Agrippa, who, in the time of Titus Cæsar, together with his wife, fell a sacrifice to a violent eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

Berenice, for a considerable time, survived Herod, to whom she was both wife and niece. A report being circulated that a criminal intercourse subsisted between her and her brother, she judged that the most effectual method for clearing herself from the horrid and slanderous accusation of incest, would be to prevail upon Polemon, king of Cilicia, to embrace Judaism, and unite herself to him in marriage. In consideration of her great wealth, Polemon accepted the proposals of Berenice; but she soon deserted him, and he then abandoned the principles of the Jewish religion.

Marianne was not more virtuous than her sister; for she quitted her husband Archelaus, and espoused Demetrius, the most considerable Jew of Alexandria, both on account of his family and wealth. He held the office of alabarcha of Alexandria. By Demetrius, Marianne had a son, named Agrippinus.

Felix was no sooner vested with his authority, than he made war on the robbers who had now infested the country for twenty years, making prisoner Eleazer their captain, with several others, whom he sent to Rome. The number of thieves killed, taken prisoners, or put to death judicially, with those kept in prison, including the country people who joined them, was incredibly great.

These miscreants being routed, another set of villains appeared, who were called Sicarii, from Sica, the poignard used by them. These used to commit murders in the open streets of Jerusalem, particularly when the city was crowded on public days. They carried short daggers under their clothes, and privately stabbed those against whom they had an enmity; and, when a murder was committed, were the first to wonder at the crime. This practice was continued some time before the authors of it were suspected. Jonathan, the high-priest, was the

first who fell by their hands, and daily murders followed his death. The citizens were so alarmed, that their apprehensions aggravated the reality; for the danger in battle was not greater than in walking the streets; every man at a distance was suspected for an enemy, and people were afraid of their approaching friends: yet the murderers were so dexterous at their work, that vigilance itself could not guard against them.

Another set now arose, whose tongues were as mischievous as the weapons of the former. Though they shed no blood, their doctrines were worse than daggers, utterly contaminating the minds of the people. These enthusiasts, under pretence of religion, propagated strange doctrines. They enticed the people into woods and solitary places, pretending that God had determined to give them absolute liberty, of which he would grant them infallible assurance by signs from heaven. Felix, foreseeing that this plan tended only to foment a rebellion, despatched a body of troops after the enthusiasts, by which great numbers of them were destroyed.

It was at this time that that Egyptian rebelled who is referred to in the Acts, and whose history is recorded in a former chapter.

The robbers and magicians now concerted with each other how they should engage the people to shake off the Roman yoke, and assert an absolute liberty. To effect this, they used arguments and menaces, threatening with death those who denied their authority. Their view was to reduce those by terror who would otherwise have submitted to voluntary slavery. These people were dispersed through the country, plundering the houses of the rich, and killing and burning as they went; so that Judea was reduced to the utmost degree of confusion and despair.

As the city of Cæsarea, about this time, began to be the scene of some important transactions which not a little accelerated the destruction of the Jewish state, it will not be improper to give here its description and history in the words of Josephus. Adjacent to the sea-coast was situated a place which had heretofore been denominated Straton's tower; and this Herod deemed a spot most admirably adapted for the building of a city. Having drawn the model of the intended erection, he employed a number of hands to construct it, and completed the whole. The private houses, as well as the palaces of this city were all built with marble; but the most distinguished part of the whole was the port, which was erected on the same scale as the Pyrcæum; and, exclusive of all the other conveniences that attended it, was protected from all danger of wind or weather. The completion of this work was the more extraordinary, as every article of the materials for finishing it was conveyed thither from distant parts at an expence almost incredible.

The situation of this city is in Phœnicia, near the passage

into Egypt, between Joppa and Dora, two most considerable sea-port towns, in the harbours of which there is no riding with any degree of safety if the wind blows from the south-west; for it beats upon the coast with such fury, that the merchantmen are often obliged to keep out at sea for a considerable time, lest they should be driven on shore. To obviate these dangers, arising from the situation he had chosen, Herod gave directions that a mole should be formed in the shape of a half-moon, and of size sufficient to contain a complete royal navy. In this place, he gave orders for the sinking of stones of immense size in twenty fathoms of water. Some of these stones were fifty feet long, eighteen feet broad, and nine feet thick, many others of them of various dimensions, some being even more than this size. The extent of the mole was no less than two hundred feet, one half of which was destined to the breaking off the surf of the sea, and the other was appropriated to form the foundation of a stone wall, on which a number of fortified turrets were erected; and the largest and most beautiful of these Herod called by the name of the tower of Drusus, in honour of the memory of Drusus, the son-in-law of Cæsar, who had died in his youth. Adjacent hereto were several arched vaults, which served as cabins for the sailors. There was also a quay, or landing place, with a broad walk around the port, proper to retreat for the benefit of the air, and as a place of recreation. The opening of this port was to the northward, whence the wind blows with its mildest influence. On the entrance of this port, to the left hand, a turret was built with a large platform, and beneath it was a descending bank to prevent the sea from washing it: on the right hand, and opposite to the tower, were erected two pillars of stone, and of an equal height. The houses adjacent to the port were all built with the finest kind of marble, and with the most exact uniformity to each other. A temple dedicated to Cæsar was erected on a mount in the middle, which became a famous sea-mark, and proved of the utmost use to mariners. In this temple were placed a representation of the city of Rome, and a statue of Cæsar, which were no less distinguished for the beauty of the materials they were made of, than for the elegance of the workmanship; and thence the city obtained the name of Cæsarea. Nor was less ingenuity exerted in the contrivance of the vaults and common sewers, which were placed at equal degrees of distance from each other, and discharged their contents into the sea; but there was one conveyance which intersected all the rest, which, while it carried off all the filth from the various parts of the city, was so disposed, that the tides entered by it, and washed the passages, by which the whole was kept in an uncommon state of cleanliness. Exclusive of all the structures above mentioned, Herod built a theatre of stone; and, on the south side of the harbour, constructed a very large amphitheatre, which afforded an elegant

prospect towards the sea. In fact, nothing that money could procure, or diligence effect, was wanting; and the whole of this magnificent work was completed in about twelve years.

At this period, concerning which we are writing, there arose a contention between the Cæsarean Jews and the Syrians on the extent of certain privileges. The Jews of Cæsarea established their claim of preference in the right of Herod their king, as the original founder of the city. The Syrians insisted that, previous to the establishment of the city of Herod, and of its being inhabited by Jews, the place had existed under the denomination of the tower of Straton. The governors of the adjacent provinces being informed of the prevailing commotion, caused the incendiaries of both parties to be apprehended and whipped; this punishment produced a suspension of the tumult for some time; but the dispute was at length revived by the Jews of Cæsarea, who, priding themselves in their riches, calumniated and reproached the Syrians, who replied with no inferior degree of acrimony; for they were encouraged to a boldness of opposition by a consciousness that many of the soldiers in the service of Rome were attached to their cause. From words they proceeded to annoy each other by casting of stones, and the quarrel was continued till many on each side were slain and wounded; but the Jews had considerably the advantage. The contention having increased to a kind of war, Felix commanded the Jews to decline all farther animosities; but finding that they treated his authority with contempt, he ordered his troops to march against them, and the consequence was that many of the Jews lost their lives, and a much greater number were taken prisoners. Felix gave the soldiers permission to plunder, and they rifled several of the most considerable houses of property to a great amount. Those Jews who were most remarkable for moderation and honour, dreading still more fatal consequences, solicited Felix to recal his troops, that the offenders might have the opportunity of repenting of their rash and inconsiderate conduct; and he complied with their request.

At this time, king Agrippa advanced Ismael, the son of Phabeus, to the pontifical dignity: and the high-priests now detached themselves from the interest of the other priests, and the governors, and the principal officers, and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Each of the high-priests procured the attendance of a guard composed of the most intrepid and seditious people they could select; and they vilified their adversaries in the most provoking terms, and molested them by casting stones. So shameful was the conduct of the magistrates in neglecting to restrain the insolence of the high-priests, that by means of their agents they destroyed the barns, and seized the tithes belonging to the other priests, many of the poorer sort of whom actually perished for want of food. Had no order of government been established, they could not have proceeded to greater extremities.

Felix, in order more completely to terminate this sedition, desired the leading men of both parties to visit Nero in the capacity of commissioners, and plead the cause of their friends. Soon after this, the emperor transferred the government to Portius Festus, when some of the most considerable of the Cæsarean Jews repaired to Rome, in order to exhibit accusations against Felix for the exercise of tyranny and injustice; and their representations must inevitably have produced his destruction, but for the interference of his brother Pallas, who, being in high estimation with Nero, solicited and obtained his pardon.

Two distinguished Syrians of Cæsarea applied to Beryllus, who had been preceptor, and now held the office of Greek secretary to Nero; and, by an immense sum of money, prevailed upon him to procure the emperor's mandate for disfranchising the Jews, and for revoking the privileges and immunities of the city of Cæsarea, which they claimed in common with the Syrians. This mandate is to be considered as the cause of all the miseries which the Jews afterwards experienced; for the Cæsarean Jews were thereby inflamed to greater violence, nor did their restless dispositions subside till they were involved in all the calamities of an open war.

Upon the arrival of Festus in Judea, he found the country ravaged and laid waste, the people compelled to desert their habitations, the land overrun by great numbers of robbers, who set fire to and plundered houses, and committed every other kind of enormity without control.

A famous impostor lived at this time; he seduced great numbers of the people into the absurd notion, that if they followed him into a certain wilderness, they should be no longer subject to the misfortunes and accidents of life. However, Festus ordered the procession to be intercepted by a strong detachment of horse and foot, who pursued and put to death the seducer and his credulous disciples.

An event occurred about this time, which, though it produced no very important consequences, deserves to be recorded as remarkably characteristic of the spirit which then actuated the Jewish nation. Near the porch of the royal palace at Jerusalem, which formerly belonged to the Maccabean family, king Agrippa had erected a superb edifice. As this was situated on an eminence, it commanded a view of the city; and from the king's bedchamber might be perceived all that passed in the temple. This circumstance highly offended the principal Jews, who therefore erected a wall which inclosed the interior part of the temple toward the west; and it likewise concealed the galleries without the temple on the other side, where the Roman guards are stationed on the public days for preserving tranquillity. Agrippa was highly offended with the Jews for building the wall, and Festus was still more so, and the latter ordered them immediately to destroy it; but they replied that

they would sooner relinquish their lives than commit any violence against their temple; and they requested that, before any measures were pursued against them, they might be permitted to appeal to Cæsar through the agency of deputies, and Festus complied with their desire. They nominated ten eminent citizens, with Ismael the high-priest, and Chelcias the treasurer of the temple, as commissioners to represent their case to Nero. Poppæa, the emperor's wife, a friend to the Jews, interceded with Nero, and prevailed upon him to authorize the continuance of the wall. The empress detained Ismael and Chelcias as hostages, but the ten deputies were permitted to return. Agrippa, being informed that the Jews had gained their suit, bestowed the pontificate upon Joseph, otherwise named Cabis, the son of Simon, who had formerly enjoyed the dignity of the high-priesthood.

Upon the death of Festus, Nero conferred the government upon Albinus. At the same period, Agrippa displaced Joseph and promoted Ananus to succeed him in the pontificate. The elder Ananus was considered as one of the most happy men on earth; for he had five sons, who successively enjoyed the pontificate after him; and this was what no other man could boast. Ananus, the son, was of a vindictive, fierce, and haughty temper; he professed the principles of the Sadducees, who were a sect remarkable for their censorious and uncharitable dispositions. After the death of Festus, and previous to the arrival of his successor Albinus, Ananus assembled a council, and cited James the brother of Christ and others to appear and answer to an accusation of having committed blasphemy and violated the law; and, in consequence of this charge, they were sentenced to be stoned. The conduct of Ananus, with respect to these supposed offenders, proved highly disgusting to those citizens whose sentiments were regulated by motives of piety and a due regard to the laws: and they privately transmitted a representation of the case to the king, requesting that Ananus might be reprimanded, in order to deter him from a repetition of his unjustifiable conduct. The matter was also related to Albinus, then on his journey to Alexandria, to whom the letters set forth that the parties could not be legally condemned without his concurrence, and that therefore Ananus had been guilty of usurping his authority and violating the law. Highly incensed against the high-priest, Albinus wrote to him a menacing letter, strongly expressive of his displeasure; and, on the expiration of three months, king Agrippa deposed Ananus from the pontificate, and appointed Jesus, the son of Damneus, to assume that dignity.

Albinus is described by Josephus as a man abandoned to every vice. Avarice, corruption, extortion, oppression, public and private, were equally familiar to him. He accepted bribes in civil and personal causes and oppressed the nation by the

weight of arbitrary taxes. If any offender, however atrocious, convicted of robbery or assault, by himself, or any other magistrate, was under sentence of the law, a friend and a bribe would ensure his liberty : and this governor never found a man guilty who had money to prove his innocence.

At this time a faction prevailed at Jerusalem : and, wishing a change of government, the most opulent of them previously compounded with Albinus in case a disturbance should happen. There was likewise a set of men who could not be easy while the state was at peace ; and Albinus engaged these in his interest. The leaders of these mutineers were each of them attended by daring fellows of their own turn of mind ; but the governor was the most abandoned villain of the whole, and had guards always ready to execute his orders. The event proved that the injured dare not complain : those who were in any danger of losing part of their property were glad to compound to save the rest, and the receivers proved the worst of thieves. In fact, there appeared to be no sense of honour remaining ; and a new slavery seemed predicted from the number of tyrants already in power.

When Albinus had received information that Gessius Florus was appointed to succeed him, he determined, as the most effectual means of obtaining the popular esteem, to execute justice upon such offenders as he had apprehended and committed to prison. He ordered the prisoners to be brought into his presence, and pronounced judgment upon them according to their degrees of criminality : such as were accused only of slight offences he dismissed on their paying fines, and he sentenced those to death against whom sufficient evidence was adduced to prove the commission of capital crimes. Thus, by clearing the jails, did he suffer the country to be over-run by robbers, and other abandoned characters. The singing men of the tribe of Levi petitioned Agrippa for permission to use the linen stole, which only the priests had then a right to wear, urging that, from a compliance with their request, he would derive immortal honour. The king summoned a council, and granted their petition with the usual formalities ; and the other Levites who served in the temple he permitted to officiate as singers. The grant of these privileges was contrary to the laws and customs of the Jewish nation, which, Josephus observes, have never been violated with impunity.

About this time, that is, about A. D. 63, the work of the temple was completed, which had been carried on ever since the time of Herod. Herod, having signalized himself by a great number of very distinguished actions, and completed many buildings of uncommon pomp and magnificence, conceived an idea, in the eighteenth year of his reign, of erecting a temple to the honour of God, which he proposed should be a much larger and more splendid building than the former.

This work he intended should redound more to the credit of his own name, and tend more effectually to perpetuate his memory than all he had ever done before, which proved to be actually the case; but lest the people should conceive that he proposed a plan which would be too difficult in its execution, he caused them to be summoned together, to try what the force of reason would do towards the removing of that objection; and, when they were met, he addressed them in a speech on the subject.

There was something in his address and declaration so totally unexpected by the people, that they were astonished at the hearing of it, and filled with apprehension what would be the consequence. Exclusive of this, they were extremely afraid that the old temple would be pulled down before they were certain of having another to supply its place; nay, the having any other at all was rather the object of their hopes than of their expectations; for they thought it almost impossible that such a work should be completed. While they were revolving this business in their minds, the king, finding what it was that gave them uneasiness, desired that they would not indulge their anxiety any longer; for they might rest assured that the old temple should remain altogether in its present situation till the materials for the new one should be provided; and, in this circumstance, his performance kept pace with his promise.

For the completion of this work, a hundred carriages were provided to remove stones and other materials; of handicraftsmen of all sorts there were ten thousand artists, and of these the best in each kind that could possibly be procured; and, for the superintendance of them, a thousand priests that understood the business of masonry and carpentry; and these priests were supplied with robes and vestments at the king's expence. When the workmen were engaged, and the stones, timber, and other materials all provided, the first work they began upon was to clear the old foundation, and lay a new one in its stead; and on this they elevated a superstructure of a temple, the length of which was a hundred cubits, and the height one hundred and twenty; but as it afterwards happened that the odd twenty cubits sunk, it fell so much short of the original design; and the Jews in the time of Nero had an intention of supplying the defect. The whole building was a composition of durable white stone, each stone being eight cubits high, twelve broad, and twenty-five in length.

The principal front of this extraordinary building had very much the appearance of a palace, the centre part of which was much higher than the sides. The prospect it afforded towards the fields was extremely agreeable, and this prospect extended into the country several furlongs; nor was the view of the building itself less pleasing to those who had their residence

opposite to it, or such as were travelling towards it. The porch of the temple was a curiosity no less singular than the rest of the building, the upper part of it being adorned with an abundance of the richest tapestry hanging, variety of beautiful purple flowers and pillars appearing to be interwoven; round the pillars a golden vine crept and entwined itself, on the branches of which were suspended clusters of grapes that descended in elegant negligence from the cornices of the room; the whole exhibiting a piece of workmanship no less valuable for the materials with which it was formed, than for the admirable skill with which it was executed.

Large galleries extended round about the temple, which were equally superb and magnificent with the rest of the work; but for the elegance and beauty of their structure, greatly surpassing any thing that had been seen before of that kind. Two strong walls formed the support for two of these galleries, and were of themselves deemed pieces of work of a very remarkable degree of excellence.

Near this city nature had placed a steep rocky hill, but on the eastward side of it the descent was gently sloping. Now Solomon, in former ages, had, by the particular command of God, surrounded this hillock with a wall, and the lower extremity of it was encompassed by another wall, under which, towards the south, was a deep valley. This was composed of stones of immense size, cramped together with irons round the whole work, and extending down to the bottom of the hill. This work was built in a square form, and was deemed a most extraordinary piece of architecture, allowance being made for its depth and magnitude. The best opinion could be formed of the size of the stones wherewith it was built, by viewing it on the outside, since on the inside they were jointed together one within another, to prevent the inclemency of the weather from separating them.

When this wall was built up to its proper height, the space between that and the hill was filled up with earth, so as to bring the ground upon a level with the wall; and then were erected four galleries, each gallery being deemed a furlong in extent. Within the square, likewise, there was another stone wall, which extended round the top of the hill, and was ornamented with a double porch on the east side, which was opposite to the portal of the temple, which stood in the middle. Several princes contributed to adorn this portal by many tokens of their royal bounty; and round about various parts of the temple were hung the spoils and trophies which had been acquired in battles with the barbarians; these Herod caused to be again dedicated, and added to them many others of later date, which, in his battle with the Arabians, he had brought off as proofs of his own victories.

A strong and well fortified building stood on one of the

angles of the north side, which had been erected by some of the line of the Asmoneans, a family that had executed the joint authority of prince and high-priest for a long succession of years. To this place they gave the name of Baris, or the Tower; and herein they deposited the pontifical habits, which, agreeably to ancient custom, were never to be brought forth but when the high-priest wanted them for his immediate use in the exercise of his office. To this purpose, likewise, Herod destined the building; but, on his decease, it fell into the hands of the Romans, with whom it remained till the time of Tiberius.

Before the middle inclosure was placed the altar where the priests offered up their sacrifices. This place was so sacred, that even Herod himself durst not enter into it, since the law prohibited him from so doing, as he was not a priest. For this reason, Herod committed the care of this part of the sacred work to the priests; and they completed it in the space of eighteen months; whereas, Herod himself, in superintending the completion of the rest, employed no less a time than eight years.

The finishing of the sacred part of the work in so short a time afforded matter of such extreme joy to the people, that they united in returning thanks to the Almighty for the blessing he had bestowed on their endeavours, and likewise spoke in the highest terms of the king, for the laudable zeal he had shown in the promotion of the worship of God.

The temple being thus restored, the circumstance was celebrated by every demonstration of the sincerest joy. On this occasion, three hundred oxen were sacrificed for the king's account, and a proportionable number for persons of all ranks and degrees, so that the whole of the sacrifices exceeded in number what could possibly be imagined. There was a very great degree of solemnity in this dedication of the temple, beyond, indeed, what any person could have formed an idea of; and this solemnity was doubled by its happening on the very day of Herod's accession to the throne.

The other parts of the temple being now completed, eighteen thousand workmen, who had been paid for their labour with the utmost punctuality, now became destitute of employment. The people being desirous to assist these distressed artificers, and unwilling to keep large sums of money by them, lest they should be seized by the Romans, made a proposal to Agrippa for repairing an edifice situated on the east side of the temple, which overlooked a narrow valley of great depth. The wall of this building was four hundred cubits high: the stones were white, each being twenty cubits long and six deep, and the surface of them wrought smooth and regular. The structure was raised by Solomon, the original founder of the temple. Claudius Cæsar commissioned Agrippa to make the proposed repa-

rations; but Agrippa considering the extensiveness of the undertaking, the immense sums of money it would require, and that all human works might easily be destroyed, he judged that it would not be expedient to comply with the desires of the public; but he proposed, instead of repairing the sacred edifice, to pave the streets of the city with white stones. After this, Agrippa advanced Matthias, the son of Theophilus, to the pontifical dignity, in the room of Jesus, the son of Gamaliel; and, in his time, the wars between the Romans and the Jews commenced.

The character of Florus, who succeeded Albinus in the year sixty-four, is thus described by Josephus. His principles were so much more abandoned than those of his predecessor, that Albinus seemed innocent on the comparison. Albinus was treacherous, but observed a secrecy in his crimes that had the appearance of modesty; but Gessius was so consummate in his wickedness, that he boasted of his atrocious behaviour, and declared himself the general enemy of the nation. His conduct in his province was more like that of an executioner than a governor; for he treated all the people like criminals, and extended his rapine and tyranny beyond all bounds. He was equally devoid of compassion, and dead to all sense of honour; cruel to the unfortunate, and utterly abandoned in cases so enormous, that impudence itself would blush at the recollection of them. He exceeded all the men of his time in making lies and imposition pass for truth, and was equally artful in discovering new modes of doing mischief. He could not be contented with the idea of destroying a whole nation by slow degrees; but his vengeance extended to the sweeping away whole cities, and extirpating the body of the people at once. He gave such encouragement to the sons of rapine and plunder, that he might as well have proclaimed that every man was at liberty to seize whatever he could lay his hands on, provided that he himself obtained a share of the plunder. His avarice was carried to so extravagant a pitch, that the inhabitants of the province were reduced to a degree of poverty little short of starving, and many of them left the country in absolute want of the necessaries of life.

At this time, Cestius Gallus had the command in Syria, and it was then deemed dangerous for any Jew to complain of the conduct of Florus; notwithstanding which, when Gallus went to Jerusalem at the feast of unleavened bread, a number of Jews, not less than three hundred thousand, applied to Gallus to have compassion on a wretched people, and relieve the province from the infamous government of Florus. This proceeding was immediately made known to Florus, who was so far from being concerned at it, that he made a perfect jest of the affair. In the interim, Cestius, having used his utmost endeavours to calm the passions of the multitude, by assuring them

that Florus should treat them with more humanity for the future, returned to Antioch. Florus attended Gallus on his journey as far as Cæsarea, recounting many improbable tales to him as they travelled; but, in the mean time, revolving in his own mind the necessity of a war with the Jews, as the only method to prevent a rigid scrutiny into his actions, and thereby remain unpunished. He apprehended, that if peace should continue, the cause would be brought before Cæsar, which might be attended with dangerous consequences; and that if he could but incite them to a revolt, the lesser calamity might be lost in the greater: wherefore, he thought the most effectual method of consulting his own safety would be by gradually forcing them into a rebellion.

At this time, the Greeks of Cæsarea had carried their cause against the Jews before Cæsar, who had pronounced sentence in their behalf; a circumstance that was the origin of the Jewish war. This sentence is dated in the month Artemisius, in the seventeenth year of the reign of Agrippa, and the twelfth of Nero.

A certain Greek in that city had a house near the synagogue, which the Jews wanted to purchase: and frequently treating with the owner of it, offered him more than its value: but he was so far from regarding their offers, that instead of endeavouring to accommodate them, he, in mere malice, crowded a number of small shops into the passage, which almost blocked it up, so that the way to the synagogue was barely sufficient for a single person to pass. Affronted by this insult, some Jewish young men, in the heat of passion, went to the workmen, and warned them to proceed at their peril. This order of theirs was countermanded by Florus, whom the Jews now therefore thought it necessary to soften by means of a bribe. Some of the chief of them assembled on this business, among whom was one John, who farmed the royal customs, and these contracted with Florus to forbid the building on the receipt of eight talents. The governor took the money, and promised to give the necessary directions; but he had no sooner received it, than he went from Cæsarea to Sebaste, as if on purpose to increase the dispute, and as if he triumphed in the opportunity he gave them of murdering each other.

The Jewish sabbath falling on the following day, a malicious Cæsarean placed an earthen vessel with a sacrifice of birds upon it before the door of the synagogue, while the people were assembled within at their devotions. This ridicule and mockery of their solemnities had such an effect on the Jews, that they lost all patience at the profane derision. The principal and more moderate men among them were for making an appeal to government for redress of the injury; while the young men of warmer passions were only for verbal disputes and blows; nor were the Cæsareans less forward to come to an

encounter; for the previous sacrifice had been made on purpose to produce a quarrel, and the event was as follows:

It happened that Jucundus, a captain of horse, who had been appointed to keep the peace, arrived at the critical juncture; and having given orders for the vessel above mentioned to be removed, he did all in his power to quell the disturbance. The Jews, finding that the Cæsareans were too powerful for Jucundus, took the books of their law and conveyed them to the province of Nabata, at the distance of about sixty furlongs from Cæsarea. Then ten of their principal people, attended by John, the farmer of the customs, repaired to Florus at Sebaste, complaining of what had happened, and petitioning for redress, with a slight hint of the eight talents he had received. Florus instantly ordered them into custody, and his pretence was their having removed their law from Cæsarea.

The Jews of Jerusalem were inexpressibly astonished at this conduct of Florus; but they thought it prudent at present not to be free in expressing their sentiments. In the mean time, Florus continued to foment the sedition; and, that he might do it the more effectually, he sent and demanded seventeen talents out of the treasury, in the name, and as for the service of the emperor. This circumstance caused great confusion among the Jews, who ran backwards and forwards about the temple exclaiming as if they were distracted, and calling on the name of Cæsar, demanding a deliverance from the inhumanities of Florus, whom they pursued with curses, clamour, and every kind of insult. One of them, in derision of the governor, carried a basket through the streets begging of alms for the poor unfortunate Florus. These reflections, however, had no other effect on him than the making him more avaricious and more malignant. Florus also, instead of suppressing the sedition at Cæsarea on its first commencement, as it was his duty to have done, marched with a body of horse and foot to Jerusalem, where he made the power of Rome subservient to the gratification of his passions of revenge, pride, and avarice; and he filled the minds of the people wherever he went with terror and apprehension.

Notwithstanding all the indignities that he had offered to the public, the people still continued to pay an apparent respect to Florus, going out to meet him in his way, and complimenting him by those honourable marks of esteem which are customary in similar cases. While they were thus disposed to pay him every possible honour on his entrance into the city, Florus defeated the compliment by sending to them a centurion, named Capito, with fifty horse to impede their journey. Capito delivered to them a message to the following effect: 'In the name, and by the command of Florus, I am to direct that you return home; and to inform you, that the man whom you have so freely treated, partly in a serious way, and partly in ridi-

cule, cannot be induced to form a more favourable opinion of you for your false and complimentary speeches. If you are really men of courage and resolution, as you would wish to be thought, why do you not abuse by scurrilous language that man to his face whom you have been so free to censure in his absence, and assert by force of arms that liberty for which you have clamoured so loudly?' Daunted by this rebuke, and frightened by the sudden attack of the soldiers, the terrified multitude dispersed without waiting to congratulate Florus, or to pay those respects to the soldiers which are usual on such occasions. In fact, every man retired to his own habitation not a little disturbed by the restless anxiety of his fears.

At this time, Florus resided in the palace; and, on the following day, he ascended the tribunal, attended by the high-priest and the principal persons of the city. He made many severe reflections on the free and insulting speeches that had been made to his prejudice, and positively demanded that the authors of them should be discovered and delivered up; threatening, at the same time, that he would be revenged on those in the place, if the guilty were not surrendered. To this the Jews replied, that 'the majority of their people were peaceable; and, with regard to those who had spoken freely, they entreated pardon for them; since it could not be supposed, but that in such an immense number, some rash and violent men would be found. Nor was it possible clearly to distinguish the innocent from the guilty, since those who might have repented of what they had done would not be free to acknowledge the fact. Wherefore, they submitted to the consideration of Florus, whether the greatest service that could in this case be rendered to the empire of Rome would not be to consult the safety of the city and people, by keeping them firm in their allegiance to the emperor. They said they would farther advise, in case matters came to extremities, that some of the criminals might be spared in compassion to so many innocent persons, rather than that the unoffending should be destroyed in revenge of the insult of the guilty few.'

All the effect this reasoning had on Florus was to increase his rage to such a degree, that he ordered the soldiers to the great market in the upper town, to pillage the place, and kill all they should encounter. The soldiers, finding their commander had given them this licence to plunder, not only executed their orders against those places and people within their directions, but made equally free with every house, and destroyed the inhabitants without distinction, committing similar violence on those they found in their flight in by-ways and in secret places. In a word, they hesitated not to make booty by any means. Several of the nobility being seized and conducted to Florus, he gave orders that they should be whipped and crucified. It is estimated that six hundred and thirty persons were sacrificed on

that day, including men, women, and children; for even infants at their mothers' breasts were not spared. This misfortune, how terrible soever in itself, appeared the worse for its singularity; for before the time of Florus, it was never known that the Jewish nobility were whipped and gibbeted like slaves; for the Roman dignity was held sacred, though they were Jews by extraction.

Nero having made Alexander governor of Egypt, Agrippa was now gone to Alexandria to pay him a visit. Berenice, sister of Alexander, was at Jerusalem greatly afflicted, on account of the tumults which had arisen; so that she sent some of her officers and guards to Florus, to entreat that he would restrain his indignation, and shed no more blood. But Florus was alike insensible of the crime he had been guilty of, or of the honour of the mediatrix. His soul was prostituted to the lust of plunder, and he despised all other considerations; so that the soldiers were permitted to continue their massacres, notwithstanding the presence of Berenice, who would certainly have been sacrificed if she had not escaped from her palace, where she had spent a sleepless night, attended by her guards. She now went to Jerusalem for the purpose of paying a vow to God, as usual, after deliverance from sickness, or other imminent danger. Agreeable to custom, she continued in prayer thirty days, abstaining from wine, and shaving her hair. It was now the sixteenth of the month Artemisius, when Berenice was in the daily course of her devotion, standing barefoot before the tribunal, and soliciting Florus in behalf of the people; but she had not met with any success, and her pious office was undertaken at the risk of her life.

On the following day the people assembled in the market-place of the upper town, exclaiming most violently against those who had murdered their friends on the preceding day; but Florus was particularly the object of their rage and resentment. The high-priests and men of eminence were so apprehensive of the danger of again inciting the wrath of Florus, that they rent their garments, and, going among the people, entreated them not to talk so freely, for that every ill consequence was to be dreaded from the vengeance of Florus. The passions of the people now began to subside, partly through respect to the mediators, and partly in the hope that the malice of the governor was at an end.

The return of peace was painful to Florus, who began to consider how he might foment a new disturbance. With this view, he sent for the high-priests and principal people among the Jews to attend him, and informed them that two companies were coming from Cæsarea, and if the people would go out and meet them on the way, it would be deemed a substantial proof of their affection to the government. This proposal being readily acceded to, Florus gave directions to the centurions,

that if the Jews on their meeting should treat them with civility and respect, they should not pay the least compliment in return; and if this behaviour should be resented, even in the slightest degree, that they should immediately have recourse to arms.

The high-priests having assembled the Jews in the temple, solemnly charged them to go and meet the Romans on the road, and pay them great respect, lest any ill consequences should ensue. There were several rash people among them, who opposed this motion; and the rest of the company, inspired by sentiments of revenge for the late slaughter of their friends, were ready enough to coincide with them in opinion. At this juncture, all the priests and Levites arrived, exposing to view the holy vessels, and other precious ornaments of the temple, which would probably be rifled by the Romans if they should be irritated. Several of the high-priests appeared with ashes on their heads, their breasts bare, and their garments torn; who first applied themselves to every person of eminence separately, and then addressed the people in general, entreating that they would not permit a slight disagreement to encourage the proceedings of those people who wished the ruin of their country. 'In what manner,' said they, 'will the Romans be benefited, if you treat them with the same degree of respect that you have formerly done? or how can the Jews be sufferers by refusing this degree of respect? On the contrary, if you treat them in an honourable manner, and according to the rules of good breeding, Florus can form no pretence of molesting you; and, in the end, this conduct will relieve your country from the calamities that are otherwise to be dreaded. You will likewise reflect on the great disproportion between the peaceful majority of the people, and the few turbulent incendiaries; and how probable it is that the smaller number should be overruled by the greater.

The arguments and the authority of those who reasoned had such an effect upon the multitude, that the most violent men among them were at length prevailed on to listen to the dictates of reason. When affairs were brought into this happy way, the principal people attended the priests, and marched out to receive the soldiers, being followed by the multitude in a regular manner. The Jews being come near enough to pay their compliments, saluted the Romans; but their salutation being received with silent contempt, the more violent among them began immediately to revile Florus as the author and contriver of all the calamities they had endured. Agreeable to the hint given them, the soldiers instantly attacked the Jews with clubs and cudgels, totally routed them, and trampled numbers under the feet of their horses. Many of them died of the blows they received, others were crushed to death in the crowd, or smothered by striving to get first out at the gate, where they only

hindered each other; so that, on the whole, the spectacle was a dreadful one, many being maimed and bruised in such a manner, that their bodies were so disfigured that the survivors could not know their friends, so as to afford them a decent funeral. In a word, the enemy destroyed all within their reach; but their principal aim was to get between the Jews and the gate of Bezeth, which was a passage leading to the castle Antonia and the temple. In the mean time, Florus sallied from the palace with all the troops under his command, on the rear of the Jews, with a view of making himself master of the castle: but the Jews rallying and making head against him, his design was frustrated. By this time, many of the Jews had taken possession of the houses, from the roofs of which they assaulted the Romans with such violent showers of stones and darts, that, unable to make any resistance, or press through the crowds of people in the narrow streets, Florus was compelled to retreat to the palace with the remainder of his troops. As the Jews apprehended Florus would return to the attack, and make an attempt on the temple by the way of fort Antonia, they immediately cut down a gallery which communicated between that fort and the temple. Florus was so mortified by this circumstance, that he abandoned the enterprize, finding his project hopeless, and his avarice disappointed; for his principal view was to seize the holy treasure. He now held a conference with the high-priest and the senate, informing them that he meant to quit the city, but would leave them such a garrison as they should require. To this they answered, that if no new innovations took place, they thought one company would suffice, but hoped it might not be that company with which the people had already quarrelled; for having greatly suffered by them, they were prejudiced against them. Agreeable to their request, Florus ordered another company, and then returned to Cæsarea with the remainder of his army.

As soon as Florus arrived at Cæsarea, he endeavoured to devise a new mode of propagating a war, which he communicated in a letter to Cestius, governor of Syria, in which he charged the Jews with having revolted; but that was so notorious a falsehood, that he himself was guilty of the very crimes which he imputed to the Jews. The queen Berenice, and the chief people of Jerusalem, acted nobly on this occasion, informing Cestius of the real matter of fact, and acquainting him with the mode in which Florus had governed. Cestius, having obtained this information, thought it prudent previously to send a man of credit and address to inquire into facts, and give him a faithful account of the success of his inquiries. The person fixed on was a tribune, named Politianus, who, meeting king Agrippa near Jamnia on his return from Alexandria, informed him who was his employer, whence he came, and his business. At this time many senators and persons of rank, and among them

several high-priests, attended to pay their duty to the king. When the first respectful compliments were passed, they gave a melancholy description of the condition to which the inhumanity of Florus had reduced the Jews. Agrippa was of their opinion; but he thought it incompatible with his rank to increase the complaint; and therefore he artfully seemed to take part against the Jews, whose situation he nevertheless commiserated; but his wish was to moderate rather than inflame their passions, since the less they appeared to suffer, the less temptation would they have to seek revenge. He thought this conduct would be taken kindly by those who had most to lose, and consequently afford the greatest reason to wish for peace.

Agrippa and Politianus were met about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem by the people of that city, who conducted them thither with every mark of respect: in the interim, the women grievously lamented the loss of their murdered husbands; and all the multitude, as infected by their sorrow, burst into tears and lamentations. Some of them earnestly entreated Agrippa to compassionate their nation, and others entreated Politianus to go into the city and see what havoc had been there made by Florus. Hereupon they took him to the market-place, showed him the houses in ruins, and the devastations that had been made. After this, through the interest of Agrippa, they prevailed on Politianus to go through the city as far as the pool of Siloah, attended by one servant only, whereby he might witness the respect the Jews paid to the Romans in authority; but they said that the cruelties of Florus were insupportable.

Politianus having taken a view of the city, and indisputably convinced himself of the loyal disposition of the Jews, he assembled the people, and went up to the temple, where he made a speech, in which he highly commended their known fidelity to the Romans; and then, having given them a variety of good counsel and advice respecting the preservation of public peace, he offered praise and thanksgiving to God in the plan and manner prescribed by law, and with all possible veneration for the rites of religion. This being done, he retired to Cestius.

No sooner was Politianus gone, than the people in general made their addresses to the king, and the high-priests soliciting permission to send ambassadors to Nero, to exhibit a complaint against Florus, urging as a reason for this request, that if they should remain supine, and not attempt to bring so violent an outrage to examination, and make the authors of it abide a severe trial, it would appear as if themselves were the criminals, and therefore durst not bring the affair to a judicial determination.

On the one hand, it was evident that a refusal of this liberty would be attended with danger to Agrippa; and, on the other, he thought it would have the appearance of malice to permit,

under the name of an embassy, such an immense multitude to attack their governor in an inveterate manner. Reflecting on the courageous and martial disposition of the Romans, and of the danger of provoking the Jews to an insurrection, Agrippa summoned an assembly to meet in a large gallery; and, having placed his sister Berenice in a chair of state in the Asmonean palace, which overlooked that gallery from the upper part of the town, (a bridge uniting the temple with the gallery,) harangued the multitude in a pathetic speech, which tended to dissuade them from violent and seditious practices.

Agrippa and his sister Berenice were so affected, that they both wept; and the violent passions of the multitude were abated; but they said one to another, that they had no complaint against the Romans, they only resented the indignities offered them by Florus. In answer to this, Agrippa said, "You have acted as the professed enemies of Rome would have done. You broke down the Antonian galleries, and refuse the tribute due to Cæsar. Your business, then, if you would prevent any further complaint of your conduct, is to rebuild the galleries, and pay the taxes; for this is neither the fort nor tribunal of Florus."

The passions of the people now subsiding, they attended the king and Berenice to the temple, immediately began to rebuild the galleries, and despatched officers and agents through the province to collect such duties as were yet unpaid. These duties, amounting to forty talents, were immediately collected and paid.

The insurrection having now in a great degree subsided, Agrippa advised the people to a patient submission to Florus till another governor should be appointed by Cæsar. This again inflamed the passions of the people, who treated him with the most opprobrious language, and pelted him with stones till he was compelled to abandon the city. This contemptuous treatment had a very disagreeable effect on the mind of the king, who, finding the people ungovernable, despatched several men of rank to Florus at Cæsarea, desiring he would choose collectors for the province among them; and Agrippa departed when he had discharged his duty.

Many of the factious Jews about this time privately entered a Roman fortress called Massada, put the garrison to death, and introduced in the place of it one of their own. This may be considered as the first important warlike transaction in the rebellion of the Jews, and was regarded by the insurgents as a great accession to their strength, since Massada was remarkably strong both by nature and art, being built by Judas Maccabeus, and having received several additional fortifications from Herod the Great.

About this same juncture, Eleazar, son of Ananias the high-priest, being a bold and enterprising young man, and a military officer, urged a number of his friends among the priests to ac-

cept no sacrifices, unless from the Jewish people. As it was easily foreseen that such a resolution must greatly incense the Romans, a great number of the priests and Pharisees, and other persons of distinction, exerted their utmost influence to oppose the measure; and, finding that their endeavours were unsuccessful, despatched deputies to Florus and Agrippa to vindicate their own conduct, and solicit that a sufficient force might be immediately sent to Jerusalem to put an end to the rebellion. This news was highly agreeable to Florus, whose disposition led him to inflame the war, how ruinous soever the consequence might be to himself or others. This was evidently evinced by his delay in giving an answer to the deputies, on purpose to afford the rebels an opportunity of augmenting their forces.

On the contrary, Agrippa consulted only the general welfare, being willing to do all in his power to save both parties, the offenders and the offended; and, by this means, to secure Jerusalem in the possession of the Jews, and bind the Jews in subjection to the Romans. But as his own interest was likewise at stake in this general confusion of affairs, he despatched two thousand auxiliary horse, with Darius at their head, and having Philip, the son of Joachim, also, for a general. The people sent on this expedition were inhabitants of Auranitis, Trachonitis, and Batanea.

The high-priests, with the princes of the people, and those in general who were disposed for peace, received these deputies into the upper town, the insurgents being already in possession of the lower town and the temple. A skirmish with darts and stones now commenced, and then the combatants on both sides made use of their bows and arrows, with which they galled each other incessantly; and occasionally they made sallies and excursions on each other, and frequently fought hand to hand. The insurgents made attacks in the most desperate manner; but the royal forces appeared to have a superior knowledge of the military art. The principal operation they had in view was to compel the sacrilegious faction to abandon the temple; while on the contrary, Eleazar and his adherents laboured with equal zeal to get the upper town into their possession. The contest continued without intermission for seven days, in all which time, though there was great slaughter on both sides, not even the least shadow of advantage was obtained by either.

At this period, a festival approached, which is named Xylophoria, and acquires that denomination from the custom of carrying wood to the temple to keep the fire throughout the year. Advantage was taken of this circumstance, to exclude the insurgents from their worship; but while a number of the Jews were engaged in this office, the Sicarii broke in upon these people, and improved the advantage they had gained to such a degree, that the royal troops, equally overcome by superior numbers and more determined resolution, were obliged to aban-

don the upper town, of which immediate possession was taken by the rebels. After this exploit, they broke into the house of Ananias the high-priest, and reduced to ashes the palaces of Agrippa and Berenice. This being done, they resolved in the next place to set fire to the offices of record, and consume both them and all their contents, thinking that if they deprived the people of fortune of those papers which might prove their riches, they should bring over to their interest the whole body of debtors and beggars; and, by that means, change the quarrel into a direct war between the rich and the poor, under pretence of asserting the liberties of the people. In fact, the persons who had the care and security of the public records were so terrified, as to abandon their trust, each man seeking his own security in flight, on which both offices and records were burnt to ashes. This fatal stroke being given to the credit and safety of the city, the insurgents began to consider the prosecution of the war as the principal object worthy of their attention.

While things were in this unhappy state of confusion and disorder, the high-priests and many of the nobility were compelled to fly for their lives, and seek for safety in vaults and other secret places; while others got into the upper palace among the royal troops, bolting the door after them, and making the passage secure from assault: and of this number were Ananias the high-priest, his brother Hezekias, and the deputies who had been sent to Agrippa.

The victory being thus obtained, the insurgents seemed to be contented for that day with the mischief they had done, and paused awhile to reflect on what was past: but, on the following day, which was the fifteenth of the month Lous, they made an attack on the castle of Antonia, which resisted no longer than two days, and was then carried by assault; on which the rebels burnt the castle, and put all the garrison to the sword. They now proceeded to the palace, in which the troops of Agrippa had taken sanctuary: having divided their force into four bodies, they made an attempt to undermine the walls, while those within were under the necessity of remaining inactive, as their strength was insufficient for them to sally forth with hope of success. In the mean time, the assailants continued their operations, and several of them perished under the walls of the castle, among whom were some of the Sicarii. The operations were continued night and day without intermission, the assailants hoping to starve the besieged into a compliance: and the latter, by a constant and vigilant attendance to their defence, flattering themselves that the insurgents would be fatigued with the attack, and abandon the enterprize.

Among the rebels was a man named Manahem, the son of Judas of Galilee: he was a person of great cunning, and an artful orator. He was the same person who formerly reflected on

the Jews under Cyrenius, for acknowledging themselves as subject to the Romans, and at the same time professing to worship only one God. Now Manahem had formed a design on the arsenal of Herod at Massada, in which he induced several men of quality to join him, and, taking them with him, he seized the place by force; and then, arming a number of low vagabond fellows, whom he found there, he took them with him as his guard, and, marching to Jerusalem, entered that city like a petty sovereign. When he arrived there, he put himself at the head of the insurgents, and issued out his orders for besieging the palace in form.

The assailants were principally in want of machines; for they found it impracticable to work at the foot of the wall while they were annoyed by an enemy directly over their heads. Hereupon they began to break the ground at a considerable distance from the castle; and, having carried on a covered way to the foundation of one of the towers, they supported its weight as they worked by several props of timber. This being done, they retreated, having first set fire to the props, which, being consumed, the turret fell to the ground. Now the royal troops having been apprised of what was going forward, had run up a wall behind the turret to support the rest of the building. The assailants had reckoned their work almost complete; but when one of the towers only fell, the discovery of what had been done caused an astonishment and confusion among them that is not to be described.

Notwithstanding the success of this counter scheme, the royalists who were in the palace sent a messenger to Manahem and the other chiefs of the opposition, requesting that they might have leave to depart; which request was immediately complied with, as far as it related to the king's people and others who were of the same religion, who accordingly departed without loss of time.

The Romans who were left behind were quite dispirited by this circumstance; for they found themselves unable to cope with the superior number of the enemy, thought it inconsistent with their character to submit to treat with rebels, and dreaded the hazard they should run when exposed to the mercy of men totally destitute of all faith and honour. Reduced to this extremity, they abandoned the place as not being defensible, and retired with all expedition to the royal forts of Hippon, Phasaël, and Mariamme. No sooner did the soldiers begin to quit the place, than the rebels under the command of Manahem broke in, murdered every person they could seize on, and stripped the places of all the valuable furniture, and concluded the outrage by setting fire to the camp.

On the next day, Ananias and his brother Hezekiah were found together in one of the vaults adjoining to the court, dragged forth, and put to death. Manahem, whom we have

just mentioned as a factious leader, was, with many of his followers, soon after murdered by the partisans of Eleazar. The people, in the mean time, were, in general, extremely solicitous with these persons who had the direction of the faction not to act with any unnecessary severity towards the Romans, but rather to raise the siege, and permit them to depart; but the more this matter was urged on the one side, the more obstinately it was refused on the other. The Roman general Metilius, and they who accompanied him, having exerted themselves to the utmost of their power for the defence of the place, and being now reduced to the greatest extremity, proposed terms of capitulation to Eleazar, and offered to deliver up the place, together with every thing contained in it, on the single condition that their lives might be spared.

These terms were too moderate to be rejected; whereupon Goriab, the son of Nicodemus, Ananias, the son of Saddaca, and Judas, the son of Jonathas, were fixed on as commissioners to ratify the treaty on oath, and give validity to the articles by signing and sealing. No sooner were the formalities ended, and the agreement properly ratified, than Metilius, fully confiding in the honour of his opponent, drew off his soldiers while they were under arms, equally without interruption and without suspicion of any; but no sooner, in conformity to the agreement that had been made, had the soldiers delivered up their swords and shields, than the troops of Eleazar broke in upon them, seized them, and most inhumanly murdered them; the latter neither supplicating for their lives, nor making any resistance, only reflecting on their barbarous foes by the pronunciation of the words, *oaths* and *articles*. Metilius alone was mean enough to solicit his life, which was at length granted to his earnest prayers, on the condition of his solemnly promising to turn Jew, and submit to the ceremony of circumcision. The above-mentioned assassination of the Romans took place on the sabbath-day, which was deemed a great aggravation of the crime, since on that day all labour whatsoever, even the most sacred, is totally forbidden to the Jews by their law.

The Roman power, however, was very little injured by this atrocious outrage, since the loss of the troops that were thus destroyed was inconsiderable, proportioned to the vast armies of which they were possessed; but this circumstance was an evident prelude to the destruction of the Jews; for an inevitable war was actually in view, and that founded on a good cause: the city, which had taken the principal share in the dispute, was so corrupted by perfidy and rebellion, that, admitting it might escape the vengeance of the Romans, it was not reasonable to suppose but that it must fall a sacrifice to divine justice. The face of affairs was now more mournful, melancholy, and desponding, than it had been at any former period: they who were innocent dreaded to share the fate of the guilty, and

feared that they should be made answerable for the crimes they had not committed.

Divine Providence so directed affairs, that on the very day, and at the same hour of the above-recited massacre, there was a slaughter of the Jews at Cæsarea, in which above twenty thousand persons fell a sacrifice, not a single Jew in the town being left alive. With regard to the few who sought to escape by flight, Florus took care to have them apprehended, and sent them to the galleys in chains. The whole nation of the Jews became outrageous on occasion of this horrid slaughter; and, dividing themselves into distinct bodies, dispersed into different quarters. They first laid waste a number of villages of Syria, and then destroyed several of the adjacent cities, among which were Philadelphia, Gibonitis, Gerassa, Pella, and Scythopolis. This being done, they made their attacks on Gadara, Hippon, and Gaulanitis, proceeding from thence to Ptolemais, Gaba, and Cæsarea, and the Tyrian Cedasa, some of which places they burnt, and levelled others with the ground. In the next place, they attacked Sebaste and Askalon, which surrendered without opposition. When they had effectually reduced these places, and laid them in ruins, they destroyed Anthedon and Gaza; and, continuing their ravages, laid waste a number of villages on the frontiers, putting to death as many of the inhabitants as they could get into their custody.

On the other hand, the Syrians wreaked their vengeance on all the Jews they could find in country places, whom they put to the sword, and extended the persecution against the inhabitants of the several cities. This was done, not only from motives of policy, in the weakening of a determined enemy, but from those of revenge on an ancient animosity. At this time, the condition of Syria was far more deplorable than language can describe; since, in fact, there were in every city two armies, nor was any safety to be expected for the one but in the destruction of the other. The whole day was spent in spilling of blood; and, on the advance of the night, the fears of the parties were worse than the reality. The Syrians asserted that they meant only to destroy the Jews; but there being a number of people whom they only suspected to be of the Jewish faith, they knew not how to act with regard to them: they were afraid to leave them unpunished, lest they should be Jews, and yet thought that the destroying them on surmise only would have the appearance of cruelty.

At this period, many persons who had been heretofore distinguished by their benevolence, became of savage disposition from the mere lust of gain; for those they killed they plundered, and the booty was allowed them as a reward of their courage, that man being accounted most valiant who obtained most pillage; for, in this case, the terms victory and robbery were confounded. It was a dreadful spectacle to behold the streets

filled with the bodies of men, women, and children, who had been murdered, stripped, and left, not only unburied, but uncovered. But still more melancholy events were to take place.

To this period the Jews had only made war on strangers; but when they approached the confines of Scythopolis, they found the Jews themselves of that district to be their enemies, so much had the latter preferred the consideration of their own interest to that of their country, the Jews of Scythopolis having actually combined with the inhabitants of that place against their own countrymen. But the Scythopolitans were suspicious of the good faith of their new allies, who had entered into the agreement with an eagerness for which they could not account. They reflected what might be the consequence if these people should unite against them with the other Jews, surprise the town by night, and then assert that what they had done arose from the necessity of their situation, or was in revenge of their own sufferings. On this occasion, the citizens proposed to the Jews of their confederacy, that if they were willing to give a proof of their integrity and love of justice towards strangers, they would for the present withdraw with their families into a grove adjacent to the town. The Jews complied with this requisition, and every thing remained in peace at Scythopolis during the two following days; but on the third night, intelligence being received of the defenceless situation of the Jews, that some of them were asleep, others in careless postures, and all of them off their guard, the people of Scythopolis attacked them unawares, destroyed them all to the number of thirteen thousand, and departed, having first seized every thing of value in the camp.

The example of the massacre at Scythopolis had spirited up the people in several other places, where also the Jews were massacred. In Askalon two thousand five hundred fell a sacrifice; in Ptolemais two thousand; and many of them were put to death at Tyre, where likewise several were imprisoned. All those who were most active at Hippon and Gadara were destroyed, and the rest thrown into prison. In other towns where they were either dreaded or hated they were treated with similar severity; but the Jewish inhabitants of Antioch, Sidon, and Apamia, remained in the peaceable enjoyment of their lives and liberties. It is doubtful whether this lenity arose from a belief that they were too weak to be dreaded, or from a generous view to spare a body of people who did not appear to harbour any sinister design against the state; but, in fact, this latter idea seems to have the best foundation. Those Jews who chose to remain in the Gerasenes were permitted so to do, and those who declined staying were safely conducted to the borders of the country.

In the interim, the possession of the castle of Cypros on the frontiers of Jericho was obtained by the rebels, who destroyed

the place after first putting the garrison to the sword. About the same period, the Romans of Macheras were treated with by another large body of the Jews, for the surrender of their garrison; and they accordingly agreed to the terms on which it should be given up, thinking it was better to yield it by capitulation, than to be driven out of it by force.

Cestius, remarking the antipathy in which the Jews were every where held, took advantage of this circumstance to prosecute the war with vigour. On this occasion, he assembled his troops, and marched towards Ptolemais, taking with him the whole twelfth legion which he commanded at Antioch, two thousand select men from the other legions, and four divisions of horse, exclusive of the royal auxiliaries; and these last consisted of two thousand horse and three thousand foot, belonging to Antiochus, all armed with bows and arrows; one thousand horse and three thousand foot of the troops of king Agrippa; and a body of king Sohemus' troops, consisting of four thousand men, about a third of which were horse and the rest foot, and the greater number of them archers. As Cestius continued his march towards Ptolemais, the country people flocked to him as he passed. It is not to be supposed these soldiers were equal in skill to his own; but their antipathy to the Jews, and their zeal in the cause, amply compensated for what they wanted in judgment and experience.

Cestius was assisted by Agrippa, both with soldiers and instructions; and, being thus provided, the general proceeded with part of his army towards Zebulon, (otherwise called Andron,) the most defensible city of Galilee, and by which Judea is divided from Ptolemais. On his arrival at the place, he found that it was amply stored with provisions of all kinds, but not a single person was visible in the town, all the inhabitants having fled to the mountains, on which he gave his soldiers permission to plunder the city. The general was astonished at the beauty and elegance of the buildings, which bore a great resemblance to those of Tyre, Sidon, and Berytus; yet, notwithstanding his amazement, he caused them to be burned and levelled with the ground. This being done, he proceeded to ravage the adjacent country, laying waste wherever he came. When he had made all possible depredations, and burnt the adjacent villages, he left them in that situation, and then returned to Ptolemais. On this occasion, the Syrians were so intent on the obtaining of plunder, that they could not prevail on themselves to retire in time; but many of them remained behind: and, on the retreat of Cestius, the Jews, taking courage, fell on these plunderers and destroyed near two thousand of them.

Cestius proceeded from Ptolemais to Caesarea, whence he despatched a division of his army to Joppa, with directions, that

if they could get an easy possession of the place, they should preserve it; but if they found that the inhabitants made preparation to defend it, in that case, they should wait for the arrival of the rest of the army. However, the Romans attacked the place both by land and sea, and became masters of it with very little difficulty; for the inhabitants were so far from being able to resist the attack, that they had not even an opportunity of making their escape; but all of them, men, women, and children, masters and servants, were indiscriminately put to the sword; the number of the persons slain being reckoned at eight thousand four hundred, and the city was plundered and reduced to ashes. A body of Roman horse made similar destruction in the toparchy of Narbatane, not far from Cæsarea, where they ravaged the country, killed great numbers of the inhabitants, took possession of their effects, and burnt their cities to the ground.

The twelfth legion was now sent into Galilee by Cestius, under the command of Cæsarnius Gallus, and as many other troops were sent in their aid as were deemed sufficient for the reduction of that province. The strongest city in this country was Sepphoris, the gates of which were immediately opened to the commander, and the other towns copied the example of Sepphoris. The insurgents and disaffected people retired to the mountain of Asamon, which crosses Galilee, and is directly opposite to Sepphoris. While they were thus situated, Gallus approached; but as long as they were able to maintain the higher ground, they were more than a match for the Romans, about two hundred of whom they killed in the attack; but at length the Romans making a compass, so as to act on equal terms, the opposite party was soon put to the rout; since the men, being ill-armed, were unable to withstand the assault, and the fugitives were soon cut to pieces by the horse. Some few of them saved their lives by hiding in crags of the rocks, but above two thousand of them were slain on this occasion.

By this time, Gallus being convinced that there was no further necessity for his attendance in Galilee, retired with his troops to Cæsarea; and Cestius departed with his army to Antipatris, where, when he arrived, he was informed that a great number of Jews had got into the tower of Aphec, whither he sent a number of his troops to rout them. The Jews finding themselves totally unable to sustain the shock, abandoned the place to the Romans, who first stripped it of every thing of value, then set fire to all the villages in its neighbourhood, and departed as soon as they were destroyed.

From Antipatris, Cestius proceeded to Lydda, where he found no more than fifty men, all the rest of them having gone to Jerusalem on occasion of the feast of tabernacles. These fifty

Cestius caused to be destroyed, set fire to the town, and proceeded by the way of Bethoron to a place named Gabaoh, about fifty furlongs from Jerusalem, where he encamped.

Convinced of the excessive dangers of the war, the Jews abandoned their former scruples with regard to their sacred days, and applied themselves strictly to their arms. Imagining that their force was now sufficient to cope with the Romans, they made a desperate sally on the sabbath-day, and with a furious uproar attacked their enemies. The rage which, on this occasion, inflamed them, so as to induce them to forget their duty, was advantageous to them in the execution of the projected enterprise; for, on the first charge, they put the front of the Romans into great disorder, and penetrated so far into the main body of the army, that if a body of foot had not yet remained entirely unbroken, and a party of horse arrived to their relief in this critical juncture, it is probable that Cestius and all must have been cut to pieces. On this occasion, four hundred of the Roman cavalry were slain, and a hundred and fifteen of the infantry, while of the Jews there fell no more on the spot than twenty-two men. They who were most eminently distinguished in this action were Monobasus and Cenedæus, two relations of Monobasus, king of the Adiabeniens; and the valour of these chieftains was well seconded by Niger of Perea, and Silas the Babylonian, the last of whom had gone over to take part with the Jews, after having been formerly in the service of king Agrippa.

The main body of the Jews retreating in good order, went back into the city, and, in the mean time, the Romans retiring towards Bethoron, they were followed by Gioras, the son of Simon, who destroyed several of them, and seized a number of carriages and a quantity of baggage, which he found in the course of his pursuit, and which he conveyed to Jerusalem. Cestius remained in the field three days after this action, during all which time a party of the Jews was stationed on the adjacent hills to watch his movements; and it is probable that the Jews would have attacked the Romans if they had offered to depart during that period.

Agrippa, observing that the Jews made their appearance in amazing numbers on the hills, and on every elevated situation in the neighbourhood, did not think that even the Romans themselves were safe within the reach of an enemy so powerful; wherefore he came to a resolution to try if fair words might not obtain him some advantage, flattering himself that the opposing parties might be reasoned into a better opinion of each other than they at present held; or, at least, that if he should not be able to bring them to terms of perfect friendship, he might abate something of their enmity by promoting a change of opinion on either side.

Impressed with these sentiments, Agrippa despatched two of

his friends and officers, named Boreæus and Phœbus, men of unsullied honour and reputation, to offer his opponents a league of alliance with the Romans, and full pardon and indemnity for all that was past, on the single condition that they should henceforth entertain new sentiments, and immediately lay down their arms.

This proposal was no sooner made, than the leaders of the opposition, apprehensive that the people in general might entertain thoughts of going over to the party of Agrippa, in hopes of the promised pardon, resolved on the immediate destruction of the ambassadors. Phœbus they killed without permitting him to say a word in his justification; but Boreæus made his escape after being wounded. The atrocious wickedness of this action so incensed the multitude, that they pursued the offenders with clubs and stones, and in this manner they drove them into the town.

In consequence of this disturbance, Agrippa was furnished with the fairest opportunity imaginable of making his attack on the faction; and hereupon he advanced towards them with his whole army, attacked and routed them, and pursued them even to the walls of Jerusalem. This being done, he retired to a place named Scopus, at the distance of about seven furlongs from the city, where he pitched his camp, and remained three days and nights without attempting to make any attack upon the city, flattering himself with the expectation that the people would be induced to change their sentiments. In this interim, he did nothing but send into the adjacent country for a supply of corn and other necessaries.

On the following day, which was the thirtieth of the month Hyperberetæus, Cestius advanced with his whole army in a regular manner to the borders of the city, where the people in general were so terrified by the faction, that they were afraid to take any step of consequence; while the principal promoters of the sedition were so alarmed by the conduct and discipline of the Romans on their march, that they retired from the extremities of the city, and took refuge in the temple. Cestius proceeded by the way of Bezetha; and, as he passed forwards, burnt Cenopolis, and a place which was denominated the wood-market. Hence he advanced to the upper town, and pitched his camp at a small distance from the palace. If at this critical juncture he had made a vigorous attack, he might with the greatest ease have made himself master of the place, and put a period to the war; but he was diverted from this purpose by the mediation of two generals, named Tyrannus and Priscus, and several other officers, with the prevailing argument of some of Florus's money; and this unhappy proceeding was the occasion of the present misfortunes of the Jews, and the source of many of their future calamities.

When affairs were in this situation, Ananus, the son of Jona-

thas, and several other men of distinction among the Jews, called aloud to Cestius, making an offer to open the gates to him; but either through diffidence or fear, he was so long in considering whether he should comply with the offer, that the intention was discovered, and the people compelled Ananus and his companion to retreat from the walls of the city, and retire to their houses for protection. After this, the Jews, with a view to defend the walls of the city, repaired to the different turrets; and, for five successive days, defended them against all the efforts of the Romans, though they urged the attack with the utmost impetuosity. Cestius, on the sixth day, made an assault on the north side of the temple with a select force chosen from his troops and bowmen; but he was received with such a violent shower of shot and stones from the porch and galleries, that the Romans were not only repeatedly compelled to retire from the severity of the charge, but finally obliged to abandon the enterprize. Having been thus repulsed, the Romans had, at length, recourse to the following singular invention. Those in front placing their bucklers against the wall, and covering their heads and shoulders with them; they who stood next closed their bucklers to the former, till the whole body was covered, and made the appearance of a tortoise; the bucklers being thus conjoined, were proof against all the darts and arrows of the enemy; so that the Romans could now sap and undermine the walls without being exposed to danger; and the first thing they now did was to attempt setting fire to the gates of the temple. This circumstance amazed and terrified the faction to such a degree, that they considered themselves as ruined; and many of them absolutely abandoned the town, nor were the honest party less elevated with joy than the rebels depressed by despair. The people now demanded that the gates might be opened to Cestius, whom they considered in the light of a friend and preserver. Matters having proceeded thus far, the general had nothing more to have done but to have maintained the siege for a very little time longer, and the town must have submitted; but the providence of God would not permit a war which had been undertaken with so little provocation to end in such a manner; for Cestius, without considering the good disposition of the people in general in the town, or reflecting on the despair into which the rebels were thrown, as if he had been infatuated, drew off his men all at once; and, contrary to all common sense and reason, abandoned the siege at the time when his prospects were better than they had been at any former period. The revoltors were so much encouraged by this unexpected departure of Cestius, that they attacked him in the rear, and destroyed a number both of his cavalry and infantry. On the first night he took up his residence in a camp which he had fortified at a place named Scopus; and, on the following day, he continued his march, but was closely pursued by the enemy, who annoyed

him as he went, and destroyed a considerable number of his troops. A trench, with pallisadoes on both sides of the way, having been thrown up by the Romans, the Jews annoyed them exceedingly with their darts and arrows during their march across the passage, while the Romans did not offer to revenge this insult, nor even to look back in the face of their enemies. This was partly in consideration of their being unable to secure their flanks, as their numbers were very considerable, and partly in the apprehension that the order of their march might be broken, as they were themselves burthened with very heavy arms, and those of the Jews were remarkably light, so that they were enabled to make excursions and surprises without any difficulty. On the whole, this was a very disastrous attack to the Romans, and not attended with any loss on the part of the Jews. In fact, the roads were covered with dead and wounded bodies in this retreat. Great numbers of the common soldiers were slain; and, among those of superior rank, were Priscus, commander of the sixth legion; a tribune named Longinus; and Emilius Jucundus, a distinguished officer of horse. The Romans likewise lost great part of their baggage; but at length they arrived at Gabaoh, where they had encamped on a former occasion.

Cestius was now greatly distressed how to act; and, during two days, employed his thoughts on his next operation. On the third day, he found that the Jews were so greatly increased in numbers, that the whole face of the country was covered with them. He was now sensible that danger, as well as hinderance of time, had arisen from his delay; and that as his enemies still increased in number, more danger would arise from a further delay. Hereupon he issued orders that the army should be eased of all their incumbrances, that they might march with the greater expedition; he likewise directed that all the mules, asses, and other beasts of burden, should be killed, except only as many as might be necessary to carry such weapons and machines as would, probably, be hereafter wanted; and this was done likewise from motives of policy, to prevent their coming into possession of the enemy, and being employed to his disadvantage. This was the situation of the army during its approach towards Bethoron, Cestius marching at their head. While the troops continued in the open country, they did not receive the least interruption from the Jews; but as they advanced into hollow ways and defiles, the enemy charged them in front and rear, to separate some divisions of them from the rest of the army, and force them further into the valley; and, in the interim, the Jews discharged shot on the heads of the Romans from the rocks and crags. While the infantry were thus distressed, and in doubt how they should act, the situation of the cavalry was still more deplorable; for it was impossible for them to advance against the Jews in the mountains, or secure themselves in the vallies:

nor could the order of the troops be maintained amidst such a shower of arrows as descended on them. Many perished by falling from precipices, and by other accidents; in fact, they were in such a distressful situation, that they could neither fight nor fly. Reduced to this shocking extremity, the Romans gave vent to their passion by tears, groans, and lamentations; while, on the other hand, the Jews made the rocks and vallies resound with their transports of joy, triumph, and exultation. In fact, such was the situation of affairs, that if daylight had continued some time longer, the whole army of Cestius must have been cut to pieces; but the Romans with difficulty crept to Bethoron under cover of the night, all the passes near which place were immediately secured by the Jews, to prevent the retreat of their adversaries.

Cestius finding in what a disagreeable manner he was surrounded, and that it would be impossible to retreat within sight of the enemy, devised a scheme to favour his escape. Having stationed near four hundred of his most gallant troops on the tops of the houses, he ordered that they should act the part of centinels, calling as loud as they were able to the watches and guards, as if the army was still in its encampment. While this plan was going forward, Cestius collected his troops, and, during the night, marched to the distance of about thirty furlongs. In the morning, when the Jews came to find that the place had been deserted by the main body of the army during the night, they were so enraged that they immediately attacked the four hundred Romans who had acted as centinels, slew every one of them, and then instantly marched in pursuit of Cestius; but his troops having obtained a whole night's march on them, and proceeding with the utmost rapidity on the following day, it was not possible to overtake them. Such were the hurry and confusion in which the Romans had fled, that they dropt in the road all their slings, machines, and other instruments for battery and attack: and these being seized by the pursuers, they afterwards made use of them against the Romans. The Jews pursued their enemies as far as Antipatris: but finding it in vain to continue the chase, they carefully preserved the engines, stripped the dead, collected all the booty they could, and then returned towards Jerusalem, singing songs of triumph for so important a victory obtained with a loss perfectly inconsiderable. In this contest, there fell of the Romans and their auxiliaries three hundred and eighty cavalry, and four thousand infantry.

When the news of the defeat of Cestius had reached Damascus, the Syrians determined to provide for their safety by the massacre of their Jewish neighbours, whom they cut in pieces, to the amount of ten thousand, almost without opposition.

The more moderate Jews abandoned Jerusalem, and the christians in a body are said to have retreated to Pella. Such of their countrymen as were determined upon resistance, held a

meeting in the temple, in which they appointed the officers for carrying on the war. Joseph the son of Gorion, and Ananus the high-priest, were constituted governors in civil affairs, having a charge to superintend the city, and especially take care of the fortifications. Jesus, the son of Sapphas, one of the high-priests, and Eleazar, the son of the new high-priest, were sent into Idumea; Joseph, the son of Simon, was made commander of Jericho; Manasses went beyond the river Jordan; and John the Essene was despatched to Thamna. The government of Gophnitis and Acrabatene was given to John, the son of Ananias; and the two Galilees to Josephus, the son of Matthias, to whom likewise submitted the government of Gamala, the strongest place in the country.

Each of these governors discharged his trust with pleasure, and managed with great prudence. With regard to Josephus, as soon as he arrived in Galilee, he sought to ingratiate himself into the affections of the people, as an interest which would amply atone for any trivial errors they might fall into. He also reflected, that the admitting persons of rank to a share in the government was a ready way to make them his friends; and that the most effectual method of obliging the people at large would be the employing such of the natives as were popular in all public business. The method Josephus took was as follows: he selected a council of seventy from among the oldest and wisest men of the nation. To this council he deputed the government of Galilee, restraining them in a few particulars only. These seventy judges were distributed seven in each city, and empowered to hear and determine all common affairs, agreeably to a plan which was prescribed to them: but the determining in capital cases and matters of great consequence, Josephus reserved for himself.

The council of seventy thus disposed of, and domestic affairs regulated, Josephus began to consider how most effectually to secure himself from foreign attacks. He had no doubt but that the Romans would make irruptions into Galilee, and therefore immediately caused walls to be built round the defensible cities, viz. Jotapata, Bersabee, Selamis, Perea, Japha, and Sigoh, Tarichaea and Tiberias, and also the mountain called Itabyr. In the lower Galilee, he fortified the caves near the lake of Genesareth: in the upper Galilee, Petra of the Achabarians, Seph, Jaminth, and Mero; with Selencia, Soganes, and Gamala, in Gaulanitis. But the Sephorites, who were a rich people, and naturally of a martial turn, were permitted to build their own walls. Gischala was walled in by Josephus's command, by John, the son of Levi. All the rest of the castles were fortified by Josephus's immediate aid and direction.

Having obtained upwards of one hundred thousand men in Galilee, he supplied them with arms which he had collected in various places. He next reflected on the amazing power of the

Romans, and what it was that contributed to render those people so invincible; and he was of opinion that it was owing to their strict discipline and regular obedience. As it was not in his power at present to discipline his people as he wished, he determined to secure their obedience in the best manner he could; and, for this purpose, he thought the Roman method of multiplying officers would be effectual, dividing and subdividing officers of command beneath each other. And this method he adopted. He appointed officers over tens, hundreds, and thousands, all of them still subject to the superior commands of others. He caused his forces to be instructed to understand signals; to know the points of war by the sound of the trumpet, distinguishing an alarm, a charge, or a retreat, by the different sounds; to comprehend the mode of fighting and the form of battle; the method of attack and retreat; and how to second the distressed, and relieve those that might be fatigued. He instructed them in the virtues of fortitude, to sustain mental or bodily distress, admonishing them to show themselves equally proof against trouble and danger. He made use of the Roman discipline in all his warlike instructions, as what might produce an equal force of authority and example. He told his soldiers, that if their wish was to obtain his good opinion of their obedience in time of war, it would become them previously to decline every act of unlawful violence; to avoid all fraud, pilfering, and robbery; that they should be strictly just in their dealings with every one, and not think that what arose from the defraud of another could produce any advantage to themselves. 'Is it possible,' said he, 'for a war against God and man must be our professed enemies?' In this manner did Josephus continue to admonish and instruct his people, till he had formed an army agreeable to his own wish. He was now at the head of sixty thousand infantry, two hundred and fifty cavalry, and six hundred select men for his body guard, exclusive of four thousand five hundred mercenaries, on whom he placed the utmost reliance. The expense of these men to the country was not considerable; for all of them, except the mercenaries, were supported by cities. These cities, while one half of the men were engaged in the wars, employed the other half to provide necessaries for their associates; so that the men were mutual assistants to each other, as those who were in arms served to protect those who provided for them.

The emperor, on receiving intelligence of the defeat of Cestius in Judea, was thrown into the most terrible consternation; but he dissembled his alarm, ostentatiously asserting that it was to the misconduct of his general, and not to their own valour, that the Jews were indebted for victory; for he imagined that it would be derogatory to the sovereign state of the Roman empire, and to his superiority to other princes, to betray a concern

at the common occurrences of life. During this contention between his fear and his pride, he industriously sought for a man qualified to assume the important task of chastising the revolted Jews, preserving the East in tranquillity, and the allegiance of several other nations who had manifested a disposition to free themselves from the power of the Romans. Upon mature deliberation, Nero at length judged Vespasian to be the only man possessed of abilities adequate to the important enterprize. Vespasian was now arrived at an advanced age, and, from his early years, he had been engaged in a continued succession of military exploits. The empire was indebted to him for the establishment of a peace in the west, where the Germans had revolted; and he completed the conquest over Britain, attributing to the emperor the glory of triumphing over that country, which had not before been entirely subdued. The years and experience of Vespasian, and his approved courage and fidelity; his having sons for hostages of his loyalty, who, being in the vigour of youth, might execute their father's commands; and his appearing to be favoured by the providence of the Almighty; determined the emperor to appoint him to the command of his army in Syria. Immediately upon receiving the commission from Nero, who accompanied it with the strongest professions of friendship, he commanded his son Titus to lead the fifth and the tenth legions into Alexandria, and he himself departed from Achaia; and, crossing the Hellespont, proceeded by land into Syria, where he assembled all the Roman forces, and the auxiliaries which the princes adjacent to that province had supplied.

On his arrival at Antioch, the metropolis of Syria, he found king Agrippa, attended by his troops, waiting to receive him. Hence he proceeded to Ptolemais, where the people of Sepphoris, a city in Galilee, had assembled on occasion of his expected arrival. These were a well-disposed people: and, being conscious of the great power of the Romans, and desirous of making provision for their own safety, they acknowledged Cestius Gallus as their governor previous to the arrival of Vespasian, binding themselves to act in perfect obedience to his commands, even against their own countrymen, and at the same time declaring their allegiance to the state of Rome. They received a garrison from Cestius Gallus, and solicited Vespasian to grant them a number of cavalry and infantry sufficient for their defence, in case of being attacked by the Jews; with this request he readily complied; for Sepphoris being the most extensive and the strongest city of Galilee, he judged it expedient to keep so important a place in a proper state of defence.

From Ptolemais he despatched Placidus with an army of six thousand foot and one thousand horse, for the security of the city of Sepphoris within, and near which they encamped; and, by their frequent excursions, greatly incommoded Josephus and his friends. Josephus, to put a stop to these evils, determined

to lay siege to Sepphoris, but soon became convinced that such a design was impracticable. Placidus now ravaged the country with greater fury than ever, putting all such of the inhabitants as resisted to the sword, and reducing the rest to slavery. He then made a fruitless attempt on Jotapata, the siege of which he was obliged to relinquish, though with small loss.

In the mean time, Titus repaired to Vespasian, his father, at Ptolemais, with much greater expedition than it was supposed a winter march would permit; and he there joined the fifteenth, the fifth, and the tenth legions, which were esteemed to be the best disciplined and most courageous of the Roman troops. These were followed by eighteen companies, besides five companies and a troop of horse from Cæsarea, and a troop of Syrian cavalry. Ten of these cohorts were composed of a thousand men each, and the rest of six hundred and thirteen foot, and a hundred and twenty horse; and the army was strengthened by auxiliaries supplied by neighbouring princes: Antiochus, Agrippa, and Sohemus, furnished each two thousand infantry and one thousand cavalry; Malichus, king of Arabia, sent five thousand foot, most of whom were provided with bows and arrows, and one thousand horse. The army amounted to sixty thousand horse and foot, exclusive of the train of baggage, and a great number of domestics, most of whom, having been trained to the practice of war, were but little inferior to their masters in courage and dexterity.

Having formed the resolution of making an incursion into Galilee, Vespasian issued marching orders to his troops, according to the military discipline of the Romans, and departed from Ptolemais. The auxiliary forces being more lightly armed than the rest of the troops, were ordered to march first, in order to reconnoitre the woods and other places where it was supposed ambushes were stationed, and prevent surprises from the enemy: they were followed by a party of infantry and cavalry, to which succeeded a detachment formed of ten men from each company: next came pioneers to level and make good the ways, cut down trees, and remove other obstructions: and then followed the general's baggage, and that of his principal officers, under the convoy of a strong company of horse: after these Vespasian marched, attended by a chosen body of cavalry and infantry, a number of men provided with lances, and a hundred and twenty of his own men selected from the same number of squadrons of horse: the next in course were the engineers, with their various implements and machines of assault; and they were followed by the tribunes and other officers, escorted by a select body of troops: the imperial eagle, preceding the rest of the Roman ensigns, came next; the figure of the eagle was considered as an omen of success in war, and as an emblem intimating that as the eagle was the sovereign of all other birds, so were the Romans superior to the rest of mankind: the ensigns of the

Romans, which were deemed sacred, were followed by the performers on martial instruments of music, to whom succeeded the body of the army, drawn up six in front, the officers attending to keep the men in rank and file, and preserve a regular discipline in every other respect: the domestics belonging to the several legions marched with the infantry, and it was their business to take the necessary care that the baggage was safely conveyed; and the procession was closed by artizans, purveyors, and other mercenaries, who were escorted by a company of infantry and cavalry.

Having marched in the above order to the frontiers of Galilee, Vespasian there encamped his army: he might have advanced farther, but his design was to inspire the enemy with terror by the formidable appearance of his army; and, by affording time for their passions to operate, to render them less capable of resistance before proceeding to an encounter: and, in the mean time, he caused every necessary preparation to be made for a siege. Vespasian was not deceived in this conjecture; for the news of his approach threw the Jews into the most terrible consternation; and Josephus's followers, who were encamped in the neighbourhood of Sepphoris, deserted their leader, even before the enemy came in sight. Being thus abandoned, and finding that the spirits of the Jews were entirely depressed, that the majority of the people had already joined the enemy, and that the rest seemed inclinable to their example, he declined all thoughts of prosecuting the war, and retreated to Tiberias, accompanied by a few of his people who still maintained their fidelity.

Vespasian attacked Gadara; and as that city did not contain a sufficient number of inhabitants to make a successful defence, he with little difficulty subdued it on the first assault. The enmity they entertained against the Jews, and a principle of revenge for the defeat of Cestius, induced the Romans to put the inhabitants of the town promiscuously to the sword; and, not satisfied with setting fire to the conquered city, they burnt and utterly laid waste the neighbouring small towns and villages, and subjected the inhabitants to slavery.

Vespasian determined that his next expedition should be against Jotapata, which was the strongest city in Galilee, and the place to which the Jews had fled in vast numbers for refuge. He first, however, despatched a select party of horse and foot, attended with pioneers, to cross the mountains, and form a passage, the road being at that time wholly impassable for horse, and extremely difficult for foot. This work was completed in the space of four days, so that the whole army was able to proceed without inconvenience. The next day being the twenty-first of the month Artemisius, Josephus escaped from Tiberias, and threw himself into Jotapata; a circumstance which much encouraged the garrison, while it stimulated the Romans to

make the more vigorous attack, as they hoped, by taking the general, to reduce to submission all the Galilean revolters.

On the next day Vespasian began his march, and arrived in the afternoon at Jotapata. He established his camp on a hill about seven furlongs to the north of the city, intending to alarm the enemy by the formidable appearance of his army. The inhabitants were so terrified that they kept within their walls, while the Romans were too fatigued to attempt any exploit the remainder of that day. On the following morning the Romans began to assault the city, which was defended with great bravery, Josephus, at the head of the Jews, making a furious assault upon the enemy, and compelling them to retire. The pressing necessities of the Jews provoked them to acts of the most desperate valour, while the resentment of the Romans was roused by the obstinate resistance which they experienced. On one side were to be discovered the most consummate courage and military skill, on the other the most ferocious and ungovernable rage. Night, at length, parted the combatants, after the Romans had lost thirteen men killed, and several wounded; and seventeen of the Jews had been slain, and about six hundred wounded. On the next day the besiegers renewed their assault, and still more extraordinary instances of valour were displayed, the Jews not merely acting upon the defensive, but making frequent sallies, without regard to the numbers and strength of their enemies. Thus was the contest obstinately maintained for five successive days.

The city of Jotapata is built on a rock, and on three sides are valleys of such surprising depth, that a man cannot look down from the precipices without being seized with giddiness. It is absolutely inaccessible, but upon the north, where a part of the city stands, upon the brow of the mountain; but this quarter Josephus caused to be strongly fortified and taken into the city, thereby precluding the enemy from taking advantage of another mountain by which it is overlooked, and which, with other mountains, so entirely enclose the place, that it can be seen but at a very small distance.

Finding the place so admirably situated for defence, and that he had to contend with an intrepid and determined enemy, Vespasian assembled a council of his principal officers to debate on the means of obtaining victory. The issue of the deliberations was, that a large terrace should be raised on that side of the city which appeared to be least capable of resistance. Immediately upon this resolution being taken, Vespasian ordered his whole army to employ themselves in procuring materials for the intended work. Immense quantities of timber and stone were conveyed from the adjacent mountains, and hurdles were formed to protect the Romans from the darts and other weapons that were thrown from the city. Thus defended, they continued to prosecute their design, in defiance

of the innumerable darts, arrows, lances, and large stones, which were continually thrown from above. What earth they had occasion for was procured in the neighbourhood, and handed from one man to another. The whole army being engaged, the work was continued without intermission, and advanced with surprising rapidity; and the utmost efforts of the Jews to annoy the enemy proved ineffectual.

The Roman army had now sixty machines employed in throwing lances, exclusive of larger engines for casting arrows, javelins, stones, fire, &c. and these were managed by Arabian and other skilful engineers. The operations were pursued with so much vigour, that the space between the city wall and the mount could be no longer occupied. The Jews, however, made frequent sallies by surprise, destroyed the defences, set fire to all the combustible materials they could find, and, in short, did all possible damage to the works of the enemy. In spite, however, of what he sustained from the repeated sallies made by the Jews, Vespasian caused his works to be advanced upon the interval between the walls and the terrace, and connected his troops in a close body, which answered the desired end.

The terrace being now raised nearly to a level with the city wall, Josephus considered that it would reflect dishonour upon him if he should omit to engage in as arduous a task for the defence of the place as the enemy had undertaken for its destruction: and therefore ordered the wall to be raised in proportion to the advancement of the enemy's work, and to be kept at a sufficient height above the summit of the mount. The workmen declined the undertaking, urging the impossibility of pursuing their business, since they should be continually exposed to the enemy. However, Josephus suggested the following invention as a defence against fire, stones, and other weapons: he caused large stakes to be fixed into the ground, and the raw hides of beasts lately killed to be stretched upon them: on account of the yielding quality of the skins, they scarcely received any impression from the lances and stones, and their moisture damped the fire of the enemy. The workmen being perfectly secured through the contrivance of Josephus, continued indefatigably industrious both by day and night; and they soon erected a wall twenty cubits high, on which were formed towers and strong embattlements. The Romans, who had entertained the utmost confidence of subduing the city, were equally astonished and confounded by the depth of policy and invincible resolution of their adversaries.

Vespasian now determined to turn the siege into a blockade, not doubting that this, though it might be a slow way of subduing the enemy, would prove a very effectual one. They had an abundance of corn and all other necessaries in the town, excepting only water and salt, there being neither spring nor fountain in the city, and the people having no water for their com-

mon uses but what descended in rain. Josephus soon found it necessary to limit his people to a daily allowance of water, with which they became discontented, and refused to continue their work. At length he had recourse to the following stratagem. Recollecting that there was on the west side of the city a hollow or gutter in a place so little frequented that it was not likely to have been observed by the enemy, he wrote to the Jews without the city to cause water and other necessaries to be conveyed to him through this passage, enjoining them to be careful that the messengers should be covered with the hides of beasts, and instructed to walk upon their hands and feet, that in case of being observed by the watch, they might be mistaken for dogs or other animals. An intercourse was thus maintained, till the Romans at length discovered and blocked up the avenue.

At length Vespasian, having observed that the terrace which he had been raising had almost arrived at the height of the wall, determined to make use of the battering-ram, which was an engine of immense size, resembling the mast of a ship: it had an iron head formed like that of a ram, and, when used, its motion was somewhat similar to the butting of that animal. It was suspended by large cables affixed to cross timbers cramped together, and strongly supported. It bore upon the middle, and hung on the balance like a scale beam; and, when put in a swinging motion, it struck with such surprising violence, that the strongest wall could not long resist its repeated attacks.

Conscious that the longer the siege was delayed the difficulty of conquest would be increased, since the enemy would be afforded leisure to make preparations of defence, Vespasian ordered the slingers, archers, &c. to advance with their several machines nearer the town, in order to beat off the Jews who defended the walls. This business being executed, the ram was brought forward, being covered with hurdles and the hides of beasts, for the purpose of preserving the machine from damage, and defending the men who were appointed to conduct its operations. The first stroke of the engine threw the Jews into a most terrible consternation; and Josephus, knowing that the wall could not possibly long withstand repeated batterings in the same place, ordered a number of sacks filled with chaff to be lowered by means of ropes; and though the assailants frequently changed the direction of the machine, its intended effects were constantly defeated by means of the chaff-sacks which were interposed to defend the wall. At length the Romans affixed sharp carving irons to the ends of long poles, and therewith cut the ropes which suspended the sacks. The wall being newly repaired, had not yet acquired a hard consistence sufficient to resist the ram, which now performed its office without impediment. The Jews, who had now a most alarming

prospect of speedy destruction, collected a quantity of pitch, sulphur, and other combustibles, which they set fire to in three several parts of the enemy's works, and the flames instantly communicating to the habitations, implements of war, &c. of the Romans, the whole were consumed in a very short time.

An heroic exploit performed by Samaeas, who was a native of Paab in Galilee, and the son of Eleazar, deserves to be transmitted to posterity. He cast down a stone of great bulk with such surprising force, as to break off the head of a ram, and then leaping into the midst of his enemies, he seized the head of the machine, which he carried to the foot of the wall, where he remained till five arrows were fixed in his body: in this condition he remounted the wall; and without betraying the least symptom of an abatement either of constancy or courage, he remained some time an object of public admiration, till at length he fell, still grasping the trophy he had so heroically acquired.

The Romans having repaired the ram towards the evening of the same day, employed it against that part of the wall which had already received damage. Vespasian received a wound from an arrow which was nearly exhausted, and therefore incapable of doing him an important injury. Great numbers of the Jews fell by the arrows and stones of the enemy, but the remainder continued to defend the walls with undaunted bravery. However, they fought under great disadvantages; for the town being illuminated by the fire which they used to annoy the enemy, they were exposed to open view, while they could not discern even the engines from which the Roman weapons were discharged. The violent noise occasioned by the engines, the dead and wounded falling from the walls, the shrieks and dismal lamentations of men and women both within and without the town, were rendered still more horrible by the continual echo of the mountains: the town ditch was running with human blood, and crowded with carcasses heaped high enough for an enemy to have mounted thereon, and made an assault. An immense number of the Jews were killed and wounded; notwithstanding which the defence was sustained during the whole night with astonishing bravery, in defiance of the enemy's machines, which were kept incessantly at work. At break of day the wall gave way; but even in this dreadful extremity the Jews persevered in their generous endeavours to preserve the liberties of their country, by exposing themselves in the breach to prevent the enemy crossing the ditch, and pursuing the advantage they had obtained. To give an adequate idea of the horrors of the night surpasses every power of description.

The Romans having received some refreshment after the extreme fatigue of the night, early on the succeeding day Vespasian issued orders for every preparation to be made necessary for renewing the siege, and for pursuing measures for deterring

the Jews from appearing in the breach. He caused a party of the most courageous cavalry to dismount, and drew them up in three divisions: these men being armed, and carrying pikes in their hands, were first to enter the town; and they were seconded by a chosen body of foot. The rest of the horse were ordered to invest the mountainous parts of the city, to prevent the escape of the Jews after the conquest of the place. The archers, with their bows and arrows, and the slingers and engineers, were the next in order. A number of men provided with ladders were ordered to attempt scaling parts of the wall which had not been injured, with a view, by making a diversion, to weaken the force by which the breach was defended.

Being apprised of the enemy's design, and conscious that little danger was to be apprehended from the Romans employed with the scaling-ladders, Josephus opposed to them only such men as were enfeebled by age, or such as had not recovered from the fatigue of the preceding night: but in places where the wall had suffered even in but a small degree, he stationed such soldiers only as were of approved fidelity and resolution; and he put himself, with five of his most intrepid followers, at their head, in order to receive the first assault. He enjoined his people to disregard the shouts of the enemy, and either to defend themselves from the arrows shot by the Romans by means of their shields, or to retire a little till their quivers were exhausted. He informed them, that if the enemy should proceed to advance their bridges, every possible effort of valour must be exerted, since all considerations for preserving the country must then give place to the noble ardour of wreaking vengeance upon the conquerors: he added, that if the Romans proved successful, it must be expected that the fathers, wives, children, and the other dearest friends and relations of his soldiers would fall miserable victims to their cruelty and rage.

The common people, women, and children, observing the adjacent mountains glittering with arms, the town surrounded by three armies, the enemy marching with drawn swords to the weakest part of the wall, and the archers preparing to discharge their arrows, joined in lamentations that could not have been exceeded, had the place been actually subdued. The outcries of these people greatly affected Josephus; and lest they should dispirit the soldiers, he ordered them to their respective habitations, under a strict injunction of silence. He then repaired to the station he had chosen, totally regardless of the scaling-ladders, his attention being engrossed on the manner of the enemy's assault.

Upon the trumpet being sounded, the Roman troops united in martial shouts; and no sooner was the signal given, than such an immense number of arrows was discharged as to obscure the sky. In obedience to their instructions, the Jews gave no attention to the clamours of the enemy, and defended themselves

with their shields. When the enemy brought their bridges forward, the Jews attacked them with surprising fury, with equal skill and intrepidity, throwing them off as fast as they mounted, and they became more undaunted in proportion as the danger increased. They were under a great disadvantage, by being kept to hard duty without any intervals of relief; while the Romans had a constant supply of reinforcements to take the places of those who were either fatigued or repulsed. The Romans collected themselves as close as possible together; and, throwing their long bucklers over them, they proceeded to the wall of the town, appearing to be an entire and impenetrable body.

The extremity to which Josephus was now reduced suggested to him a new means of defence. He caused a large quantity of oil, of which there was a plentiful supply in the town, to be boiled, and, with the vessels in which it was heated, cast from the walls upon the Roman soldiers beneath. The scalding fluid passing through the interstices of their armour, occasioned the Romans most exquisite torture, it having the quality of long retaining heat, and threw them into the greatest disorder. This armour being buckled and braced, they were unable to relieve themselves; and the oil, flowing from head to foot, consumed their flesh like fire. Some were thrown into the most violent contortions, others were drawn nearly double by their pains, and many fell from the bridge to the ground, and those who attempted to escape were prevented by the Jews.

During the above calamity, the Romans displayed a wonderful degree of intrepidity, nor was the policy of the Jews less remarkable. The former, notwithstanding their miserable condition, engaged in a competition for surpassing each other in pressing upon their adversaries, who availed themselves of another project for impeding their progress. They poured boiling fenugreek upon the bridge, which rendered the boards so slippery, that the Romans were neither able to stand to their arms or retreat: some of them fell upon the planches, and were trampled to death by their own people; and others falling still lower, were exposed to the weapons of the Jews. Many of the Romans being slain, and a great number wounded, towards evening Vespasian sounded a retreat. Only six of the Jews were killed, but the number of the wounded amounted to upwards of three hundred. It was on the twentieth day of the month Desius that this action took place.

The Roman general was desirous of complimenting his soldiers for the bravery they had shown, and consoling them for the ill success they had experienced; but instead of finding their spirits depressed as he expected, they expressed the utmost anxiety for proceeding again to action; and therefore he ordered his platforms to be raised still higher, and towers fifty feet in height to be erected thereon; and for the purpose of

keeping their towers steady by their weight, and defending them against fire, that they should be entirely covered with iron. The most skilful marksmen and engineers, provided with machines, darts, and other implements, were stationed in the turrets, whence they greatly annoyed the enemy who were exposed to their view. The Jews, being unable either to avoid the weapons or discern the people by whom they were discharged, were under the necessity of quitting the breach; but they still continued to maintain a most resolute defence, though the loss they daily suffered considerably exceeded that of the Romans.

The platforms were at length raised higher than the city wall; and on the forty-seventh day of the siege, a deserter communicated to Vespasian the state of the town, representing that, through the loss of men, and the hard duty which the survivors were obliged to perform, the garrison was so reduced that it must necessarily surrender to a vigorous attack, and more especially if advantage was to be taken of a favourable opportunity for making the assault by surprise; and he advised the Roman general to attempt the enterprize about day-break, when the Jews would be unapprehensive of danger and unprovided for defence, and the vigilance of the guard abated by fatigue and an inclination to sleep. Being sensible that the Jews possessed a remarkable fidelity to each other, which the most excruciating torments could not force them to violate, Vespasian put no confidence in what the deserter had related. He had been a witness to a recent instance of the amazing constancy and resolution of the Jews in the case of one of Josephus's people, who, being made a prisoner, and interrogated respecting the state of the city, refused to divulge a single circumstance, and persisted in that resolution till his death, notwithstanding the application of crucifixion and other excessive torments. Considering, however, that the information of the deserter might possibly be founded in truth, and that no ill consequences were likely to ensue from his appearing to believe that to be the case, he ordered the man to be secured, and every necessary preparation to be made for the attack.

The Roman army began a silent march at the appointed hour, and proceeded by the walls of the town, being led by Titus, accompanied by Domitius Sabinus and some chosen men from the fifteenth legion. They put the sentinels to death, cut the throats of the guards, and entered the city: they were followed by the tribune Sextus Cerealis and Placidus, with the troops under their command. Notwithstanding it was open day when the Romans gained possession of the fort, and made themselves masters of the town, the garrison was so exhausted and fatigued by incessant labour and watching, that they entertained no idea of their danger till the enemy had actually gained their point; and even those who were awake were almost equally strangers

to the misfortune; for they could not clearly distinguish objects on account of a thick fog which then prevailed and continued till the whole Roman army had gained admittance to the city. The recollection of their sufferings in the siege suppressed every sentiment of humanity and compassion in the breasts of the conquerors, who threw many of the Jews from the top of the fort; others, who had courage and inclination to offer resistance, were either pressed to death by the immense crowds of the enemy, or forced down precipices and killed by the ruins which fell from above. Many of Josephus's particular friends, being unwilling that the Romans should acquire the reputation of taking away their lives, retired to a remote part of the city, where they died by the hands of each other.

Such of the guards as first observed the city to be taken fled to a turret towards the north, where they were attacked by the enemy, against whom they for some time made a good defence; but being oppressed by numbers, they offered to capitulate: their proposals, however, were rejected, and they died with great resolution. The Romans might have valued themselves on gaining the victory without the loss of blood on their side, had it not been for the fate of Antony a centurion, who was treacherously murdered in the following manner: a number of Jews having fled for refuge to the caves, one of them called to Antony for quarter; the centurion immediately stretched forth his right hand, thereby indicating his compliance, when the Jew basely stabbed him in the groin with a dagger, and caused his death.

Every Jew who was met by the Romans on that day was put to instant death, and, during some following days, they carefully searched the subterraneous and other secret places for the survivors, all of whom, excepting women and children, they destroyed. The whole number of Jews slain amounted to forty thousand, and the prisoners were twelve hundred. In obedience to the orders of Vespasian, the castles were burnt, and the city was entirely laid in ruins. The Romans became masters of Jotapata on the first day of the month Panemus, in the thirteenth year of the reign of Nero.

On the third day after the termination of the siege, Josephus was discovered to have concealed himself in a large cave along with forty other distinguished Jews. He was at length prevailed upon to surrender himself to Vespasian, whose accession to the empire he pretends to have predicted, and by whom he appears to have been treated with the greatest respect.

While the main army was occupied in the siege of Jotapata, a detachment was sent under the command of Trajan to attack Japhtha, a very strong city of Galilee. This was taken with great ease, and fifteen thousand of the Jews perished on the occasion. About the same time, a large number of the Samaritans collected upon mount Gerezim, where they meditated a rebel-

lion. The Romans first surrounded them with a trench, and then offered them mercy, on their refusal of which they were put to the sword, to the amount of eleven thousand six hundred men. Soon after these events, Vespasian proceeded to Cæsarea, the most considerable city of Judea, where he intended to remain during the winter.

A great concourse of people, composed of revolters from the Romans, and fugitives from the conquered cities of the Jews, had now assembled, and were employed in rebuilding Joppa, which had been destroyed by Cestius. The banditti, being unable to procure the means of subsistence on account of the desolate state in which Cestius had left the country, constructed a number of vessels for the purpose of perpetrating robberies on the sea; and, by their piratical practices, they proved a great obstruction to commerce on the Syrian, Phœnician, and Egyptian coasts. Vespasian, being apprised of their proceedings, despatched a body of cavalry and infantry to Joppa; and the troops found but little difficulty in gaining admittance by night to the city, it being but indifferently watched and guarded. The inhabitants were so greatly astonished by being thus surprised, that they had not power to attempt the least resistance, but fled with great precipitation to their vessels, and remained that night at sea beyond the reach of the enemy's weapons.

Though Joppa is a sea-coast town, it has no port: the shore is exceedingly craggy and steep: on each side of the town stands a pointed rock, projecting a considerable space into the sea, so that when the wind prevails a more dangerous situation for shipping cannot be imagined.

At break of day, the wind, called by the people of the country the black north, arose, and caused the most terrible tempest that had been known: the vessels of those who had escaped from Joppa, by being thrown against the rocks, or dashed with great violence against each other, were broken to pieces: some, by dint of rowing, endeavoured to avoid being foundered by keeping in the open sea, were tossed upon mountainous billows, and then precipitated into the most profound abyss of waters, and great numbers of the vessels sunk. During this violent contention of the elements, the noises occasioned by the dashing of the vessels, and the lamentations and outcries of the miserable people, were dismal and terrifying beyond description. Many of the people were washed away by the billows, and dashed against the rocks; some were drowned; others fell upon their swords, and several perished on board the wrecks; and, in short, the water was covered with the blood of the deceased, whose carcasses were dispersed upon the coast. During this shocking scene, the Roman soldiers waited to destroy those who should be driven ashore alive. It was computed that four

thousand two hundred bodies were cast upon the shore by the waves.

The Romans having obtained possession of Joppa without being under the necessity of proceeding to a battle, they soon laid the place entirely in ruins. It was the fate of this city to be twice subjected to the Roman power in a short space of time. Lest Joppa should again be inhabited by pirates, Vespasian fortified the castle, and established a garrison therein sufficient for its defence: he also left a strong body of horse to set fire to and destroy the towns and villages, and lay waste the adjacent country, which, in obedience to the command of their general, they punctually executed.

A considerable personal esteem for Vespasian, a disposition to show himself faithful to the Romans, the desire to preserve his subjects in a state of tranquillity, and perhaps a secret wish to mitigate the distresses of his countrymen, induced Agrippa to cultivate the acquaintance of Vespasian, and to invite that Roman general to visit him at Cæsarea Philippi. Here Vespasian spent the term of twenty days in uninterrupted feasting and rejoicing, attended with his army. At length, having heard that Taricheæ had revolted, and that Tiberias was about to follow its example, he determined to show his kindness to Agrippa by immediately reducing these places, which belonged to the government of that prince. Vespasian having marched against Tiberias, the more numerous part of the inhabitants entreated and received his mercy, while Jesus, the son of Tobias, and the faction which he commanded, retired to the neighbouring city of Taricheæ.

Having departed from Tiberias, Vespasian encamped his army between that city and Taricheæ; and, conceiving that the intended siege would occupy a considerable time, he fortified the camp by erecting a wall. Taricheæ, like Tiberias, is situated upon a mountain, and Josephus had constructed a wall, encompassing it on every side, except on that where it is fortified by the lake Gennesareth, and the circuit of this wall was nearly equal to that of Tiberias. Nature and art had contributed to render the place exceedingly strong, and it was inhabited by the most desperate of the revolters. At the commencement of the insurrection, the people collected great quantities of provisions; and, being sufficiently provided with men and money, they were under little apprehension of being subdued. They had a numerous fleet of armed vessels on the lake, in which they meant to embark in case of being repulsed on shore.

Jesus and his associates, regardless of the force and discipline of the enemy, made a violent assault upon them while they were employed in forming intrenchments and other fortifications, and dispersed the pioneers, and did considerable injury to

the Roman works. The Romans pursued them to the lake, where they took shipping; and, having proceeded beyond the reach of the Roman darts and arrows, they cast anchor, and ranged their vessels in order of battle.

In the interim, Vespasian received intelligence that a great number of Jews had assembled on a plain adjacent to the city, in consequence whereof he despatched a body of six thousand chosen cavalry, under the command of his son, to make discoveries. Titus marched to reconnoitre the situation of the Jews; and finding them to be much more numerous than the troops under his command, he sent intelligence thereof to Vespasian. Though many of the troops under Titus were greatly alarmed by the superior force of the Jews, the majority of them still preserved an undaunted resolution.

Antonius Silo was at the same time despatched by Vespasian, with orders to lead a body of two thousand archers to occupy a mountain facing the town, and assault the Jews who were appointed to defend the walls; and this they punctually observed. Being desirous of rendering his army more formidable in appearance than it was in reality, Titus arranged his men in a line answering the front of the enemy's forces; and he himself made the first assault, being followed by his people with loud exultations and military shouts. The Jews, who were astonished at the intrepid manner of the charge, made a faint resistance; but being soon thrown into disorder, many were beat down and trampled to death by the cavalry, and others fled towards the city. The fugitives were closely pursued by the Romans, who, through the swiftness of their horses, being enabled to attack them again in front, drove back many who were endeavouring to take refuge within the walls. Great numbers were slain, and but few, if any, escaped, excepting those who were so fortunate as to get into the city.

At this period a violent insurrection took place between the natives of Taricheæ and the strangers who inhabited the city. The natives urged that they had ever been averse to engaging in the war; but the advantage gained by the Romans was the principal cause of their discontent. The strangers, of whom there were great numbers, opposed the citizens in the most outrageous manner. Titus, being near the wall, soon understood that outrage and dissension prevailed in the town; and, determining to take advantage of so favourable an opportunity, he mounted his horse, and being followed by his troops, he rode with great speed to that quarter of the town which is towards the lake, and he was the first man who entered the city. So astonished were the Jews at the intrepid behaviour of Titus, that they had not power to offer the least obstruction to his progress. Jesus and his associates escaped into the fields: some of the people fled towards the lake, and fell into the

power of the Romans; others were slain while endeavouring to get into their vessels, and many were drowned in the attempt to save themselves by swimming. Some resistance was made by the strangers who were not able to escape with Jesus; but the natives of the town readily yielded to the Romans, from whom they expected favour, from the consideration that they had disapproved of engaging in the war, and been compelled to take up arms.

The faction being subdued, Titus granted quarter to the natives of Taricheæ. The insurgents who had embarked upon the lake proceeded to as great a distance as they possibly could from the enemy. Titus despatched intelligence of the enterprise to Vespasian, to whom it afforded great satisfaction; for the reduction of Taricheæ was considered as a most material point towards a termination of the war in favour of the Romans. Titus now ordered a guard to invest the city, lest any of the Jews should effect an escape; and he went to the lake of Gennesareth on the following day, and commanded a number of vessels to be constructed for the purpose of pursuing those who had made a retreat by water. There being a great number of workmen, and a plentiful supply of materials, the vessels were completed in a few days.

The vessels being prepared, Vespasian embarked in pursuit of the Jews who had escaped on the lake of Gennesareth. The fugitives had now no probable views of escaping the vengeance of the enemy; for the shore being wholly occupied by the Romans, they could not disembark without meeting inevitable destruction; and their boats, beside being too small, were so slightly built, that they could not expect to prove victorious in a naval engagement. The Jews endeavoured to annoy their adversaries by casting stones, and by other means which proved equally ineffectual; for the weapons they discharged served only to cause a noise by meeting the vessels or arms of the Romans, who were well defended against every assault they could make: when they attempted a close encounter, they were either put to death by the sword, or their vessels upset and the men drowned. Some of the Romans fought at a distance, and made great havoc with their darts and arrows; others boarded the vessels of the Jews, and cut the men to pieces with their swords. Several of the Jewish boats were conquered by being inclosed within the two divisions of the Roman fleet. Such as attempted to save themselves by swimming were put to death by lances and darts, or sunk by being over-run by the Roman vessels; and those who were urged by despair to attempt saving themselves by getting on board the enemy's fleet, had their hands or heads instantly severed from their bodies. At length, the Jews were driven to such extremity, that they pressed into the middle of the Roman fleet in order to get to

shore. Horror and destruction now prevailed in the greatest variety of forms: great numbers of Jews were killed on the water, but the carnage was much more terrible on shore; the lake was discoloured with blood, and the banks were covered with the bodies of the slain. In a few days the carcases putrified, and infected the air to such a degree as to render life almost insupportable; and even the Romans lamented the barbarity which had produced so terrible a calamity. The Jews who were slain when the Romans assaulted the city, and those who perished in the naval encounter, amounted to six thousand five hundred.

The engagement being concluded, Vespasian summoned a council of all his principal officers to assemble in the city of Tarichæe; and, placing himself upon the tribunal, he entered upon deliberations as to what measures were most advisable to be pursued in regard to the strangers. The council opposed showing mercy to the strangers, urging that they would be dangerous to the princes into whose dominions they might retire, since they would indisputably avail themselves of every opportunity for promoting troubles and insurrections. Vespasian was convinced that they were unworthy of mercy, and so sensible of their abandoned dispositions, that he entertained not the least doubt of their attempting the destruction even of the very people to whom they might be indebted for the preservation of their lives; but what means to adopt he was at a loss to determine; for he knew that if he put the strangers to death in the city, it would prove a circumstance productive of infinite affliction to the natives, who, having surrendered to him, had received his promise of showing favour to his prisoners. The council argued that, from the nature of circumstances, he was under no absolute obligation to observe a rigid conformity to the condition, and that the case must be decided by a regard to the public welfare: Vespasian coincided in this opinion, but determined not to irritate the natives. He permitted the strangers to depart, having first commanded them to take the road to Tiberias, and stationed a number of Romans on the road to prevent their escape. When they had got within the town, the Romans made them prisoners; and, upon the arrival of Vespasian, he ordered them to be confined in the amphitheatre, where he caused those who were superannuated, as well as those who were judged to be too young to bear arms, to be put to death; and the number of those who perished in consequence of the general's order was twelve hundred. He sent six thousand of the most athletic men to Nero, to be employed in working upon the Isthmus; three thousand four hundred were sold into slavery; he presented a great number to Agrippa, to be disposed of as his discretion should dictate; and these people were sold by the king. The remaining part of the incendiary fugitives, whose restless disposition had

prompted the revolt, were Hipponians, people of Gaulanitis, Gadara, and Trachonitis.

Gamala and Giscala yet remained unsubdued. Gamala stood on the lake of Tiberias, opposite to Taricheæ, and belonged to the government of Agrippa. It was built on the cliff of a rock rising from the midst of a high mountain: it had crags on the front and back part of it, and took its name from its resemblance to the back of a camel. Its natural strength was increased by art, and its inhabitants defended it with so much persevering valour, that king Agrippa could obtain no advantage over the place during a siege of seven months. At length, however, it was attacked by Vespasian, who entered it with a part of his troops, but was repulsed with great slaughter. The siege continued, notwithstanding the distresses of the inhabitants, who suffered much from famine and the destruction of their houses, till the twenty-second of the month Hyperberetæus, on the night of which three soldiers having secretly undermined the tower, it fell, and thus opened a passage for the enemy.

The Romans were now induced to think of entering the town; but they had suffered so much in their late attempt, that they waited for some time undetermined how to act. In the interim, Titus arrived; and was so mortified at the disaster which the Romans had met with during his absence, that he immediately selected two hundred of his prime cavalry, and a body of infantry, and marched quietly into the city unopposed. An alarm of this proceeding being given by the watchmen, the news of it was instantly spread through the place; and was no sooner known, than the citizens fled in the utmost confusion to the castle, taking their wives and children with them, and crying and exclaiming as if they were distracted. The soldiers under Titus destroyed some of them, while others, who could not get into the castle, strolled about, heedless whither they went, till they fell into the hands of the Roman guards. In a word, the streets flowed with blood; nothing was to be heard but the groans of the wounded, and nothing seen but death in its most horrid forms.

Vespasian's business was now to attack the castle; and, for this purpose, his whole army was drawn towards that spot. This castle was situated on the point of a rock remarkably high and steep, surrounded by a number of precipices and crags, and almost inaccessible. This being its situation, the Romans could neither reach the Jews from below, nor avoid the stones and shot with which they were assaulted from above. But, at this juncture, Providence seemed to determine in favour of the Romans, and decree the destruction of the Jews; for a violent wind drove the Roman arrows upon the Jews, and prevented their reaching the Romans, or blew them wide of the mark. This gust of wind was likewise so strong, that the be-

sieged were unable to make their defence, or even to see the enemies with whom they had to contend. These advantages in favour of the Romans were so great, that they soon became masters of the mountain, which they instantly surrounded; and, in resentment of their former unsuccessful attack, they put to the sword all who fell in their way, the unresisting, as well as their immediate opponents. Some were so driven to despair by the horror of their situation, that they threw themselves, with their wives and children, down the precipice from the castle; and in this way about five thousand perished, while only four thousand were slain; so that a greater number of the Jews were sacrificed to their own fears than were destroyed by the Romans. The latter, however, in the fury of their rage, threw the very infants down the rocks; nor showed mercy to a single person they seized, except the two daughters of the sister of Philip, the friend of Joakim, a man of distinction, and heretofore one of Agrippa's generals.

Giscala did not make any long resistance; for the inhabitants in general were disposed for peace, most of them being husbandmen, and therefore desirous to preserve their farms from ruin: yet there were some among them who were less peaceably disposed, at the head of whom was John, an artful and enterprising man, who was devoid of all honour, and fond of promoting disturbances for the advancement of his own interest. This man, finding that the citizens were determined to surrender, escaped with his followers in the night, and advanced by rapid marches to Jerusalem. The reduction of Giscala put a final period to the war in Galilee.

The Jewish nation were now divided into two very opposite parties: the one, foreseeing that the war, if continued, would produce the ruin of their country, were desirous to end it by a speedy submission to the Romans: the other, who imbibed the principles of the Gaulonitish faction, delighted in nothing but havoc, spoil, and murder, and opposed all peaceable measures with an invincible obstinacy. This latter party, which was by far the most numerous and powerful, consisted of the vilest and most profligate characters, proud, cruel, and rapacious; but, at the same time, addicted to hypocrisy, they committed the most atrocious wickedness under the pretence of religion. In order to cut off every hope of accommodation, they had bound themselves by a solemn oath never to lay down their arms till they had either extirpated all foreign authority, or perished in the attempt. The contrary party opposed them with arms, but were found unequal in the conflict, and suffered more from their countrymen than even from the exasperated Romans. Not only the same cities, but even the same villages and houses were frequently occupied by persons belonging to the different factions; so that the horrors of civil war were extended through-

out every part of the country which had not yet been subdued by the enemy.

The zealots began to exercise their cruelty in robbing and murdering all that opposed them in the surrounding country, after which they easily entered Jerusalem with Zechariah and Eleazar at their head. Here they were at first strenuously opposed by the late high-priest Ananus, whose zeal upon this occasion Josephus highly commends. He made a pathetic speech to the people, exhorting them to take up arms against those abandoned men, who had by this time seized upon the temple, and converted it into a place of defence, from which they sallied forth to commit the vilest outrages and butcheries. They followed his advice, armed themselves without delay, and, returning in great force, made a vigorous attack upon the zealots. The engagement was on both sides fierce and bloody, and lasted a considerable time. At length Ananus forced them from the outer cincture of the temple, and closely besieged them in the interior parts of the sacred edifice, where he kept them closely besieged, and would probably soon have reduced them, had it not been for the treachery of John of Giscala. He had found means to insinuate himself into the favour of the moderate party, who deputed him as an ambassador to offer the zealots terms of accommodation, instead of which he persuaded them to hold out, and to call in the Idumeans to their assistance.

The Idumeans readily accepted the invitation, and marched, to the number of about twenty thousand, to the vicinity of Jerusalem. Here they found the gates shut against them, and therefore encamped on the outside of the walls. As the next night proved exceedingly tempestuous, the moderate party relaxed in their vigilance, and thus afforded an opportunity to the zealots, who were besieged in the temple, silently to unbar the temple gates, and, passing unperceived through the city, to open such of the city gates as were nearest to the camp of the Idumeans. The Idumeans now rushed in, and immediately proceeding to the temple, united with the zealots in an attack upon the guards, many of whom they killed while sleeping, and others while they were endeavouring to seize their arms. A short and dreadful contest ensued; for when it was known that the Idumeans were in possession of the place, all resistance was given over. In every street were heard the most fearful exclamations, while the women shrieked aloud for the loss of their protectors; and the violence of the thunder and winds, and the shouts of the zealots and Idumeans, rendered those clamours still more horrible. In the mean time, the natural rage and ferocity of the Idumeans were increased to such a degree, by the idea of their being excluded from the city in such extremity of weather, that they spared no one, whether armed or kneeling to beg their lives. The pleas of consanguinity and religion were equally made in

vain: a speedy death ensued; and such was their situation, that they could neither fight nor fly. Even the fear of death combined with the rage of the enemy to accelerate their fate; for they pressed on each other with such vehemence, that it was impossible for any of them to retire; so that their very situation was such, that their enemies dealt death among them at every blow. Distracted by their unfortunate position, some of them sought one death to avoid another; and, in their despair, threw themselves from a precipice. In a word, the whole temple was surrounded with streams of blood; and when day-light came, it was judged that eight thousand five hundred persons lay dead on the spot.

However, the insatiate appetite of the Idumeans for blood was by no means appeased; for, turning their rage against the city, they plundered all the houses, and sacrificed most of the inhabitants they met with: but they were not so intent on the destruction of the common people as in wreaking their vengeance on the high-priests, whom they no sooner found than they beheaded them, and trampled on their bodies, insulting that of Jesus on account of the speech he had made from the walls, and that of Ananus on account of his influence with the people. Nay, to such a height had their impiety arisen, that they denied them the common rites of sepulture, though the laws of the Jews, from reverence for the deceased, have provided that even crucified criminals should be taken down and interred before the setting of the sun.

The cruel murder of Ananus and Jesus was no sooner effected than the zealots and Idumeans began to exercise the most horrid barbarities on the common people, whom they destroyed without mercy as fast as they could seize them; but persons of distinction, and particularly such as were in full health and vigour, they kept in prison, in the hope that they would purchase their lives by coming over to their party; but this they refused to do, and every man of them died rather than combine with the traitors. Their death, however, was made additionally dreadful by aggravated torments. When they had been whipped till their bodies were ulcerated, the period of their existence was finished by the sword. Those who were apprehended during the day-time were crowded into prisons at night: as fast as they died, their bodies were thrown out to make room for other wretched tenants, who were treated with similar barbarity. The people were so terrified by these horrid proceedings, that they did not even dare to shed a tear or heave a sigh for the loss of their friends, nor even to bury their nearest relations. Nay, they were afraid even to weep or complain in their own houses or chambers, without first making a diligent search lest there should be any listeners; since any marks of compassion for the deceased would have been punished with death, so criminal was it deemed to possess the feelings of humanity. Sometimes,

indeed, they would throw a handful of earth on a dead body during the night, and a few persons were bold enough to do this during the day-time. No less than twelve thousand persons of some rank fell a sacrifice to this rage of party.

The Idumeans at length so strongly condemned this indiscriminate massacre, that the zealots thought proper to set up a kind of tribunal, who should decide upon the fate of those who were brought before them. Zechariah, the son of Baruch, was one of the first who was brought before this mock court, which consisted of seventy-two persons. They brought a long catalogue of heinous crimes to his charge, which he not only repelled with the greatest ease, but so strongly represented their own crimes, that they were struck with a sense of guilt, and pronounced him innocent. The zealots upon this immediately murdered him, and expelled his judges from their seats as unfit for their purpose. The Idumeans were so shocked at their conduct, that they returned home, and left their allies to carry on the war alone.

By this time John of Giscala had swelled his ambitious views to such a degree, that he even aspired to the sovereign power, though, in fact, he had for a long time entertained an idea of this kind: wherefore, insensibly withdrawing himself from the company of his old associates, he gradually engaged in his interest a number of abandoned miscreants, and formed a resolution of embarking on his own foundation. It was a distinguished feature of the character of this man to impose his order in an authoritative manner on others, and to treat their opinions with the most sovereign degree of contempt: and this he practised as the probable means of attaining the supreme authority. Some of his new adherents joined him through a principle of fear, and others from the motives of esteem and regard; for he had the art of moving the affections, and was fluent in words to a very eminent degree. Some of his followers consulted their own security in their adherence to him, imagining, or hoping at least, that whenever a scrutiny should be made into their former evil proceedings, they would, in the gross, be attributed to him, as the first inciter of the irregularities. Many of the martial part of his followers adhered to him on account of his abilities and manly resolution; while numbers of others receded from him through consideration of his pride, and disdained to submit to the authority of him who had lately been their professed enemy. But the circumstance that had more influence on them than any other, was the aversion they had to be governed by any single person; and the idea that if he once became possessed of unlimited power, it would not be an easy matter to deprive him of it; and they also thought that those who should oppose his first pretensions could have no reason to hope for his future favour. Having deliberated on these matters, the people came to a resolution rather to abide all the

perilous events of war, than to submit to what they thought would be constructed into a voluntary slavery. After this determination the faction divided themselves into zealots and anti-zealots, John putting himself at the head of the latter. These parties now opposed each other, and some trifling skirmishes ensued; but these skirmishes were directed more against the people than against each other; for the view of each party was to obtain the principal share of the booty by the exclusion of the other.

At this period, the city of Jerusalem was oppressed by the aggravated misfortunes of war, tyranny, and sedition. The populace, imagining that war was the most insupportable of all calamities, fled from their habitations to seek for protection among strangers; and afterwards found that the protection which they could not obtain from each other was to be met with among the Romans.

A fourth misfortune, not less destructive to the Jews than any of the former, immediately succeeded them. Within a small distance from Jerusalem was situated the castle of Massada, which was equally celebrated for its antiquity, strength, and magnificence. It had been erected by the ancient Jewish kings, who considered it as a royal treasury, a magazine for all the implements and necessaries of war, and a retreat which might be safely used in cases of imminent danger. At this time it was in possession of a set of abandoned miscreants called the Sicarii, whose numbers were sufficient to have totally destroyed and ravaged the country, though the acts they had hitherto done were the effects of surprise and treachery. At this period, it happened that the Roman army was lying in absolute inaction, while the Jews, divided among themselves, were distressing each other by every possible means; and, on this occasion, the assassins made a more vigorous attempt than ever they had done before. The feast of unleavened bread now came on; a festival that is celebrated by the Jews in the most solemn manner, in commemoration of their deliverance from the slavery they had undergone in Egypt, and their being conducted safely to the land of promise. On the night of this festival the insurgents surprised the town of Engaddi, into which they entered, and conquered the people before they had even time to have recourse to their arms. They drove them furiously out of the town, and, in the pursuit, killed above seven hundred of them, the majority of whom were women and children: they then stripped their houses, and made plunder of all the ripe and seasonable fruits they could find, which they carried to Massada; in their way to which place they, in like manner, depopulated the towns, villages, and castles, and laid waste the country. A multitude of abandoned people constantly coming in to join these depredators, their numbers were daily increased. Till this period, Judea had remained in ease and quiet: but on

this irruption, the whole country became the scene of every kind of violence, and every species of irregularity. As it is in the natural body, so it is when seditions prevail in a city; when the more noble parts are affected, the calamity has an influence on all the rest. In the capital, when a part is disordered, the adjacencies consent to the contamination, and suffer through the force of example. When the parties above mentioned had acquired all the plunder they could, they retired therewith into desert places, where they associated together, such numbers of the depredators joining their forces, that they had the appearance of considerable armies sufficient to destroy cities and lay temples waste. It is reasonable to suppose that the injured parties took every possible opportunity of revenge, when they could meet with those who had insulted them; but this happened but very seldom; for the robbers were generally so diligent as to escape with their booty before their pursuers could come up with them. On the whole, so calamitous was the situation of affairs, that every part of Judea felt a share of the distress with which the principal city was affected.

All the avenues were guarded with so much strictness and precaution by the factious party, that not a single person could stir without imminent danger of his life: yet, notwithstanding this vigilant and rigorous precaution, many persons found means to desert daily, who gave Vespasian an account of the situation of the place, and entreated his assistance to relieve such as yet remained in the city; representing that their attachment to the Romans had already cost many of the citizens their lives, and that many more were in danger of sharing a like fate from similar motives. Vespasian, concerned for the unhappy situation of the inhabitants, ordered his army to advance nearer to the city, not with a view, as was imagined, to attack it by a regular siege, but with a resolution to prevent any siege at all, by reducing all the fortresses in its neighbourhood, and thereby obviating any obstruction to his future views.

Vespasian having arrived at Gadara, the most affluent and best protected town beyond the river Jordan, and the principal place in the province, the most eminent of the inhabitants sent commissioners to invite him to come to the place, and take it under his protection, which he did on the fourth of the month Dystrus. This the inhabitants, who were a wealthy people, did with a view to the preservation of their own lives and fortunes. The factious multitude were unacquainted with the meaning of this proceeding, farther than by Vespasian approaching the walls. The insurgents were now totally at a loss how to act. They found it impracticable for the town to sustain itself against so many internal and external enemies; for the Roman army was at hand, and the majority of the citizens were their determined enemies. Now, therefore, they thought to trust in flight for their safety; but they conceived that they could not honourably

adopt this plan till they had first revenged themselves on the authors of their destruction. Having deliberated on this matter, they apprehended Dolesus, a person equally distinguished by his merit and his extraction, and an object of envy for having advised the embassy above mentioned. Having taken him into custody, they gave orders that he should be put to death, and then that his dead body should be whipped; and they privately left the town as soon as these orders were carried into execution.

No sooner had the Romans approached nearer towards the city, than the inhabitants went out to meet Vespasian, whom they conducted into the place with every testimony of congratulation: and, after having taken the oaths of fidelity which are customary on such occasions, they of their own accord destroyed the walls of the city, in order to give a striking proof of their fidelity and peaceable intentions, by putting it out of their power to do any injury even if they were so disposed. This being done, Vespasian bestowed on them a garrison of horse and foot for their protection, and then despatched Placidus after the enemy with five hundred cavalry and three thousand infantry; after which he retired to Cæsarea with the remainder of his forces.

The fugitives, finding that they were pursued, and that a party of horse gained ground upon them, turned aside to the village of Bethennabris before the Romans had got up to them. In this place there was a considerable number of stout young fellows, some of whom they persuaded, and others they compelled, to enter into their service; and, being thus reinforced, they sallied forth, and made a desperate attack on Placidus, who, at the first, receded a little, but this only with a view to get the enemy farther from the town; and this plan having answered his expectation, Placidus attacked them when they were situated so that he had an evident advantage of them, and totally routed them. The Roman cavalry intercepted those who consulted their safety by flight, while those who stood to their arms were destroyed by the infantry; in fact they were foiled in all their attempts. Their attacking the Romans was indeed a presumptuous enterprise: they might have encountered a wall or a rock with equal hope of success; for the Romans stood so close and firm, that it was not possible to break their main body; and were so guarded by their arms, that darts and lances could not affect them. On the contrary, the Jews were so ill protected, that they were injured by every kind of assault, and reached by any kind of weapons; till, at length, being irritated to the most violent degree of rage, they seemed abandoned to despair, and threw themselves on the swords of their enemies, by which many of them perished; some were cut in pieces, other were trampled under foot by the horse, and others again put to flight. Placidus exerted his utmost influence that none of the

fugitives should get back again to the town; and as often as this was attempted by any of them, the horse soldiers under his command interposed to prevent the carrying their scheme into execution. They killed with their lances such of them as were within their reach, and did every thing in their power to intercept the rest. Some, however, who possessed more strength and swiftness than their companions, reached the walls; and now the guard were puzzled in the highest degree to know whom to admit and whom to exclude; for they thought it would be extremely unreasonable to open the gates to their townsmen, and shut them against those of Gadara; and, on the contrary, they were fearful that if they opened them indifferently to all, the loss of the place might be endangered; as, in the end, it had like to have happened: for the Romans having pursued some fugitives even to the wall, had nearly fallen into the town with them; but with great difficulty the gates were shut, and the ingress prevented. Hereupon Placidus made a vigorous attack on the place, which he urged with so great a resolution, that he became master of it, and took possession of the wall on the afternoon of the same day. The common people, who had no means of defending themselves, were put to the sword, and the others sought their safety in flight, carrying with them, wherever they went through the country, the melancholy news of what had happened. In the interim, the victorious party first plundered the houses, and then reduced the place to ashes.

It is true, that the misery hereby occasioned was sufficiently great; but the matter of fact was abundantly exceeded by the account of the reporters, who, wherever they went, circulated a rumour that the whole army of the Romans was in pursuit of them. This report alarmed the inhabitants of the country to such a degree, that almost all of them abandoned their houses, retiring towards Jericho in immense numbers, as they thought it the most safe retreat they could make, from its natural strength and its populousness. Placidus pursued the fugitives as far as the river Jordan, his forces destroying, without distinction, as many of them as they could overtake. When they arrived near the banks of that river, they found it impassable, as the waters had been swelled by an uncommon fall of rain; and it was equally impossible to fly farther: wherefore, in this situation, it became necessary to abide the event of a battle. Hereupon the Jews planted themselves along the banks of the river, where, for some time, they maintained their ground; but their ranks being once broken, their loss, including the drowned with those who were slain, became almost incredible. It was estimated that fifteen hundred were killed on the spot, about two thousand made prisoners, and a vast booty acquired in camels, oxen, and sheep.

The Jews had never before experienced a defeat so capital as the present, which may be more easily conceived than de-

scribed. The public roads where they had passed were almost covered with the dead; and the bodies of the slain so choked up the river Jordan, as to render it impassible, while great numbers floated down the several streams that ran into the lake Asphaltites.

A series of success now attending Placidus, he proceeded to the reduction of Besemoth, Julias, Abila, and other places, even down to the lake. In these he placed garrisons of the most able, and those he could best trust, of the deserters from the enemy. This being done, he embarked his troops, having first cleared the lake of all those who had fled thither for refuge; and this he did in so effectual a manner, that the Romans were soon in absolute possession of every place beyond the river Jordan, even down to Machæras.

While these events were taking place in Judea, Vespasian received accounts that Vindex had revolted in Gaul, and therefore determined to put a speedy period to the war. With this resolution, he marched with his army from Cæsarea to Antipatris; and having regulated affairs for the space of two days, ravaged the country to the borders of the toparchy of Thamua, and received the submission of Lydda and Jamnia. He likewise took the towns of Bethabri and Caphartoba, situated in the centre of Idumea; and, in this enterprise, killed more than ten thousand men, made slaves of another thousand, and compelled the rest to seek their safety in flight. At length, having determined to attack Jerusalem on every side, Vespasian erected a fort at Jericho, and another at Adida, in each of which he placed garrisons consisting of Romans and auxiliary forces. This being done, he despatched Lucius Annius to Gerasa with a party of cavalry and infantry; and, on the first attack, that place was reduced by storm. A thousand young men who were intercepted in their flight were destroyed by the sword; great numbers of families were made prisoners, and the plunder was given to the soldiers; after which the place was burnt, and the commander proceeded in his depredations. Persons of property fled; but many were killed in the attempt to escape. The ravage was universal; those on the mountains and in the valleys felt equally the effects of the war. With regard to those who were in Jerusalem, it was impossible that they should quit it; for they who were friends to the Romans were strictly watched by the zealots; nor did the zealots themselves dare to venture out, lest they should fall into the hands of the enemy, who surrounded the town on every side.

The death of Nero, and the revolutions which rapidly succeeded it, occasioned a mighty change in the state of public affairs, and endangered the very existence of the Roman empire. The Jewish war was therefore now esteemed an object of but trifling consideration, and the several factions which divided the Hebrew nation were left for some time at liberty, to

tyrannize over the people, and to persecute each other with relentless fury.

A fresh war now broke forth at Jerusalem. At this time there was a man, born at Gerasa, who was named Simon, who had taken possession of the city. This man was in the prime of his life, less artful and contriving than John of Giscala; but he had the advantage of him in youth, strength, and intrepidity. Now Simon was deemed so dangerous a person, that the high priest Ananus routed him from his government in the toparchy of Acrabetana, and compelled him to take refuge among the Sicarii at Massada. These abandoned people were at first so suspicious of him, that they, for a time, compelled him to remain with the women he had brought with him on the first floor of the fortress, while the rest of the people remained above. But when they came to be better acquainted with him, and found how admirably he was adapted for their purposes, they changed their opinion of him, and deputed him to command the parties they sent out to rifle, and join the other troops in the plunder and depopulation of the district of Massada. In the mean time, Simon endeavoured to inspire them with more ambitious views (for his own thoughts were bent on obtaining the sovereign authority); but this was in vain till he received advice of the death of Ananus. This obstacle to the dignity, after which he aspired, being removed, he repaired to the woods, where he issued proclamations, offering bounties to all free-men, and freedom to all slaves, who would enlist under his banners. Great numbers of abandoned and desperate people were induced to join him on this occasion; and, by the assistance of these miscreants, he assailed and pillaged the villages on the hills, the number of his people daily increasing, till at length he descended into the lower countries, and spread terror through all the cities within the limits of his expedition. His credit for courage and success was such, that many persons of power and rank now came over to his interest, and the people of distinction in general made application to him, and paid him the reverence and respect due to sovereign princes; so that he no longer appeared to be a commander only of slaves and vagabonds. These successes induced him to make several incursions into the toparchy of Acrabetana and the greater Idumea, and at length he fixed his retreat in the town of Nain, a place which he had before walled and fortified. He found in the valley of Pharan a number of caverns admirably adapted to his purpose; and he enlarged others, and converted them into magazines, stores, and granaries, for the reception of such articles as he obtained by plunder. Thus provided with forces and provisions, it seemed to be the prevailing opinion that the principal view of Simon was to make an attack on Jerusalem. In this opinion the zealots coincided; and, thinking that ill consequences might arise from the permitting him thus daily to increase in numbers and

power, they determined to make one vigorous effort to suppress him while it were yet possible to effect it. With this view they advanced in a body to attack him at the head of his forces; but he received them in a manner that equally demonstrated his courage and skill, and routed them with great slaughter.

Simon did not yet think his force equal to the attack of Jerusalem, but determined to begin with an assault on Idumea, towards the borders of which country he immediately marched an army of twenty thousand men. Instantly hereupon, the principal people of the Idumeans assembled an army of almost twenty-five thousand select troops, leaving likewise a sufficient number to protect the country against the inroads of the banditti of Massada. With the forces above mentioned the Idumeans waited for Simon on the borders of their country; and, on his approach, a battle ensued, which continued from the morning till evening, the destruction on each side being so equal, that it was impossible to determine which party had the advantage. Both of them, however, were sufficiently weary of the contest; for Simon withdrew his forces to Nain, and the Idumeans retreated to their respective habitations.

Simon, having received considerable reinforcements to his army, took the field again in a short time, being now stronger than on any former occasion; and, having encamped near the village of Thecne, despatched one of his associates, named Eleazar, with a message to the commander of Herodion, demanding that the castle of that name should be delivered up to him. On his first arrival, he was received by the officers with every testimony of military honour and respect; but when they became acquainted with the nature of his commission, they all drew their swords on him in a moment; whereupon, finding his escape impossible, he threw himself from the precipice of the wall, and was killed on the spot.

The idea of the courage and power of Simon had now struck the Idumeans in so forcible a manner, that they were by no means disposed to engage him, till they were first well acquainted with the strength and situation of his army. On this occasion, one of their commanders, named James, voluntarily undertook the office of a spy or informer: and this he did with a generous appearance of public spirit, but, in fact, with the most treacherous intentions. At this time, the Idumean party was encamped at Olurus; and James being commissioned to act for them, he repaired to Simon. When some conversation had passed between them, he made a solemn compact with Simon to deliver up the whole country to him, on the consideration, that, in return for this obligation, he should be considered as his first minister and favourite, and that he should likewise possess the whole country of Idumea. This infamous bargain was succeeded by Simon's entertaining James in the most splendid manner, and gratifying his ambition by the most

liberal promises. This being done, James returned to those who had sent him on the embassy, to whom he magnified the situation of Simon greatly beyond the truth with regard to his numbers and strength, and the admirable disposition of his forces. This representation had a great influence on the minds of the people in general: and, at length, the officers of the army began to listen to the intelligence, so that they determined it would be a vain attempt to contest the matter further by force of arms, but that they would surrender to Simon lest worse consequences should ensue. At this juncture, James sent repeated messengers, requesting that Simon would advance without loss of time, and take possession of Idumea, which he would pledge himself should submit to him without bloodshed or opposition, if he would not lose the present favourable opportunity. All this was accordingly verified: for Simon advancing with his army, James immediately mounted his horse and fled with the utmost rapidity, being followed by those who adhered to his principles. This proceeding had such influence on the people in general, that they likewise fled in the utmost confusion, each consulting his own safety; so that the whole army was dispersed, and an absolute victory gained without the least effort on the part of the enemy.

Idumea having been thus in a most astonishing manner subjected to Simon without bloodshed, he advanced to the city of Hebron, which he took by surprise, and found in it an abundance of corn and treasure. From Hebron, he proceeded through the whole country of Idumea, being followed by above forty thousand people, exclusive of his regular forces. He destroyed towns and villages, and depopulated the whole country in the course of his progress. A flight of locusts through a wood could not have destroyed more effectually than his army: they rendered the country a perfect desert, destruction marking every part of their course. It was not possible that the necessaries of life should be furnished for such an immense multitude; and the misfortunes of want were still aggravated by the natural violence of Simon's temper, and his peculiar animosity against the people of Idumea. In a word, in a country which had been heretofore fruitful and well cultivated, not a trace was left of its former happy situation, owing to the waste and devastation made by the troops under the command of Simon.

The zealots were exceedingly shocked at the inhumanity of the above-mentioned proceedings: but they were yet afraid to engage in an open war, contenting themselves with such advantages as they could gain by occasional surprises: and, at length, they obtained a prize which they deemed of the utmost importance; for, happening to take prisoner the wife of Simon, with a number of his domestics, they hurried her away to Jerusalem with as many tokens of triumphant joy as if Simon him-

self had been their captive ; for they did not entertain the least doubt but that he would willingly lay down his arms on his wife being restored to him. The effect, however, was contrary to their expectation ; for the violence offered to the wife transported the husband to the most extravagant degree of rage.

This extravagance was evidenced by the future conduct of Simon. He advanced without loss of time to the gates of Jerusalem, where his behaviour was as furious as that of a wild beast which is wounded, and finds himself incapable of reaching the party who has injured him. He sought vengeance on every thing that fell in his way : men, women, and children, were equally the objects of his fury. Those who went from the city, only to pick herbs or gather sticks, were by his order apprehended and whipped to death, the ancient suffering equally with the young ; and it was remarked as something extraordinary, that he did not eat the flesh of those he caused to be destroyed. The hands of many of these inoffending people were cut off as a terror to his enemies, and to prevent other persons adhering to their party. Thus maimed, he sent them into the city, instructing them to say that Simon made an oath in the name of that God who governs the world, that if his wife was not immediately restored to him, he would make an assault on their walls, and treat all the inhabitants, old or young, guilty or innocent, with the same severity that the messengers experienced. The people in general were terrified by these threatenings, which had likewise such an effect on the zealots, that they sent Simon's wife back to him ; on which his anger was so far appeased, that the cruelties which he had hitherto committed began now in some degree to subside.

Vespasian had not yet abandoned his determination to reduce Judea ; he made such progress in this design, that Massada, Machærus, and Herodion, were now the only castles which remained in the hands of the faction : and, after those, the taking of Jerusalem by Vespasian seemed to be the only circumstance necessary to the putting a total end to this horrid and destructive war.

The success of the Romans seemed now to be threatening the destruction of Simon's authority ; but an event soon after took place which raised it much higher than before. John of Gicala having wearied out with his tyranny the Idumeans and others who were not of his party, they revolted against him, killed many of his followers, plundered his palace, and forced him to retire into the temple. In the mean time, the people, entertaining an opinion that he would sally forth in the night and set fire to the city, held a council, in which they resolved upon a remedy that proved in the end abundantly worse than the disease under which they laboured. They determined to open the city gates, and to let in Simon with his troops to oppose those of John and his zealots. Matthias, who was at that

time the high-priest, against whom the zealots had set up an obscure priest for a rival, warmly promoted the design, and was appointed ambassador to Simon. Simon was accordingly admitted into the city, where his chief care was to render his strength as great and his authority as permanent as possible. He looked indifferently upon those who had invited him, and those against whom his assistance had been requested; but made them both feel the same weight of his tyranny, though the former had received him with great honours and universal acclamations as their future deliverer. He made, however, a bold assault upon John; but meeting with a rough reception, was obliged to content himself with keeping the zealots besieged in the temple.

The Jews soon became more divided. Eleazar, the son of another Simon, a person of the sacerdotal order, and of great sense and courage, found means to form a new party, and draw to himself a considerable number of the followers of John. With this new party he seized upon the court of the priests, and confined John in that of the Israelites. Eleazar kept the avenues so well guarded, that none were admitted into that part of the temple but those who came thither to offer sacrifices; and it was by these offerings chiefly that he maintained himself and his men. John now found himself hemmed in by two powerful enemies, Eleazar above, and Simon below. He defended himself against the former by his engines, out of which he threw vast numbers of stones into the court of Eleazar; and when he sallied out against the partizans of Simon, he set all on fire wherever he could reach, destroying vast quantities of corn and other provisions, which would otherwise have enabled them to sustain a very long siege. Thus were these three factions perpetually watching all advantages against each other. Simon had the greatest number of troops, and the best store of arms and provisions; but he was the most disadvantageously situated of the three. To oppose the ten thousand zealots and five thousand Idumeans which were commanded by Simon, John had only six thousand men, for whom he was obliged to provide by making sallies upon Simon. Eleazar had but two thousand four hundred followers; but his situation was much the strongest of the three, and he was constantly supplied with provision by the offerings which were brought into the temple, and which his followers oftentimes abused by luxury and drunkenness.

While Jerusalem was in this distracted state, Vespasian was advanced to the empire, Josephus was set at liberty for having predicted his prosperity, and Titus was sent by his father to terminate the Jewish war. From Alexandria, where he parted with his father, Titus went by land to Nicopolis, where he embarked his forces in long boats, and sailed down the Nile on the banks of the Mendesian Canton, to the city of Thmuis, and landed at Tanis. Hence he proceeded to Heracleopolis, and

thence to Pelusium, where he remained two days to refresh his troops: then he marched across the desert, and encamped near the temple of Jupiter Cassius. On the following day he proceeded to Ostracine, which is so remarkable for its drought, that the inhabitants have no water but what they procure from other places: thence he went to Rinocorura, where he remained some time. Raphia, the first city on the confines of Syria, was his fourth stage, and Gaza his fifth; from which he went to Ascalon, Jamnia, and Joppa; and from Joppa to Cæsarea, in the view of adding some reinforcement to the troops under his command.

At Cæsarea he reviewed his army, and made the necessary regulations for the further prosecution of his designs. He led his forces into the country in the following order: the auxiliaries marched first; they were followed by the pioneers, to whom succeeded the troops appointed to mark out the ground where the camp was to be formed: next came the baggage of the officers attended by a convoy; and then followed Titus, escorted by his guards and other chosen troops, and attended by the ensign bearers: these were succeeded by the tribunes and other officers, with a number of selected men under their command: the next in course was the Roman eagle surrounded by the ensigns of the legions, and preceded by trumpets: then marched the body of the army in rank and file, the men being drawn up six in front, and followed by the domestics with their baggage: the rear was formed by the victuallers, artizans, and other mercenaries, escorted by their guard. Thus, according to the military discipline of the Romans, Titus led his army by the way of Samaria to Gophna, which Vespasian had formerly subdued, and therein established a garrison. On the following morning he proceeded towards a place called by the Jews the Valley of Thorns, situated near thirty furlongs from Jerusalem, and adjacent to the village of Gabath Saul, or the Valley of Saul, where he arrived and encamped his army the same evening.

He had, beside the three legions which had served under his father, the fifth legion, which had been so roughly handled by the Jews in Cestius's time, and now burned with a desire of revenge. Besides these, Agrippa, Soemus, and Antiochus, (the two former of whom accompanied him in person,) and some allied cities, had furnished him with twenty regiments of foot and eight of horse, besides vast multitudes of Arabs, and a choice number of persons of distinction from Italy and other places, who came to signalize themselves under his standards. Titus ordered the fifth legion to take the road of Emmaus, the tenth that of Jericho, the other two legions followed him. It was now the beginning of April, and near the feast of the passover, to which there was a greater resort of the Jews than had ever been known, even from beyond the Euphrates. Titus, having

advanced so near the city, went himself to take a view of its fortifications, accompanied by only six hundred horsemen: he seemed even to flatter himself, that, upon his first appearance, the peaceable part of the Jews would open the gates to him; but, to his great surprise, the factions made so sudden and vigorous a sally against him, that he found himself quite surrounded with enemies in a narrow defile, and cut off from his cavalry. He had therefore now no other way left to escape their fury, but to make a desperate push, and cut his way through them; a purpose which he at length effected without receiving a wound or losing more than two of his men. After this narrow escape, he caused his men to draw nearer to Scopas, within seven stadia of the city, that they might besiege it in form; whilst the factions within were applauding themselves for their late advantage, which they vainly interpreted as a good omen of their future success. His legion which had come by way of Jericho being arrived, he ordered it to encamp on the mount of Olives, which was parted from the town on the east by the brook Cedron; and where they were on a sudden so furiously assaulted, that they were in danger of being cut in pieces, had not Titus arrived for their rescue.

It was now that the three factions, seeing themselves besieged by so powerful an army under so brave a general, began to think of laying aside all private disputes, and uniting to oppose the enemy. This union, however, proved but short-lived; for, on the eve of the passover, when Eleazar had opened the avenues of his court to admit the great concourse who came thither to sacrifice, John found means to introduce some of his men with swords concealed under their cloaks, who immediately drew their weapons, fell upon the party of Eleazar and the rest of the people, filled the court of the priests with blood and dead bodies, and thus impiously took possession of the place. By this cruel and perfidious stratagem, the three factions were reduced to two, Eleazar's men being all either cut off, or, after their flight, returned with their chief, and had submitted themselves to John, who had now no enemy but Simon within the walls. From that time, this last leader renewed his hostilities against John with greater vigour. The whole city became one field of battle, from which they sallied forth against the enemy as occasion required, and then returned to as rancorous hostilities against each other as before. The Romans, in the mean time, were drawing nearer the walls, having levelled, with great labour, all the surrounding space for many furlongs, pulling down the houses and hedges, cutting down the trees, and even cleaving the rocks, a work which, however arduous, they accomplished in four days. We shall here insert a brief description of Jerusalem as given by Josephus.

Three celebrated walls surrounded the city of Jerusalem on every side, except on that part which was deemed inaccessible

on account of the valley beneath ; and, in this place, there was only one wall. This city was built on two hills, the one situated opposite to the other ; and a deep valley laid between them, the whole of which was likewise built on. In regard to the strength of its situation, it originally received the name of the Fortress, or Castle, from king David, the father of Solomon, who erected it ; but the Upper Market was the name by which it was distinguished in more modern times.

The situation of the lower town was on the other hill, which was called by the name of Acra, round about which there was a declivity remarkably steep. Opposite to this there was formerly another hill not so high as the Acra, from which it was separated by an extensive valley ; but, during the power of the Asmonean princes, they caused this valley to be filled up, and, detaching a part of the hill Acra, they united the town with the temple, in consequence of which it commanded and overlooked the adjacent parts.

Tyropæon was the name given to the above-mentioned valley, which divided the upper from the lower town : this valley extended even to the fountain of Siloe, the waters of which were equally distinguished by their great abundance and the excellence of their flavour.

Without the city there were two other towns which were rendered almost inaccessible by the crags and precipices which surrounded them on every side.

The most ancient of the three walls was remarkable for its extraordinary strength, being erected on a hanging rock, and protected by the depth of the valley beneath it. Exclusive of the advantages of its natural situation, it was repeatedly strengthened at an immense expense, and by all the arts of industry, by David, Solomon, and a number of other princes. Its commencement on one side was at the tower named Hippocos ; and it continued to another place named the Galleries, stretching away by the Town-house to the western porch of the temple. On the other side, reckoning from the same spot, it extended by Bethso down to the Essene-gate ; and thence, bending southwards by the fountain of Siloe, at which place it turned eastward towards the pool of Solomon, and was from thence continued to the east porch of the temple by the way of Ophilas.

At the gate called Genatha, which belonged to the former wall, the second wall commenced, and was carried on by the north side of the city to the fort Antonia.

The beginning of the third wall being at the tower Hippocos, it extended northward to that named Psephinos, opposite to the sepulchre of Helena, mother of king Izates, and queen of the Adiabeniens ; and hence it continued by the Royal Caves, from the tower at the corner, towards the place which is denominated the Fuller's monument ; after which it met the old wall in the

valley of Cedron. This was the extent of the third wall, which was built by Agrippa as a protection to that part of the city which he had erected, which, before this wall was built, had been totally undefended. About this period, the city had so far increased in the number of its inhabitants, that it was unable to contain them; in consequence of which, a sort of suburbs were by degrees erected; and the buildings increased to a very great degree on the north side of the temple next the hill.

Opposite to the fort Antonia, there was a fourth mountain; but between this mountain and the fort, ditches of an amazing depth had been cut, so that it was impossible to come at the foundation of the fort so as to undermine it; and, exclusive of this advantage, the sinking of the ditches apparently added to the height of the tower. This fourth mountain received the name of Bezeth or the New Town, being, in fact, nothing more than an addition to the former buildings. No sooner was this place well peopled, than the inhabitants requested that it might be fortified: whereupon Agrippa, the father of king Agrippa, adjusted his plan, and laid the foundation of the wall about it: but afterwards, on more mature deliberation, he thought that Claudius Cæsar might possibly be offended at his undertaking a work of such importance and magnificence; wherefore Agrippa dropped the farther prosecution of his plan after he had laid the foundations: but if he had proceeded to have completed it, the capture of Jerusalem would have been rendered totally impracticable.

Titus now took a survey of the walls, to see where they might be approached with the greatest probability of success. He found that neither horse nor foot could make any penetration by way of the vallies; and he found that it would be equally fruitless to attempt an attack by battery on the other side, owing to the strength of the wall: wherefore, after some deliberation, he concluded that the part of the line towards the sepulchre of John, the high-priest, would be best exposed to an attack, for the following reasons: the first wall was lower in that place than any other, and detached from the second wall; the fortifying of it had been also neglected, the inhabitants of the new city not being yet sufficiently numerous to have attended to it; wherefore, it would not be a difficult enterprise to pass from this place to the third wall, and thence to the upper town; and, through these means, possessing themselves of Antonia, even to the temple.

While Titus was debating these things in his mind, and Josephus was exerting all his oratory to prevail on the Jews to solicit a peace, an arrow was shot from a wall, which wounded Nicanor (an intimate friend of Titus) in the left shoulder. This instance of the ingratitude of these people towards their friends, who would have advised them to peaceable measures, incensed Titus to such a degree, that he instantly resolved to make a

formal attack on the town, and reduce it by force. Hereupon he ordered his soldiers to plunder the suburbs without loss of time, and to use the rubbish and ruins of what they should destroy for platforms and other works. His army he separated into three divisions, assigning to each its proper duty. On the mounts in the midst of the main body, he stationed his archers and slingers, who were provided with engines to throw stones, and other missive annoyances, which answered the double purpose of keeping the enemy engaged on the walls, and of repelling their attacks. No time was lost in felling the trees, and laying the suburbs bare; and the fortifications were made good with the timber thus obtained. In fact, on the part of the Romans, every hand was engaged, nor did the Jews lose their time in idleness.

The inhabitants, who had been heretofore so much exposed to the calamities of robbery and murder, finding the insurgents so earnestly engaged in defending themselves, began to conceive a hope that they should at length be at ease; flattering themselves, that if the Romans should be successful, they would enable them to do themselves justice by revenging their own quarrel. The forces under the command of John opposed the besiegers vigorously; while himself, in fear of Simon, dreaded to quit the temple. In the mean time, Simon, being stationed near the temple, was constantly in action. The shot and engines which he had heretofore taken from Cestius, and out of the fort Antonia, he placed along the wall; but his troops, being unskilled in the use and management of these engines, made very little advantage of them; and this little arose from the knowledge they occasionally acquired from deserters. However, the Jews used their engines to assail the enemy from the ramparts with arrows and stones; and occasionally they sallied forth and fought hand and hand with the Romans, who, on the contrary, defended their agents by javelins and hurdles. Each of the Roman legions was provided with extraordinary machines for repelling an attack of the enemy, particularly the tenth legion, which could throw larger stones, and farther than any other. Each stone weighed a talent, and not only did execution on the spot, but even on the top of the ramparts. They would destroy at a furlong's distance, and a whole file fell before them wherever they came. The Jews had three opportunities of being informed of the approach of these stones: the first by their colour, which, being white, they were seen at a distance; the second by the noise they made in passing through the air; and the third by an intimation that was constantly given by persons that were appointed to watch them: for a number of people being stationed on the towers to observe when the engines were played, whenever they observed this operation, they constantly cried out, "A stone is coming," by which every man had an

opportunity of retreating, and securing himself from the impending danger. This becoming known to the Romans, they coloured the stones, so that they might not be seen in their passage; and, by this device, a number of Jews were frequently killed at a stroke. All this, however, did not deter the Jews from making an opposition to the Romans in the erecting of their fortifications; for they still endeavoured equally, by the exertions of courage and policy, to do every thing within their power to retard their proceedings.

The works of the Romans were no sooner completed, than they took the distance between the mount and wall by a line and plummet; for this could not be effected in any other manner, owing to the shot and darts which were thrown down in abundance. When the place was found to be properly adapted for the battering rams, Titus directed that they might play with the greatest convenience. In obedience to these orders, three batteries began to play at the same time on three different parts of the wall. The noise occasioned by these engines was heard in all parts of the city, and appeared not to be less dreaded even by the faction than it was by the citizens. At length, the insurgents, though divided among themselves, finding that their danger was general, thought it might not be improper to unite in the defence of each other. Their argument was, that while thus disputing among themselves, they were only advancing the interest of the enemy; and that if they could not agree for a continuance, it would at least be proper for the present to make a joint opposition to the Romans. Hereupon Simon despatched a herald to inform those who had inclosed themselves within the temple, that as many as were disposed to quit it and approach to the wall, had full permission so to do. The purport of this embassy did not strike John as a circumstance that could be relied on; but he permitted his people to act as their own inclinations might direct them.

Hereupon the different factions united, and, forgetting their old animosities, marched immediately in a body to the walls, where they had no sooner taken their stations, than they cooperated with their fires and other torches on the Roman engines, plying darts and other weapons, without intermission, on those who had the conducting of them. During the violence of this determined rage, great numbers of the Jews adventurously descended from the walls on the engines, the covers of which they tore off, and attacked the guards who were appointed to their defence. At this juncture, Titus, who was never deficient in aiding his friends at a time of necessity, appointed a party of horse and archers to guard the machines, and find employment for the Jews on the walls, while the engineers should carry on their operations. This attack, however, had, for the present, very little effect: indeed the battering-ram of the fifth legion shook

the corner of a tower, which, being placed higher than the wall, the tower fell to the ground without bringing any of the wall with it.

Some time having passed since the Jews had made any sally, the Romans thought they were either tired or disheartened, and thereupon wandered about carelessly as in a state of security. This inattention on the part of the Romans being noticed by the Jews who were in the town, they rushed violently from a sally-port belonging to the tower Hippocos, set fire to the Roman works, and, during the heat of this action, drove the Romans back to their own camp. An alarm being immediately spread through the whole army, the Romans assembled from all parts to the assistance of their associates; so that the courage of the Jews was unequally matched with the admirable discipline of the Romans. The former, indeed, were for awhile vigorous, making an attack on every combined company they found: but the greatest struggle was near the engines, one party seeking to burn, and the other to preserve them. The outcries of the contending parties rent the air, and many a gallant man fell a sacrifice in the encounter. The Jews behaved with the most determined courage and intrepidity. By this time, the fire had taken hold of the machines; and there is not a doubt but that they would all have been destroyed, with all those who attended on them, but for the critical arrival of a select party of Alexandrian troops, whose behaviour on the occasion cannot be sufficiently applauded, since it contributed in a great degree to the honour of the day. The proceedings of the Jews were impeded by these troops, till the arrival of Titus with a body of cavalry. He killed twelve men with his own hands, and drove the remainder of the party into the city; and, by this enterprise, the engines were saved from destruction.

Nothing had hitherto been found so effectual for the harassing of the Jews as the turrets which the Romans had erected. On these they placed archers and slingers, and planted various sorts of machines; while the Jews could neither carry their platforms to a level with these towers, nor pull them down by reason of their solid construction, nor burn them because they were plated with iron. All, therefore, that remained in the power of the Jews, was to keep at such a distance as not to be wounded by the darts, arrows, and stones of the Romans; for it was fruitless for them to think of opposing the force of the battering-rams, which by degrees effected the purpose for which they were designed. The Romans were possessed of one ram dreadful in its execution, which the Jews distinguished by the name of "Nicon," or "the Conqueror," the first breach having been made thereby.

The Jews had now been at hard duty during the whole night, and were extremely fatigued by fighting and watching. Thus dispirited, they came to too hasty a determination to abandon

the first wall, as they had yet two others to depend on for their security. Having formed this resolution, they immediately retreated to the second wall; on which some of the Romans ascended the breach which had been made by the battering-ram above mentioned, and opened the gates to the whole army. The Romans became masters of the first wall on the seventh day of the month Artemesius, and destroyed a great part of this wall, and also of the northern quarter of the city, which very quarter had heretofore been ravaged by Cestius.

This being done, Titus withdrew to a place known by the name of the Assyrian's Camp, possessing himself of all between that and the valley of Cedron, the distance of which, from the second wall, is something more than a bow-shot. From this place, he came to a resolution of beginning his attack, and immediately commenced his operations. The Jews took their stations in a regular order on the wall, where they made a formidable opposition. John and his associates commanded the troops in the fortress Antonia, and from the sepulchre of Alexander on the north of the temple. From the monument of John, the high-priest, to the gate by which water is conveyed to the tower Hippocos, Simon and his people held the command. A number of resolute sallies were made by the Jews, in which they came to close quarters with the Romans; but the military knowledge of the latter was more than a counterpoise to the desperation of the Jews, who were repulsed with considerable loss: yet on the walls the Jews had the advantage. Skill and good fortune equally favoured the Romans; while the Jews, from a native hardness, and an animation arising from despair, seemed insensible to danger or fatigue. It should be observed, that the Romans were now fighting for glory, and the Jews for life and security, each party equally disdaining to yield. They were continually employing themselves either in violent assaults or desperate sallies, and combats of every kind. Their labours commenced with the day, and they were separated only by the darkness of the night: and even during the night, both parties were kept watching to protect their walls, and the other their camp: they continued all night under arms, and were ready for battle by break of day. On this occasion, the Jews despised danger and death so much, that they seemed emulous who should brave them most undauntedly, as the best recommendation to their superiors. They entertained so great a fear of, and veneration for, Simon, that they would have sacrificed their lives at his feet, on the slightest intimation that such a sacrifice would be agreeable to him.

The tower on the north side of the city was the object against which the battering-ram was now directed. They who defended this tower were assailed by Titus with such repeated flights of arrows, that every man of them abandoned his post, except a crafty Jew, of the name of Castor, and ten of his associates,

who concealed themselves behind the battlements. These having remained quiet for a considerable time, at length felt a shock, by the force of which the tower appeared to be shaken to its foundations. On this alarm, they quitted their present station; when Castor, assuming the language, manner, and behaviour of a supplicant, entreated that Titus would pardon all that was past, and grant him quarter. Titus, willing to believe that the Jews were now tired of the war, directed that his archers should cease their operations, and that the battery should play no longer; at the same time informing Castor, that if he had any proposals to make, he was willing to attend to what he had to say. To this Castor said, that it was his utmost ambition to commence a treaty; and Titus replied, "I grant it with all my heart; and if all your companions coincide with you in sentiment, I am freely disposed to extend my pardon to you." This offer being made, five out of the ten who associated with Castor pretended to join with him in opinion, while the other five exclaimed that they would never submit to live slaves, while it was in their power to die freemen. A stop was put to all hostilities while this dispute was in agitation. In the mean time, Castor sent privately to Simon, desiring that he would make the best advantage of the present opportunity, and submit to his management the best method of amusing the Roman general, under pretence of recommending terms of peace to his associates. In a word, Castor acted his part with so much artifice, that swords were drawn, mutual blows passed, and men appeared to be killed; but the whole device was founded in falsehood and dissimulation.

Titus and his people were astonished at the stubborn obstinacy and persevering resolution of the Jews; and, at the same time, entertained a generous compassion for their distress; but having the disadvantage of the ground, they could not be proper judges of what was done above them. At this juncture, Castor received a wound in his nose from an arrow; but immediately drawing it out, he showed it to Titus, seeming thereby to demand justice. Titus was so highly enraged at this injury, he turned to Josephus, who stood near him, desiring that he would go immediately, in his name, to Castor, and give him all possible assurances of friendship and fair treatment. Josephus, however, not only desired to be excused from executing this commission, but likewise dissuaded his friends who would have undertaken it, assuring them, that this apparent submission was founded in the deepest treachery. However, notwithstanding what was said, Æneas, one who had deserted to the Romans, seemed willing to undertake this expedition, to which he was the rather encouraged, by Castor's directing him to bring something in which to put a sum of money that he intended to compliment him with. Thus encouraged by the hope of advantage, Æneas advanced to accept the present, when Castor let fall a large stone from the wall, and Æneas narrowly escaped being

crushed by it, while it wounded the man who stood next to him.

From this circumstance, Titus was aware of the ill consequences that might arise from benevolence ill-timed; and was convinced that determined rigour ought to be opposed to plausible pretensions and fair promises. He thereupon began to play his batteries with greater violence than heretofore, in order to revenge himself for the contumacious affront that had been offered him by Castor and his associates. When the batteries had played some time, Castor and his people found that the town shook under them, and appeared to be on the point of falling; on which they set it on fire, and, running through the flames, escaped into a vault. The Romans imagined that, by this action, they had devoted themselves to certain destruction, and were generous enough to extol their courage and magnanimity to the skies.

Titus took possession of this part of the wall at the end of five days from the time that he had become master of the first. As the passage to the second wall was now opened, he had made the Jews fly before him; and having selected a hundred of his best troops, he entered the city at that quarter inhabited by the salesmen, clothiers, and brasiers, and passed up the narrow cross streets to the wall. Titus, however, either from negligence or compassion, omitted to break down the wall, and thus, as we shall soon hear, lost the advantage of the victory.

No sooner had Titus entered the town, than he issued out his orders that not a single house should be burnt, nor even one prisoner put to the sword. He was so indulgent likewise even to those of the faction, that he offered to permit them to end their own disputes among themselves, on the single condition that they should not oppress the inhabitants. To these last, likewise, he promised that he would support them in all their legal possessions, and that what had been taken from them by violence should be restored.

These terms were highly agreeable to the majority of the people, of whom some wished that the city might be spared for their own sakes, and others, that the temple might be spared for the sake of the city. However, the abandoned part of the faction ascribed all the generous benevolence and humanity of Titus to fear; and they argued in this manner, that Titus would never have offered such favourable terms, if he had not himself despaired of accomplishing the work he had undertaken; and the faction now threatened instant death to any person who should propose a peace, or a treaty of reconciliation.

No sooner had the Romans entered the city, than the Jews did all in their power to obstruct their proceedings: they blocked up the narrow passages, shot at them from the houses, making frequent sallies from the walls, often compelled the guards to abandon the towers, and seek refuge in the camp. The soldiers within the city were in the utmost confusion; and those

without were agitated in the highest degree, on account of the apprehended fate of their companions. Several smart encounters ensued between the opposing parties; but the Jews being more numerous than the Romans, and likewise better acquainted with by-ways and secret passes, they obtained repeated advantages: the breaches being likewise too narrow for any number to march out abreast, the Romans would have been pressed to such a degree, that scarcely a man of them would have escaped, if Titus had not arrived in the critical conjuncture; and this gallant officer placed a band of archers at the end of every street, was himself present in every place of the greatest danger, and, being seconded by Domitius Sabinus, (a gallant man, who performed singular feats of courage on the occasion,) the Jews were so annoyed by darts and lances, that the Romans had an opportunity of bringing off their men. Thus were the Romans driven from the second wall after they had gained possession of it.

This piece of success gave such spirits to the most determined of the inhabitants, that they flattered themselves that the Romans would not again venture to attack them; or that if they did, it would be totally impossible to subdue them: whereas, if these desperate men had not laboured under an actual infatuation, they must have reflected, that the Romans, over whom they had at present obtained an advantage, were not to be compared with the immense numbers that were yet to be encountered. But, exclusive of this consideration, a severe famine now raged in the city, the effects of which were daily felt in a more sensible manner. Hitherto, the ruin of the public had been the support of the insurgents, and they had almost literally drunk the blood of the citizens. In fact, the most worthy of the inhabitants were reduced to great distress, and many of them fell a sacrifice to absolute famine. The faction, however, rather pleased themselves in the loss of these people; those only who wished to continue the war with the Romans being objects of their regard. The rest they considered only as useless in themselves, and burthensome to the public.

The Romans having once gotten possession of the wall, and then lost it, they made another attempt to recover it. They made repeated, and almost constant assaults, for the space of three successive days, during which period they were repulsed with as much valour as they showed in the attack; but Titus made so furious a charge on the fourth day, that his opponents were no longer able to resist his force; whereupon he took possession of the wall, the northern part of which he destroyed, and in all the towers to the southward he placed garrisons without loss of time.

The storming of the third wall was now an object that engaged the attention of Titus; but as he did not deem it a work that would be attended with much difficulty, he first considered

how, by more lenient methods, he might bring the people to consider their true interest ; hoping that they might be induced to listen to him, through the dread of his power and the fear of famine ; for, by this time, their plunder and provisions were nearly consumed ; while, on the contrary, the forces under Titus were supplied with every thing they could desire for their ease and accommodation. This being the case, Titus issued orders that, on the day of a general muster, his troops should be drawn up, and paid within view of the enemy. On this occasion the infantry advanced with drawn swords, and the led horses were adorned in so splendid a manner, that gold and silver seemed to prevail over all the field. This sight was equally agreeable to the Romans, as disgusting to the Jews, who had assembled in immense numbers on the old wall on the north side of the city ; the houses were likewise crowded, and every part of the city was filled with people gazing at this splendid spectacle. In fact, the courage of the bravest among the Jews was repressed by the appearance ; and, in all probability, they would have now submitted to the Romans, had it not been for a consciousness that they had offered provocation of such a nature as not to be readily pardoned ; and that if they abandoned the point in dispute, they must be devoted to certain destruction ; wherefore, rather than submit to be sacrificed at present, they chose rather to fall in the bed of honour by the chance of war. But, in fact, Providence had so determined, that the faction was to prove the ruin of the city, and the innocent were to be involved in the consequences of the crimes of the guilty.

After four days spent without any act of hostility, in procuring provisions for the camp, Titus, on the fifth day, separated his army into two divisions ; and, finding that the Jews were not in the least disposed to peace, he caused works to be thrown up against the forts of Antonia, near the monument of John, in the hope, that from that quarter he might get possession of the upper town, and then from Antonia become possessed of the temple ; for it was impossible to keep possession of the city unless the fort was taken. He made separate attacks against each of these two places ; and at every rising ground he placed a legion of soldiers to defend and protect the engineers. Those who carried on their works near the monument were violently assaulted by the Jews, and the people under the command of Simon ; while those who besieged the fort Antonia, were still more vigorously opposed by the party of John, and the zealots in his direction ; for these had the advantage of the higher ground, and were also supplied with machines, of the use of which they were now perfectly acquainted, in consequence of daily practice. The zealots had likewise possession of forty slings for stones, and three hundred cross-bows, by which the Romans were much annoyed, and a check was given to their proceedings.

Though Titus had hitherto entertained no doubt but that he should make a complete conquest of the city ; yet while, on the one hand, he continued to urge the siege, he, on the contrary, joined to the power of force every effort of persuasion and advice, in order to induce the Jews to a compliance with the terms of reason. Reflecting that an appeal to the passions had sometimes a better effect than that to the law of arms, he, in the first place, personally addressed the Jews, requesting that they would have so much regard to their interest as to surrender a place of which he could make himself master at any time. This done, he committed the rest to Josephus ; thinking that when they were addressed by their own countryman, and in a language familiar to them, success would probably be the consequence of the humanity which inspired him to undertake so benevolent an office. Agreeable to the directions given by Titus, Josephus first walked through several parts of the city, and then stopping on an elevated spot within the hearing of the enemy, though not within reach of their shot, he made a long and eloquent speech, in which he urged every argument he could think of in order to induce them to surrender.

Josephus wept abundantly at the recital of his own speech ; but it appeared to make no impression on the opposing faction, who did not think that they could, with safety, agree to the terms offered by the Romans, even if they had been disposed so to have done. But of the common people, many were so impressed with that most effectual means of consulting their safety by flight ; and, for this purpose, they sold all their most valuable effects, though at prices greatly inferior to their real worth ; and swallowed the gold they received as the purchase money, lest they should be stripped of it in their journey. Thus provided, they repaired to the Romans, where they were supplied with what they wanted. In the interim, Titus permitted the deserters to enjoy their full liberty, which was an encouragement to others to desert, as they avoided the misfortunes of those in the city, without being subjected to the enemy. However, Simon and John, and their adherents, placed guards at all the outlets, and were not less assiduous to keep the citizens from departing, than the Romans from making an entrance. The least cause of suspicion was sufficient to deprive a man of his life, or even a pretence on which to found a suspicion had the same effect. Persons in affluent circumstances were certain to be sufferers : those who had any thing to lose were assuredly suspected, and that suspicion ended in their final destruction.

The factions now became more tumultuous, and the famine daily increased. When corn was no longer offered to sale, they broke open houses in search of it ; and if none was discovered, the owners were tortured to make them declare where their stores were deposited ; and if it was discovered, they were se-

verely punished for concealing it. The very appearance of the wretched was constructed into the effect of guilt. If they seemed to be in health, it was inferred that they had a secret supply of provisions. Those who were in a low habit of body were immediately killed, though it appeared to be a work of supererogation to destroy those who were already perishing for want of the common necessities of life. At length, such was the distress, that people in tolerable circumstances disposed of their whole effects for a bushel of wheat, and the poorer people for an equal quantity of barley. The purchase being made, they secluded themselves from all observation, when some of them began to eat the corn before it was ground, while others waited till it was baked, according to the different degrees of their hunger. The ceremony of setting out a table was totally dispensed with, and happy was he who could snatch a morsel of meat, half-raw, half-roasted, from the fire. The calamity above mentioned afforded a sight truly melancholy. The most powerful fared the best while the weaker had only to lament their misfortunes.

Starving is certainly the most deplorable kind of death, as it deprives people of the common emotions of humanity. The wife seized the meat from the mouth of the husband; the child from that of the parent; and even the mother from that of the infant which lay perishing in her arms, thus depriving it of sustenance in the moment of the utmost necessity; yet these horrid robberies were not so privately committed, but that others robbed them of what they had pilfered from their friends. Whenever the inhabitants saw a house shut up, they concluded that the people in it had something to eat; wherefore, breaking it open, they seized the meat even from the mouths of the persons who were swallowing it. Neither age nor sex was spared; the old men, who endeavoured to defend the provision they possessed, were violently beaten, while the women, who sought to conceal any thing, were dragged by their hair. Even children at the breast escaped not the general fury; so that the same treatment attended infancy and old age.

Among the free-booters who were continually in search of prey, nothing was deemed a more atrocious offence than for the unhappy man who was pursued to outrun him that followed, and eat his bread before he was robbed of it. No kind of cruelty was omitted in the search for food; persons were tormented in the most exquisite manner, and in those parts the most sensible of pain. Sharp sticks were thrust up their bodies, and they were otherwise so severely treated, that the recital would give horror; and all this, perhaps, in order to discover a handful of flour, or a loaf of bread, which had been concealed. These crimes, however, were greatly aggravated by the consideration that those who executed the tyranny had not the plea of unavoidable necessity to urge in their behalf. In fact, it was

the mere effect of barbarity, when they were provided with six days' provision in advance. Some unhappy creatures, who had evaded the vigilance of the guards, and slipped out of the town by night, in order to gather sallad and herbs, were unfortunate enough to fall into their hands at a time when they thought themselves least in danger; and having been stripped of all they had procured at the hazard of their lives, were happy to receive a small part of their own property, in consequence of their earnest prayers and entreaties.

Such was the treatment that the common people received from soldiers: but persons of a superior degree were carried before the usurpers, who directed that some of them should be put to death on a charge of treason, false witnesses being continually produced to swear that they had an intention of betraying the city to the Romans: and one of the constant charges against them was, that they were disposed to have combined with the enemy. Those who had been plundered by Simon were carried to John, and the prisoners brought to John were transmitted to Simon, as if they had mutually agreed to triumph in the distresses of their fellow-creatures. In a word, though Simon and John contested for the superiority, they appeared to entertain similar sentiments with respect to the practice and the arts of tyranny. They were partners in robbery: and he was accounted the greatest villain who cheated his accomplice of that part of the booty which each deemed to be equally his property.

Titus plied his operations with incessant assiduity, in the course of which he lost many men by shots from the walls. The Jews had a practice of quitting the city during the night in search of the necessaries of life; and, in these excursions, they were often attended by soldiers, who could not obtain within the city sufficient to satisfy the demands of nature. The people who thus went out were chiefly very poor; but they were afraid to desert absolutely, lest their wives and children, whom they left behind, should be murdered; nor did they dare to take their families with them, from the apprehension of discovery.

These circumstances being well known to Titus, he sent a party of his cavalry to wait for the Jews in the valleys; and these latter, being reduced to despair through hunger, fell into the snare laid by the enemy. When they found their unfortunate situation, they were compelled to fight, in the dread of a punishment even worse than death in battle: and, in fact, it was now too late for them to think of demanding quarter. In a word, the Jews were subdued; and having first been put to a variety of tortures, were crucified in sight of their brethren who were besieged. The exertion of this rigour was disagreeable to Titus; but he could not spare men enough from their military duty to attend them as prisoners, nor did he think it prudent to give liberty to such a number. Exclusive of these considera-

tions, he hoped that the terrible example might tend to influence those within the city to avoid a similar fate. The unhappy persons above mentioned were all crucified, but in a variety of forms, expressive of the hatred, contempt, or rage of the enemy; but the number of miserable wretches was so great, that crosses were wanted, and even room for executing them. Yet this horrid spectacle was so far from having its proper influence on the faction, that it wrought an effect directly contrary to what was intended; for the friends and relations of the fugitives, and all those who seemed inclined to listen to terms of accommodation, were compelled to come down to the walls, and observe what was to be expected by those who deserted to the Romans; and, on this occasion, it was insisted that the sufferers were not prisoners of war, but deserters who had made their submission and implored mercy. By this contrivance many were prevented from going off till the fact came to be known, though there were a number who escaped to the enemy, in the mere dread of being starved, which they considered as a more deplorable death than that of crucifixion.

Hereupon Titus gave orders that several of the prisoners should have their hands cut off, and in this condition he sent them to John and Simon, so that it was not possible they should be mistaken for deserters; and by these people he sent his advice, that an end might be put to the war, before he should be absolutely compelled to destroy the city, intimating that the Jews, on a proper submission, had yet an opportunity of preserving their lives, their country, and their temple. In the mean time, however, Titus did not neglect to forward his works, encouraging those who laboured on them to be indefatigable, having determined that his preparations should be followed by convincing proofs, that what was not to be effected by the laws of reason should yield to those of force.

The Romans began their platform on the twelfth day of the month Artemisius; and after seventeen days' incessant labour, completed them on the twenty-ninth. There were four of these platforms, and they were works of a very capital nature. One of them, which was near the fortress of Antonia, was constructed by the fifth legion opposite the middle of the Struthian Pool; the twelfth legion threw up another at the distance of twenty cubits from the former: opposite to the pool named Amygdalon, another work was thrown up by the tenth legion, which was more numerous than the other legions: and a fourth mount was erected by the fifteenth legion, at a small distance from the monument erected to the memory of John the high-priest.

As soon as the works above mentioned were completed, John gave directions for digging a mine under that facing Antonia, and that a number of props should support the earth from falling. This being done, the wood-work was covered with a bituminous inflammable matter; after which, John ordered that the

pillars should be fired; and the props being destroyed, the whole fortification fell to the ground with a hideous crash. At first, no fire appeared, only dust and smoke, till at length the flames burst forth to view. The Romans were astonished at the sight, and perfectly distracted to think that their views were thus defeated on the moment that they thought themselves certain of success. As their ramparts were destroyed, they conceived it would be fruitless to attempt to quench the fire.

Two days after this circumstance, Simon and his associates made an attempt on the other two mounts, where the Romans had by this time planted their battering-rams, and began their operations. Jephthæus, a Galilean of the city of Gasis; Megassar, a domestic of queen Mariamne; and Agiras (otherwise the lame) the son of Nabatæus of Adiabene, greatly distinguished themselves on this occasion. They ran with torches in their hands, and, forcing their way through the troops of the enemy with as much unconcern as if there had been no opposition, they set fire to the works; and though they were opposed by darts and arrows, they resolutely persevered in their intention till the whole erection was in a flame. These three men were esteemed among the bravest that took part in the war.

When the flames began to ascend, the Romans sent a body of troops to the relief of their brother-soldiers; but, in the mean time, the Jews violently assailed them with shot from the walls, and in total disregard of their own safety, made a vigorous attack on those who were endeavouring to stop the progress of the fire. The Romans used every effort in their power to save the battering-rams, the covers of which were by this time consumed; while the Jews advanced even into the flames to prevent them; nor would they let go their hold, though the iron work was then of a burning heat. There was now no possibility of preventing the fire passing to the ramparts; and when the Romans found that they were encompassed with flames, and that no hope remained of saving their works from destruction, they retreated to their camp.

Such numbers from without the city now came in as reinforcements to the Jews, that this additional aid gave them such fresh spirits and courage, that, flushed with the hope of conquest, they advanced even to the camp, and made an attack on the guards. The office of the Roman guards, according to the strictness of their discipline, was to perform their duty alternately, relieving each other; and the man who quitted his station, under any pretence whatever, was certain of suffering death without mercy. Thus assured, from the very nature of their station, that they must suffer the infamous death of deserters if they did not fall like men of honour, they made so resolute an opposition, that some of those who had fled thought themselves under a necessity of returning; when they made such resistance, by means of their engines, that the excursions of the Jews

from the city were stopped. These Jews had sallied forth with the utmost fury, unprovided even with weapons for their defence, attacking all they met with without distinction, rashly rushing among their enemies, and throwing themselves on the points of their pikes. In a word, the advantages of the Jews at any time gained over the Romans were less acquired by real courage than rash precipitancy ; while the Romans, little afraid of any essential injury the Jews could do them, often yielded to the violent impetuosity of their opponents.

When Titus returned from Antonia, where he had been to fix on a proper spot for carrying on the siege, he severely reprimanded his troops for permitting themselves to be attacked in their own works, when they had possessed themselves of those of the enemy, and yielding to be besieged by those who could be considered as no other than prisoners. After this, Titus made a selection of some of his best troops, and, surrounding the Jews, charged them in the flank ; while they, on the other hand, sustained the charge with astonishing resolution. When the parties met, there was such a horrid noise, and the dust flew in such clouds, that it was impossible to see or hear any thing distinctly, nor could friends be distinguished from foes. This obstinate resistance of the Jews arose more from despair than from any great idea they had of their own power. On the contrary, the Romans were so enraged, partly from a sense of military honour, and partly from a concern for the safety of their general, who was in imminent danger, that if the Jews had not retreated to the city in the very moment that they did, every one of them would have been utterly destroyed. Still, however, the Romans were hurt at the reflection of having lost their bulwarks, and that what they had been so long in erecting should be demolished almost in an hour. In consequence of this disappointment, the Romans began to despair of accomplishing their design.

During this situation of affairs, Titus issued orders that his principal officers should be summoned to a council to advise with him how to act in the emergency. Some of the most violent among them recommended an immediate attack with the whole army, and coming to a general battle, alleging that nothing had yet been done but by way of skirmish ; but if once a vigorous assault was made, the darts and arrows alone would insure victory over the Jews. Those of more reflection gave their voices for the re-edification of the ramparts : while a third party were totally against having any fortifications, but advised that care might be taken that no provisions should be carried into the city ; trusting that famine would effectually do the business, and that victory might be obtained without a blow being struck ; alleging, that persons driven to despair would hold their resolution even to death.

Though Titus did not think it perfectly honourable to lie

inactive at the head of so large an army, yet he was not disposed to attack a people who sought their own destruction with such determined resolution. The want of materials rendered it impracticable that he should erect new ramparts; and with regard to the preventing provisions being carried into the city, he thought it would be equally impossible, on account of the extent of the place and the number of avenues. He considered, that if the common roads were to be all blocked up, yet the Jews, who were acquainted with all the secret passes in the neighbourhood, would, when driven to absolute necessity, find out some secret places of conveyance. He reflected, that if the Jews should, by stealth, convey any relief into the city, it would tend only to protract the siege, and the delay thereby occasioned would lessen the honour of the victory.

Titus directed his officers immediately to begin the erection of the wall, and let the whole army take a share in the business, assigning to each party its proper station. These orders were no sooner issued, than every soldier was animated with a wish to exceed his fellows in this work. The ground was measured out, the legions were divided, and every man was emulous who should most effectually distinguish himself. The common soldiers copied the example of the serjeants, the serjeants that of the captains, the captains that of the tribunes, and the tribunes that of their superior officers; the whole being under the direction of Titus, whose zeal for the despatch of the business was such, that he was continually taking his rounds to superintend the whole proceeding.

This wall commenced at a place named the Camp of the Assyrians, where Titus himself held his head-quarters. Hence it was continued to the lower Cænopolis, carried forward by the way of Cedron to mount Olivet, which was inclosed to the south as far as the rock Peristereon, and this inclosure comprehended an adjacent hill which commands the Vale of Siloah. From this place, it inclined somewhat to the west, and was carried on to the Valley of the Fountain. Its next direction was to the sepulchre of Ananus, the high-priest: after this, it inclosed the mountain on which Pompey had heretofore encamped. It then turned to the north, and was extended to a village named Fribinthonicus. It included the sepulchre of Herod on the east side; and soon afterwards was joined to that part of the wall where the building originally commenced.

Nine and thirty furlongs was the whole extent of this wall, and thirteen forts were erected on the outside of it, ten furlongs being the compass of each fort. It is somewhat extraordinary, but no less so than true, that this amazing work was completed in three days, though an equal number of months might have been supposed a reasonable time for it. As soon as it was finished, garrisons were placed in all the forts, who did duty under arms every night. On each night, likewise, Titus went the first

round in person ; Tiberius Alexander, the second ; and the officers who commanded the legions, the third. Some persons were constantly on guard in the forts during the whole night : but some of the soldiers were allowed to rest alternately with others who were appointed to watch.

The above-mentioned inclosure of the Jews within the town reduced them to the last degree of despair ; for by this time the famine had increased to such a height, that whole families fell a sacrifice to its rage. The dead bodies of women and children were seen in every house : the old men were found dead in all the narrow lanes of the city ; while the younger men, who were yet able to walk, appeared like ghosts parading the streets. It became impossible to commit the bodies of the dead to the ground. Many of the living were unable to perform this charitable office ; while others were unwilling to take it, partly discouraged by the numbers of the deceased, and partly by the reflection that themselves could not survive any considerable time. Numbers of them expired even while they were burying their fellow-citizens ; and some, prompted by despair, sought their own graves, and interred themselves, that they might be certain of a place of repose. Yet miserably distressful as the present situation of these wretches was, not a single complaint or lamentation was heard ; for the pangs of excessive hunger absorbed every other passion. They who last expired beheld those who had gone before them with unweeping eyes, and looks marked with the near approach of death. The most profound silence reigned through every part of the city ; and, during the course of the night, heaps of dead bodies were frequently piled on each other. Yet a more melancholy part of the story (if more melancholy can be) still remains untold. This arose from the brutal insolence of a number of abandoned thieves, who broke into the houses, that at this time appeared like charnel-houses, and having stripped the bodies of the dead, they derided their situation : exclusive of which, they ran their swords into the bodies of persons who lay half expiring. When any despairing wretch called for some friendly hand to despatch him by a sword, that he might no longer endure the miseries of famine, this earnest request was constantly refused with the most unfeeling barbarity. When any of the unfortunate reached the moment of death, they turned their faces to the temple, and thus closed their eyes ; lamenting, at the same time, that the vile incendiaries who had profaned the holy place should be yet left among the living. When the offensive smells, arising from the corruption of the dead bodies, became insupportable, an order was given that all of them should be buried at the public expense : the abandoned incendiaries threw them from the walls into the vallies ; a sight that occasioned so much horror to Titus, that, while he was going his rounds, and found the ditches infected with dead bodies, and pestilential vapours arising from

them, he extended his hands towards heaven, and made a solemn appeal to God that these misfortunes arose not from any orders that he had given.

The insurgents were now so pent up within the walls, that they found it impossible for any of them to quit the place. In the mean time, they endured all the pangs of famine, aggravated by the tortures of despair; while, on the contrary, the Romans lived at their ease, and passed their time very agreeably, being amply supplied with the necessaries of life from Syria and the adjacent provinces. Encouraged by their better fortune, many of the Romans advanced to the walls, and made an ostentatious display of their provisions, with a view to reflect on the necessities of those who were in circumstances of distress. All this appeared to have no effect on the unfeeling minds of the seditious multitude: whereupon Titus, in mere compassion to the residue of an unhappy people, determined immediately on the erection of new works, and resolved that no time should be lost in their completion. One considerable difficulty indeed now occurred, which was the providing the proper materials for carrying these works into execution; for all the wood in the neighbourhood of the city had been cut down for the erection of the former works: wherefore, they were under a necessity of fetching all the timber for this second supply from a place ninety furlongs off; and herewith four ramparts of greater magnitude than the former were erected at the fortress Antonia. Titus carried on this business with great assiduity, and the besieged being now at his mercy, he plainly hinted to them that he knew their situation. Still, however, they showed no concern for what had happened: they seemed to have no regard for themselves or each other. Those who were decaying with sickness they confined in prisons, and tore the dead in pieces as dogs would have done.

The ungrateful return which Matthias received from Simon, for procuring him to be admitted into the city, was, that he first caused him to be tortured, and then put to death. The story of the event is as follows: Matthias was the son of a priest named Boethus, whom the people held in as high esteem as any man of his function. The zealots having treated the Jews with very unwarrantable severity, and John having joined the former, Matthias recommended that Simon might be called in to their assistance, but took no previous precaution, nor made any condition with regard to his conduct. Such was the ingratitude of Simon, that as soon as he had become master of the city, he treated Matthias as one of his worst enemies, and the advice the latter had given for opening the ports was attributed to mere thoughtlessness and simplicity. On this ridiculous pretence he was brought to a trial, and charged with holding a correspondence with the Romans; and, without any kind of proof, sentence of death was passed on Matthias and three of his sons, but

without permitting them to urge a single argument in their defence; but a fourth son had made his escape to the Romans. The venerable old man made it his earnest request, and the only favour he asked in return for his admitting Simon into the town, that he himself might first suffer; but even this poor favour was denied by Simon, who gave orders that Matthias should be executed the last, with the cruel resolution of prolonging the term of his sufferings. The issue of this horrid affair was, that the good old Matthias was put to death on the bodies of his sons, and within view of the Romans, agreeable to an order which Simon gave to Ananus, the son of Barnadus; which Ananus was distinguished from all the dependants of Simon by the extreme cruelty of his disposition. Simon, however, was not contented with the simple execution of this barbarous sentence: but in the moment that Ananus was preparing to give the fatal stroke, he said to Matthias, with an air of the most insolent derision, 'You had intended to have deserted to the Romans, let them now afford you assistance if it be in their power.' When the execution was over, the barbarity was carried still farther; for Simon gave express orders that the bodies should be denied the rites of sepulture.

About the same time, several other distinguished personages were put to death, the father of Josephus imprisoned, and himself wounded by a stone. At this juncture, a number of the inhabitants went off to the Romans. Some of them deserted them under pretence of pursuing the enemy with stones; while others made their escape by leaping over the walls. But while they sought to avoid the distresses which prevailed within the city, they met with greater calamities without; for they contracted surfeits in the camp still more hastily destructive than the famine from which they had fled: for after long fasting, and being infected with a dropsical complaint, they durst not venture to eat freely for fear of bursting. But the most melancholy part of the history remains yet to be recounted.

Among the Syrians, a fugitive Jew was discovered while he was searching for gold, which he had swallowed, and which had passed through his body. At the period above mentioned, there was a very great scarcity of gold in the town, and twelve attics were as valuable as twenty-five had been in former times; and the faction had searched all the people in the strictest manner. On the above-mentioned discovery, it was immediately reported through the camp that the Jews who had deserted had swallowed all the gold. Hereupon the Arabians and Syrians seized on the deserters, and cut open the bodies of two thousand of them in one night. This Josephus deems to have been the most inhuman butchery that ever was perpetrated on the Jews.

The horrid inhumanity of this action gave so much offence to Titus, that he would undoubtedly have ordered his cavalry to destroy every one of the offenders with darts, if their number

had not been more considerable than that of those they had murdered: but as this was the case, he summoned together his officers, as well the Romans as the auxiliaries; and finding that some of his own people had been concerned in this inhuman butchery, he delivered his sentiments on the occasion in the following manner: In the first place, addressing himself to the Romans, he said, 'I am astonished that any soldier of mine should be guilty of an action so unmanly, in order to possess himself of so uncertain an advantage, without blushing at the meanness to which he had been induced by his avarice.' Then, turning to his auxiliaries, he exclaimed, 'Do you think it reasonable that the insolence offered, and the inhumanities perpetrated by the Syrians and Arabians in a foreign war, in which they act without control, ought to be imputed to the Romans? and that the crimes of one party ought to be laid to the charge of the other?'

Titus, so far from excusing his own people, was transported to the highest degree of rage at their conduct, and threatened immediate death to any man who should be guilty of similar acts of barbarity for the future. At the same time, he gave orders to his legions to make strict search after every person who should be suspected, and declared that he himself would sit in judgment on his trial. The love of money, however, will combat every danger. The cruel are covetous by nature, and avarice is the most insatiable of all our appetites and inclinations. In some cases, it may happen that a reasonable and upright conduct may be the consequence of fear; but when people are lost to all sense of moral honesty, their destruction may arise from the very efforts made to save them. What Titus prohibited publicly with such severity, was repeatedly practised in secret on the deserters from the Jews. Their mode only of proceeding was varied: for when any of the deserters were taken, the custom of the murderers was first to be assured that they were not within view of any of the Romans, and then to rip up the bodies of the Jews in search of treasure, though they were seldom successful in the finding money sought after by these infamous means. However, the shocking practice had such an effect on the Jews, that they now no longer deserted to the Romans, being apprehensive of the fatal consequences that would ensue.

John having obtained all he could by plunder, then proceeded to sacrilege, seizing and appropriating to his own use several cups, dishes, tables, and other necessary vessels appropriated to divine service, which had been presented as gifts, or offered as oblations, not excepting even the pieces dedicated to the honour of the temple by Augustus and the empress. The Roman emperors had ever entertained a great esteem and veneration for the temple, though at this time it was profaned by a Jew, who stripped it of the presents bestowed on it by

strangers, and encouraged his companions to make free with every thing that was sacred, saying, 'It was but reasonable that those should live by the temple who had fought for it.' In pursuance of these sentiments, he made no scruple of distributing among his people the holy wine and oil, which had been reserved for sacrifices in the interior part of the temple: and as John was free of his distributions, the people were equally free of receiving them, drinking and anointing without ceremony.

The Romans were put to great difficulty in procuring the necessary materials for completing their works; but they cut down all the woods within the circuit of ninety furlongs of the city, and finished their platforms in the space of twenty-one days. A most dismal alteration took place in this delightful part of Judea, which abounded in curious gardens, plantations, and houses of pleasure: not a building or a tree was now to be seen, but the marks of devastation and ruin occupied the whole prospect. So great was the difference between the present and the former state of Jerusalem, that even strangers could not refrain from tears on the comparison. So terrible was the devastation and havoc of the war, that people in the heart of the city might reasonably have inquired where Jerusalem, that place so peculiarly favoured by heaven, was situated.

The Romans having raised the mounts, the Jews became greatly alarmed; for matters were now arrived to such an extremity, that they were conscious they must inevitably surrender the city if their endeavours to destroy the Roman works proved ineffectual: on the other hand, the Romans were exceedingly apprehensive lest the attempts of their adversaries should prevail; for the wood of the adjacent parts of the country being wholly exhausted, and the men greatly harassed by incessant and hard duty, if the mounts were destroyed, all hopes of success must end, since there appeared no possibility of constructing other works.

Notwithstanding the enmity subsisting between the parties, the Romans were more concerned on account of the miseries of the Jews than they were themselves. In despite of all the difficulties and dangers they had undergone, and the prospect of what they had still to encounter, the Jews preserved their spirits and resolution. The disadvantage they had sustained in several combats, the inefficacy of their engines against a wall of such surprising strength, and the disappointment of divers stratagems by the superior policy of the enemy, proved highly discouraging to the Romans. They reflected that they had to contend with people who, notwithstanding the disadvantages of intestine divisions, the miseries of famine, and the horrors of a foreign war, suffered no abatement of fortitude and courage; but, on the contrary, appeared to derive addi-

tional vigour from the difficulties in which they were engaged; and they exclaimed, 'Were these people favoured by fortune, to what great undertakings would they not be equal, since, in despite of the great disadvantages under which they at present labour, they conduct themselves with such surprising courage and address!' The Romans now doubled the number of their guards, and took such other precautions as occasion required.

Before the rams were mounted, no measures that were likely to prove effectual were omitted by John and his adherents, who guarded the castle of Antonia to prevent a breach being made in the walls. They made a sally with a view of setting fire to the mounts; but they went out in small parties, and they did not act with that courage and unanimity which was usual to the Jews. Their measures were not well concerted, nor were they carried into execution with the necessary spirit, to which may be attributed the failure of their design. The Romans became unusually vigilant, and lest their works should be set on fire, they planted a strict guard upon the bulwarks, and adopted such other precautionary measures as were necessary for preventing any disadvantages being taken by the enemy. Rather than submit to the irreparable injury of relinquishing their advantageous station, they unanimously resolved to die in defending the mounts. They considered that the honour of the Roman name would incur indelible disgrace, if they suffered their courage and discipline to be baffled by the headstrong impetuosity of a desperate and outrageous multitude; and to submit to the power of the Jews, was a circumstance that they could not reflect upon with any tolerable degree of patience.

The Romans were prepared with darts to encounter the enemy as they advanced; and such of the foremost as were slain or wounded, obstructed the progress and damped the courage of their companions. They who pressed forward were astonished and deterred upon observing the exact regularity of the Roman discipline; others were alarmed at the great numbers of the enemy; and they who were wounded availed themselves of the first opportunities that offered for effecting an escape. In short, all the Jews retired, each man endeavouring to preserve himself from censure by attributing the common calamity to the misconduct of his companions.

The Jews having retreated on the first day of the month Panemus, the Romans advanced their rams in order to batter the walls of the castle of Antonia. To prevent the approach of the engines, the Jews had recourse to their swords, fire, stones, and such other means as were likely to prove effectual; and they defended themselves with singular resolution; they greatly depended on the walls being sufficiently strong to resist the force of the machines; but still they exerted every possi-

ble effort to prevent their being advanced and placed in a manner proper for action. Hence the assailants concluded that the great activity of the Jews proceeded from a consciousness of Antonia being in danger. For a considerable time the battery was continued without effect; but despairing of being able to effect a breach by means of their engines, the Romans applied themselves to mining, carefully guarding themselves with their bucklers from the stones, lances, and other weapons discharged from above. With immense labour, they at length loosened four stones of the foundation. The night now arrived, and both parties retired to repose. In the mean time, that part of the wall which John had undermined, with a view of destroying the former works, suddenly gave way. This unexpected event had a contrary effect upon the contending parties. The Jews, who, by a proper attention, might have prevented the accident, were but little concerned when it arrived; for they deemed the place to be still sufficiently secure. The Romans were greatly rejoiced at a circumstance so favourable to their views as the falling of the wall; but their transports abated, upon observing a wall which John had constructed within the circuit of that wherein the breach appeared. They still, however, entertained hopes of conquering the place; for the ruins of the outward wall greatly facilitated access to the other, which was not yet sufficiently settled and hard to make any considerable resistance to the force of the battering-rams. The assailants judged that instant death would inevitably be the fate of those who should attempt to scale the walls; and therefore all thoughts of that exploit were declined, unless by one Sabinus, who lost his life in the attempt.

Two days being elapsed, twenty of the guards of the platforms, the ensign of the fifth, two cavaliers, and a trumpet assembled; and in the dead of the night these people silently advanced over the ruins of the wall to Antonia. They marched without meeting the least obstruction; and finding the advanced guard oppressed with sleep, they cut their throats; and having gained possession of the wall, the trumpeter sounded his instrument, which aroused the rest of the guard, who were thrown into so great a consternation, that they instantly fled, being ignorant that only a small number of the enemy had entered the place, but strongly possessed of the opinion that they were exceedingly numerous.

Upon receiving intimation of the state of affairs at the fort, Titus put himself at the head of his most resolute troops, and immediately marched thither over the ruins already mentioned. So astonished were the Jews at the sudden and unexpected attack, that some fled for safety to the interior temple, and others to the mine that John had formed with a view of destroying the Roman works. The factions under the command of John and Simon were convinced that every prospect of success must

and it the enemy obtained possession of the temple; and hereupon a desperate engagement ensued before the doors of the sacred building, one party fighting for the preservation of life, and the other for the honour of conquest. Neither party could use lances or darts with effect; for they were so closely engaged, that the sword was the only weapon on which the issue of the battle was to depend. Jews and Romans were promiscuously crowded together, and neither order or discipline was observed; but the utmost confusion prevailed. The outcries were so loud and various, that, notwithstanding the difference of language, there was no possibility of distinguishing from which party they respectively proceeded. A very considerable slaughter was made on each side, and the ground was encumbered with the bodies and weapons of the slain and wounded. The spot where the battle took place would not admit of a retreat or a pursuit; but when either party obtained an advantage, they pressed forward with shouts of triumph, while the other retired, exclaiming against the severity and injustice of fortune.

The rear of each army was so violently pressed forward, that the soldiers in front were wholly unable to retreat; and therefore they had no alternative but either to destroy their adversaries or surrender their own lives. The encounter was maintained for the space of ten hours, being commenced at the expiration of the ninth hour of the night, and not concluded till the end of the seventh on the following morning. The determined rage of the Jews, however, proved too powerful for the discipline and bravery of the Romans; and that this was the case, proved a happy circumstance for the former, whose last advantage being at stake, had they been vanquished in this action, utter destruction to them must inevitably have been the consequence. The Romans judged that they had reason to be satisfied with the advantage they had acquired, in gaining possession of the fort Antonia: for they had performed the exploit with only a part of the army, the legions on whom the greatest dependence was placed not being yet arrived.

Having determined to break up the foundations of fort Antonia, and form a level passage for the more convenient march of his army, Titus, before he proceeded to that extremity, commissioned Josephus to bring back the Jews to the exercise of their reason. His arguments were lost in the majority of his hearers; but prevailed with divers of those people who composed the faction, and heartily disposed them to revolt to the Romans: but, notwithstanding they deemed it impossible that the city should escape ruin, a dread of the guards, which many of them entertained, prevented a compliance with their inclinations: others seized the opportunity of escaping to the Romans; and in the number of these were Joseph and Jesus, the high-priests; the three sons of Ismael, who was beheaded at Cyrene; four sons of Matthias; and one son of another Matthias, who

escaped to the Romans after Simon, the son of Gorias, had put his father and three brothers to death, as we have already related ; and, exclusive of the above, a considerable number of other persons of rank revolted to the enemy. They experienced a most gracious and generous reception from Titus, who, conceiving that it would prove both inconvenient and disagreeable to reside among people whose laws, customs, and manners so materially differed from those under which they had been used to live, ordered them to Gophne, promising to grant them considerable possessions when the war should be concluded ; and the fugitives expressed the warmest sentiments of gratitude for the liberal treatment they had received from the Roman general.

When the faction observed that the fugitives were no longer to be seen from the city, they circulated a rumour that the Romans had put them to death. For some time, this stratagem had the desired effect, by deterring other Jews from following the example of the deserters : but being apprised of the design with which the report had been propagated, Titus recalled the deserters from Gophne, and ordered them to make the tour of the walls attended by Josephus. The calumny being thus refuted, a still greater number of the people were induced to revolt to the Romans. Being assembled on this occasion within sight of the Romans, with tears and lamentations they supplicated the faction to preserve their country by admitting the Romans into the town ; or, at least, to depart from the temple rather than provoke the enemy to destroy it by fire, to which extremity they would not proceed, unless aggravated to adopt the measure by an inconsiderate perseverance in a fruitless opposition. This conduct served but to inflame the faction to a more extravagant degree of outrage ; and having planted machines even at the gates of the temple, they assailed the deserters with darts, arrows, stones discharged from slings, and other missive weapons ; so that the sacred building had a greater resemblance to a place of war and slaughter than a house dedicated to the worship of God ; and the bodies of the deceased lay in such numbers in the space of ground before the temple, as to give it the appearance of a cemetery. They forcibly entered the holy sanctuary, their hands yet reeking with the blood of the murdered citizens, and were guilty of the most horrid impieties.

Titus now determined to make an assault upon the Jews ; but, at the same time, consented to remain in the fort of Antonia, where he might witness their operations without exposing his person. The attack commenced at three o'clock in the morning, when the Romans were deceived in the expectation they had formed of surprising the Jews while asleep : the advanced guards resolutely opposed the assailants, and, at the same time, joined in a general shout, which awakening their

companions, great multitudes immediately came to their support. The Romans bravely withstood the shock made by the advanced guard; and when the other Jews came up, a scene of horror took place: through the darkness of the night, the confused sound of voices, fear, and the impulse of rage, their consternation was so great, that they destroyed both friends and enemies without distinction; and the Jews who fell by the hands of their own countrymen, were considerably more numerous than those who were slain by the enemy. The loss on the part of the Romans was not great; for they preserved a regular discipline, carefully defended themselves with their bucklers, and had the advantage of knowing each other by means of the watch-word. Upon the appearance of day-light, the Jews discovered their error, and pursued the encounter with more regularity. Each party now employed darts, arrows, and other weapons; and, notwithstanding the contest that had been maintained in the night, they appeared to suffer no abatement of courage or strength. The Romans, conscious that their general was posted in a station where he could form an exact judgment respecting the behaviour of his troops, and considering that their future prospects in life would depend on their conduct in the present action, fought with a noble emulation to surpass each other in martial exploits. The presence of John, who threatened and even struck those of his people who appeared to be tardy in their duty, and encouraged the rest with promises of reward, added to the consideration that their own lives and the safety of the temple were at stake, induced the Jews to exert their utmost endeavours in opposing the enemy. Neither party was able to make any considerable retreat, the place not being sufficiently large for that purpose; and the battle was mostly maintained hand to hand, victory sometimes appearing to incline to one, and sometimes to the other side. The fort of Antonia was as a theatre, whence Titus and his friends commanded a full and perfect view of those who were actively engaged in the scene, urging the Romans resolutely to pursue the advantages they gained, and exhorting them firmly to maintain their ground when they appeared to be in danger of a repulse from the Jews, and giving such directions as circumstances required. In short, the contest continued from the ninth hour of the night to the fifth on the following day; and when it was concluded, so resolutely had the combatants maintained their ground, it could not be decided which party had gained the advantage.

Titus ordered the foundation of Antonia to be broken up to the very bottom; and, in the space of seven days, this work was completed, and a level passage formed for admitting the legions to march conveniently up to the walls. Titus now employed his troops in erecting four mounts: the first facing the angle of the interior temple that looked towards the north and

east; a second against the gallery, to the northward between the two gates; a third towards the west porch; and the fourth towards the north porch of the outward temple. The works were not completed without great difficulty and expense; for the Romans were under the necessity of conveying what materials they had occasion for from places at an hundred furlongs distant from Jerusalem; and, placing great confidence in their strength, they neglected to guard against surprises from the Jews, who, waiting for them on the way, frequently made desperate sallies from ambushes, and put them to considerable loss and inconvenience.

When the Romans went out in foraging parties, they frequently unbridled their horses, and turned them to graze; and when opportunities offered, the Jews sallied forth, seized and carried off the animals. This being often repeated, Titus attributed the loss to the negligence of his troops, rather than to the enterprising spirit of the enemy. He was not deceived in his conjecture; for having caused one of his soldiers to be put to death as a punishment for loosing his horse, no instance of the like nature occurred in future.

The platforms being now raised, and the Romans having made every other preparation necessary to the assault they had meditated, on the following day, a number of Jews belonging to the faction, who, being unable to procure the necessaries of life by their usual practice of pillage, and nearly on the point of starving, formed the resolution of attacking the Roman guards who were stationed on mount Olivet; and they advanced about the eleventh hour of the day, when they imagined their attempt would be most likely to succeed, as at that time it was usual for the enemy to take some respite from the fatigue of duty.

The Romans observing the approach of the seditious multitude, collected all their force in order to repulse them. A terrible contest ensued, in which great exploits were performed by both parties. The Romans founded their hopes of success on their superior knowledge in the art of war; and the furious rage and impetuosity of the Jews induced them to believe that they were able to succeed in the most desperate attempts. The valour of the one party was excited by the dread of shame, and that of the other by the pressing exigency of their situation: for the Romans conceived that they should incur indelible disgrace if they did not revenge themselves upon the Jews for the insolent attempt they had made; and the Jews had no prospect of escaping the vengeance of the enemy but by mere dint of force. The following exploit, which is so remarkable as almost to exceed credibility, was performed by a Roman cavalier, named Pedanius; the Jews being repulsed and pursued into the valley by the Romans, Pedanius rode after the fugitives, and overtaking a young Jew bearing very heavy arms, who, in order to preserve his life, was urging his horse full speed, he seized

him by the leg, and, carrying him away a prisoner, presented him to Titus. The general complimented Pedanius on his courage, and surprising strength and activity; and he consigned the Jew to death for having been concerned in the audacious attempt to surprize the Romans in their camp. Titus continued to direct his principal attention towards completing the mounts, by means of which he entertained the hope of becoming master of the temple.

Finding themselves considerably weakened by the losses sustained in divers combats, that the war daily raged with additional violence, and that the temple was in the most imminent danger of being destroyed, the Jews resolved to ruin a part of the sacred edifice, in order to preserve the rest, as it is usual to amputate the extremities, lest mortification should be communicated to the more noble parts of the body. They set fire to that part of the gallery extending from the north to the east, and facing the fort Antonia; and, in a short time, as much of the building as occupied a space of near twenty cubits was entirely consumed. Thus were the Jews the first who actually put the design in execution of effecting the destruction of the superb and holy structure, so deservedly celebrated throughout the universe.

Two days having elapsed, the Romans, on the twenty-fourth of the same month, set fire to the remaining part of the gallery; and when the flames had gained fourteen cubits, the Jews destroyed the roof, as well as every other matter which was likely to serve as a communication with fort Antonia, though they might, had they been so inclined, have saved the place from the rage of the flames; but they were wholly regardless as to what course the mischief took, so it tended to promote their private views. During this time, daily skirmishes took place in the neighbourhood of the temple.

At this juncture, the faction in the temple, soldiers on the mounts, and the rest of the Jews, devised the following stratagem on the twenty-seventh day of the month above mentioned. They placed a large quantity of dry wood, sulphur, and bituminous matter, between the timbers and the top of the roof of the western porch; and then affecting to give way, as if an attack had been made on them, they retreated with every appearance of being driven out of a place of which they could no longer hold the possession. Hereupon, a number of their opponents pursued them closely with the utmost eagerness, and put up ladders to get possession of the place, which the others had abandoned: but they who reflected on the affair, deemed it to be a mere artifice, and therefore did not join in the pursuit.

As soon as the Romans had crowded into the porch, the Jews set it on fire, and the whole building was immediately in flames, to the horror and confusion of those who were within, and the astonishment of those who viewed the conflagration at a distance.

Some of the unhappy people threw themselves into wells and pits; others leaped from the houses, and ran for their lives; others again were smothered in the flames, while others threw themselves on their swords to avoid a death still more dreadful.

Titus was greatly affected by this horrid sight, compassionating, in a high degree, the misfortunes arising from so fatal a miscarriage. In the mean time, he was highly offended at his soldiers for having embarked in such an enterprize without previously receiving his orders. They had, however, one satisfaction in the midst of their distress, to compensate for the loss of life; that they were pitied by the prince in whose service they suffered; for they could behold him giving his orders, and using his utmost endeavours to afford them relief; and all the evidences he gave of his regard were deemed memorials to his lasting honour. With regard to those persons who escaped the fury of the flames, they were attacked by the Jews, and every man of them was slain, after they had made all the resistance in their power.

The fire destroyed the porch as far as the tower which John had built (during his war with Simon) on the pillars that led to his porch. After the Romans had been burnt by the Jews in the manner above recited, they destroyed the remainder of the building; and the following day the Romans set fire to the north porch, and continued this fire to the porch facing the eastward, which commands the valley of Cedron, from a precipice, to take a downward view of which affords a prospect almost distracting.

Thus unhappily were affairs situated in the neighbourhood of the temple. The extreme severity of the famine had almost depopulated the city, and the miseries consequent on this calamity are beyond all recital; if it was but suspected that there was any concealed food in a family, this circumstance was sufficient to dissolve the tenderest ties, and create a general insurrection among the parties. They who absolutely perished of mere hunger were not credited even at the hour of death, when they declared that they had no food: for no sooner had the breath left their bodies, than immediate search was made about their persons, on the supposition that they had concealed some bread. When the survivors found not what they searched for, they ranged the streets like mad dogs, reeling, like drunkards, through weakness; repeatedly prying into every corner of every house, seizing whatever they could find, even such articles as a canine appetite would have refused. The skins of beasts, leather girdles, and shoes, were eaten, and even a handful of old hay bore the price of four atties.

In the village named Vetezobra, (that is, the house of Hyssop,) beyond the river Jordan, lived one Eleazar, who had a daughter named Mary. The family was rich, and their descent respectable. Now this Mary fled, in company with several other

persons, and took refuge in Jerusalem, where it was their misfortune to be besieged. All the more valuable effects that this woman brought with her she was deprived of by the tyrants; and, with regard to such articles as she had concealed, whether goods or provisions, the soldiers frequently broke open her house, and stole them from her. Irritated by this treatment, she reviled the faction in terms of the utmost acrimony; but no language of which she was mistress, however severe, could provoke any of this abandoned set to put her to death, either from motives of rage or pity. At length, tormented with the excruciating pangs of a devouring famine, from which she saw no possibility of escaping, having no farther means of sustaining life, and being abandoned to the utmost rage of despair, she determined on a resolution more horrible than it is in the power of language to describe.

She killed her infant; and, having boiled it, ate the half of it; and, covering up the remainder, put it away. The circumstance of her dressing food soon came to the knowledge of the faction, some of whom went to the house of the woman, and threatened her with immediate death if she did not produce what provisions she had in the house. Hereupon she fetched out that part of the child which still remained undevoured, and told them that was all the food she possessed. This sight had such an effect on the spectators, that they at first appeared petrified with horror, then trembled at the idea of what had passed, and were shocked at the consequences to be dreaded from it. On this, the woman addressed them as follows: 'Be assured that this is my son, the half of whom I have eaten myself, and request that you will eat the remainder; I flatter myself that you will not pretend to have more delicacy than a woman, or more compassion than a mother. But if you refuse the oblation through scruples of conscience, you are welcome to leave the food where you have found it, only remember that I have eaten a part of it already.' She had no sooner ended speaking, than they departed with evident signs of terror, leaving, though against their inclinations, the remainder of the child with the unfortunate mother; the only circumstance of their whole conduct attended with any degree of delicacy.

This shocking deed became immediately the subject of conversation throughout the whole city; and every man appeared to detest the crime as much as if he himself had been immediately concerned in it. The famine now raged with such violence, that the people wished for immediate death in the mere fear of starving; and they who remained alive envied those who had died before the calamity increased to such an alarming degree. The melancholy tale soon spread from the Jews to the Romans, some of whom commiserated the calamities of the Jews, while others hated them the mere for their misfortunes, and a third sort gave no credit to the recital. In the mean time, Titus so-

lennily declared his innocence respecting the whole matter, vowing in the presence of God, that he had exerted his utmost influence to render the Jews easy and happy in their fortunes, lives, and liberties. 'But,' said he, 'if the Jews were determined rather to destroy each other, than to live in the bands of fraternal affection; if they preferred war rather than peace, and famine rather than plenty, it was not in my power to prevent them. As they were determined to set fire to the temple with their own hands, while I did every thing in my power to preserve it, the flesh of their own children is as good food as such parents deserve. For my part, I am resolved that their iniquities shall but be the forerunners of their ruin; for I will not longer permit the existence of a city, in which mothers feed on their own children, and the fathers, with a still more horrid degree of impiety, continue the war, after such plain and evident demonstration that the so doing is contrary to the will of Almighty God.' Having said this, and reflected on the amazing obstinacy and incurable stubbornness of the faction, he looked on them as a people devoted to destruction; for he thought that the miseries they had already endured would have changed their sentiments, if it had been in nature that such an effect could be wrought.

Two of the legions having completed their platforms, Titus directed his battering-rams to be planted against the western gallery of the outward temple, on the eighth day of the month Lous. For the space of six days successively, he played his best piece of battery against this place; but without effect; for the engines could make no impression on the work. In the interim, some of the troops were employed in sapping the foundations on the north side; but after a prodigious labour, they found that they could only move the outward stones, the porch still remaining firm: wherefore, finding that mines and batteries were ineffectual to answer the purpose, the Romans had recourse to the use of their scaling-ladders.

Though the Jews were unable to prevent their enemies fixing their ladders, yet they made an obstinate resistance in every part where it was possible to be made. Those who ascended the ladders were attacked immediately, before they had time to put themselves in a posture of defence: others they threw down as they were ascending: some they destroyed as they were advancing with relief; and sometimes they overturned the ladders with the men upon them. On the whole, the Romans sustained a very considerable loss in this attack, especially in those contests which happened for the defence or recovery of their colours, which military people deem to be an affair of the utmost consequence. In the end, however, the Jews killed a number of the ensign-bearers, keeping such ensigns as they got possession of; a circumstance which so discouraged the rest of the assailants, that they thought it prudent to retreat. However, to do justice

to the besiegers, it must be acknowledged that not a single man among the slain disgraced the character of a Roman. Their opponents of the faction who had behaved well on former occasions lost, not their character for intrepidity; and Eleazar, the nephew of the tyrant Simon, was distinguished by his courage. Titus now finding that his own men were only devoted to ruin by his wishes to spare the temple of the enemy, he issued orders that his troops should set fire to the gates without loss of time.

At this juncture, two deserters from the Jews repaired to Titus, flattering themselves that their abandoning the faction at the time they had some advantage in their favour would secure them the better reception. One of these deserters was Archelaus, the son of Magadathes; and the other Ananus of Emmaus, one of Simon's guards, and deemed the most inhuman of all his attendants. The character of these men for cruelty was so well known to Titus, that he entertained some thoughts of putting both of them to death, notwithstanding their pretended attachment to his interest, being convinced that it was not an affection for his service, but the consideration of their own safety that influenced their conduct. He thought that those who had first inflamed their country, and then abandoned it, were unworthy to live: but, having reflected more seriously on the affair, he came to a resolution to spare them.

By this time, the gates of the temple were burning furiously, the timbers being all on fire; and the silver work above the gates melted, while the flames extended even to the adjacent galleries. The Jews were so much surprised by this unexpected event, that, finding themselves encompassed by the flames, they regarded each other with looks of the most extreme astonishment, not even attempting to preserve what yet remained uninjured, or affecting any concern for what was already destroyed. In a word, they were totally dispirited for any kind of enterprise; so that the fire continued to increase all that day and the succeeding night, till at length the galleries were totally burnt to the ground.

On the following day, Titus issued out orders for the suppression of the fire, and that the roads might be levelled for the march of his troops. His next step was to summon a council of his general officers, to concert the best mode of proceeding. These officers were Tiberius Alexander, his lieutenant-general; Sextus Cerealis, the commander of the fifth legion; Lorgius Lepidus, of the tenth; and Titus Tigrius, who presided over the fifteenth; and to these were added Eternius Fronto, a captain of two of the legions of Alexandria; and Marcus Antonius Julianus, governor of Judea; exclusive of colonels and other officers, whose opinions it was thought proper to take, on the mode of proceeding requisite to be pursued with respect to the affair of the temple. Of these, some recommended a strict adherence

to the law of arms, urging, that while the temple remained, and the Jews continued their frequent associations in it, they would never desist from their opposition. Others gave their votes for sparing the temple, on the condition that the Jews should abandon it, and that it should be no longer considered as an object of contention; but that if possession of it should be acquired by dint of the sword, in this case, that they should not hesitate to burn it, not considering it as a temple, but as a castle; since the blame would then rest with those who compelled the burning it, not with those whom necessity urged to the deed. Hereupon Titus gave his opinion, saying, 'If the obstinacy of the Jews will convert a temple to a citadel, shall I take vengeance on their perverseness by wreaking my wrath on the stones of the building, and burn to ashes the most magnificent structure in the world on their account? Indeed, I am of opinion, that the robbing the empire of so distinguished an ornament would be a disgrace to the characteristic majesty of Rome.' Alexander, Cerealis, and Fronto, hearing the sentiments of Titus, coincided with him in opinion, on which the council was dismissed. Orders were now issued that the army should be allowed to rest and take refreshment, in order to be better prepared for future enterprises. In the mean time, some select battalions were directed to observe the ravages made by fire, and to make proper passages through the ruins.

The courage and strength of the Jews beginning now equally to fail them, they remained at peace during this day: but on the following day, about the second hour, having by that time recruited their spirits and acquired fresh resolution, they made a desperate sally through the eastern gate on the guards of the outward temple. At first, the Romans, under the protection of their bucklers, sustained the shock with the utmost resolution, it making no more impression than it would have done against a stone wall; but all their courage and perseverance would not have enabled them long to hold out in opposition to so fierce and numerous an enemy, if Titus (who beheld the action from Antonia) had not instantly come to their relief, before they had yielded to their antagonists. On this relief, some of the Jews fell back; and the Romans breaking in on their front, the main body fled with precipitation. After this, the Romans retreated in their turn, while the Jews rallied and advanced in order of battle. Thus they continued alternately advancing or retreating, one party having now the advantage, and then the other, till about the fifth hour of the day, when the Jews were compelled to retreat into the temple, and there inclose themselves. Hereupon Titus retired to Antonia, having come to a determination to make an assault on the temple on the following day with his whole army. But it seemed evident that divine providence had originally destined this place to be destroyed by fire, and that the period was at length arrived, that is to say, the

tenth day of the month Lous, being the return of that day on which it had been heretofore burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon. Of this last conflagration, however, the Jews themselves were the evident occasion: for no sooner had Titus left them at their repose, than the insurgents made a violent sally on his guards, while they were engaged, by the general's orders, in extinguishing the fire. But, on this occasion, the Romans routed the Jews, and compelled them to retreat to the temple for refuge.

An event happened at this period which took rise from the conduct of a private soldier, who thought himself actuated by a divine impulse, without pretending to any other authority for what he transacted. Having got on the shoulders of one of his comrades, he threw a firebrand into the golden window that was opposite the apartments on the north side of the temple. This action was no sooner done, than the place was in flames, which occasioned so violent a tumult among the Jews, that their countrymen hastened as fast as possible to their relief; for the present juncture, when every thing dear to them was at stake, was not a period in which to think of saving their lives or indulging themselves.

Titus was just now laying down to repose himself in his tent, after the fatigue of the action, when intelligence of the conflagration was brought to him; on which he immediately arose, and, ordering his chariot, proceeded to the temple, to use all his authority towards the extinction of the fire. He was followed by his principal officers, and the legions: but in a confused manner, as may be supposed of such an immense number, who had not received regular orders for their proceeding. Titus exerted himself to the utmost of his power both by words and signs, in giving directions to stop the progress of the flames; but all his efforts were vain; the lesser noise was lost in the greater, nor were his words more heard than the signs and motions of his hand attended to. The soldiers were not to be governed by commands or threatenings; but, following the impulse of their rage, some were trodden on and pressed to death by the crowd, while others were suffocated by the smoke arising from the ruins of the galleries over the porches. The common soldiers who were in the temple urged, in excuse of their disobedience of the general's orders, that they could not hear what he said; while those who followed them gave orders that they should throw fire. In a word, the faction had no way to prevent what happened, and on which side soever they turned, destruction stared them in the face. The poor people, the sick, and the unarmed, were destroyed by the sword wherever they were found: numbers of unhappy wretches were left streaming in their own blood; dead bodies were piled in heaps around the altar, and the stairs were floated with deluges of blood.

The fury of the soldiers had now arisen to such a height, that

Titus, finding it impossible to restrain it, and that the fire continued to make additional ravages every day, immediately proceeded, with some of his officers of the first rank, into the interior temple, where, on a careful survey of the place, he found that its splendour and magnificence greatly exceeded what common fame had reported, and were, at least, equal to the very account propagated respecting them by the Jews. Titus having now remarked that the fire had not reached the sanctuary, and being of opinion that it might not yet be too late to preserve the holy place, instantly exerted himself, and entreated the soldiers, in the most earnest manner, to use their utmost endeavours to stop the progress of the flames; at the same time issuing strict orders to Liberalis, a centurion of the guards, to urge the accomplishment of this business, and to punish those who refused their assistance. But so violent was the rage of the soldiers for revenge, that they were not restrained within the bounds of their duty, either by the motives of respect or fear. At the very time that Titus was exerting his utmost endeavours to preserve the temple, one of the soldiers set fire to several of the door-posts; on which Titus and his officers were obliged to retire to such a distance, that their services could no longer avail: so that, in the end, the temple was destroyed, notwithstanding every generous effort Titus had made for its protection.

During the time that the temple was in flames, the soldiers seized every person they could find; and, having first plundered, they slew them, without paying the least attention to age, sex, or quality. The slaughter on this occasion was immense; the old, the young, those of the priesthood, and those of the laity, persons of all ranks and all degrees, whether they sued for quarter or otherwise, were all involved in the general calamity of the war.

As the fire continued to increase, the noise of the flames was heard, intermixed with the groans of persons in the agonies of death: and to those at a distance, the whole city appeared to be on fire, owing to the extent of the conflagration, and the depth of the hill. The confusion and disorder occasioned by this event were so great, as it is not in the power of language to describe them. The Roman legions made the most horrid outcries: the rebels, when they found themselves at the mercy of the fire and sword, screamed in the most dreadful manner; while the unhappy wretches, inclosed between the enemy and the fire, lamented their situation in the most pitiable complaints. Those on the mountain and those in the city seemed mutually to return the groans of each other. Those who were already on the point of expiring through famine, acquired fresh spirits to deplore their misfortunes, when they saw the dreadful effects of the raging flames. The complaints and lamentations from the city were repeatedly echoed from the adjacent mountains and places beyond Jordan: but the calamity exceeding in reality

all that could be expressed by the bewailings of the sufferers. The flames of fire were so violent and impetuous, that the mountain on which the temple stood resembled one large body of fire, even from its foundation. The blood of the sufferers flowed in proportion to the raging of the flames; for the number of those who were slain exceeded that of their executioners. Dead bodies strewed the ground on every side, and the Roman soldiers trampled on the bodies of the slain in pursuit of the survivors. At length, however, a body of the insurgents repelled the Romans; and, having forced a passage into the outward temple, effected their escape into the city, while the outward porch was gained by the remainder of their number.

Many of the priests who had engaged in this contest with the Romans made use of the spits belonging to the temple instead of darts; and, in the place of stones, they threw their seats, which had lead in them; but, at length, finding that all the efforts of their resolution were fruitless, and that fire pursued wherever they attempted to fly, they took refuge for some time under a thick wall that was not less than eight cubits in breadth. Among the principal persons who exerted themselves on this occasion, were Meirus, the son of Belgas, and Joseph, the son of Daleus, who might have preserved their own lives, if they would have taken part with the Romans; but they rather chose to adhere to their associates, and, plunging themselves into the fire, were buried in the conflagration that destroyed the temple.

The Romans, now finding that the temple was reduced to ashes, were less anxious as to the preservation of any particular buildings: wherefore they set fire to most of the gates and galleries at the same time, sparing only one on the east side, and another on the south: in a short time afterwards, these underwent the fate of the former. They likewise burnt the treasury and the wardrobe, containing an immense treasure in jewels and money, and rich habits to a very large amount; for, in fact, the Jews had made this place a repository of every thing that they deemed most valuable. There was yet standing one gallery on the outward part of the temple, to which had resorted a very great number of women and children, with a variety of persons who had fled from the multitude, the whole number amounting to almost six thousand. The soldiers, enraged to the utmost degree of fury, set this place on fire before Titus had an opportunity of giving any directions concerning it; and they continued their operations against it with such vehemence, that not a single person escaped with life, numbers throwing themselves precipitately from the ruins, and all the rest being consumed by the flames.

This melancholy event happened through the artifices of an impostor, who, on that day, pretended to be commissioned by Almighty God to declare his will, which was, that they should

immediately go up to the temple; and he accompanied this order with an assurance that the divine favour and protection would be manifested by an infallible sign. It was no unusual custom with the faction to pretend to have received revelations of the will of God, in order to prevent their people from deserting, and to induce them to encounter every kind of danger. Persons in circumstances of distress, when they are flattered with relief, are generally inclined to believe that their real misfortunes have been magnified by their fears.

By this time, the insurgents had fled into the city. The Roman army now placed their ensigns against the eastern gate, where they made sacrifices of thanksgiving, and proclaimed Titus emperor with every possible demonstration of joy. So large a treasure in gold was now obtained in Syria, that it was reduced to half its accustomed value.

Among the priests on the wall, there happened to be a child, who requested the Romans to give him a draught of water to quench his thirst: this, on the promise of good faith on both sides, they readily did, in compassion to his tender age and great necessity. On going down to drink the water, he took with him a flagon, which he filled, and ran off with it to his friends with such expedition, that the guards found it impossible to catch him. On this the Romans accused the boy with having forfeited his word; but, in his defence, he alleged that he had only contracted with them for permission to fetch the water, but not to remain with them when possessed of it, and of course had not violated his agreement. The Romans submitted to the imposition in consideration of the innocence of the fraud.

The priests having continued on the wall yet five days longer, an extremity of hunger at length compelled them to go down and surrender themselves prisoners: whereupon the guards conducted them to Titus, before whom they humbled themselves, and entreated his merciful regard. To this, the emperor replied, that they were too late in their application; for as the temple was now destroyed, it was not unreasonable that the priests should share its fate, since they ought to perish with the temple to which they belonged; and hereupon he ordered them to be put to death.

The leaders of the faction, now finding how they were beset on all sides, and surrounded so that there was no possibility of their escape, proposed to enter into a treaty with the emperor: to which he, with his wonted benevolence of disposition, lent a favourable ear, partly, indeed, on the recommendation of his friends, and partly with a view to spare the city, in the hope that the insurgents, by their future conduct, might deserve his mercy. Titus took his station on the west side of the interior temple, near the gates which led to the gallery; and between the temple and the upper town there was a bridge of commu-

nication by which the Romans and Jews were at this time separated. On each side, the soldiers crowded round their commanding officers; the Romans, on the one part, eager to see how Titus would receive the supplicants; and the Jews, on the other, equally eager to learn what chance there was of its being pardoned. Titus having ordered his men to forbear making any acclamations, and to keep the strictest peace and most profound silence, intimated to the Jews by an interpreter that it was his province to speak first, addressed them in a speech, in which, after reproaching them for their crimes, he promised that all, unless their leaders, should receive his pardon on submission.

To this address, the faction returned an answer, importing that they could not surrender on any promise or assurance of safety that the emperor could make, as they were solemnly sworn not to make any submission; but, with his permission, they were ready to retire with their wives and children into the desert, and leave to the Romans the possession of the city. Enraged by the idea of prisoners giving law and prescribing terms to the conqueror, Titus caused proclamations to be immediately made, intimating that, for the future, no Jew should presume to apply to him for quarter or protection: but they now might have recourse to arms, and defend themselves in the best manner in their power; for that the laws of war should hereafter determine his conduct towards them.

Hereupon the soldiers had immediate permission to attack them with fire and sword, and to apply the plunder they could obtain in the city to their own use. On the present day no step was taken; but, on the following morning, they set fire to the council-chamber, the castle, the register-office, and a place named Ophlas; whence the flames spread to queen Helen's palace in the middle of the mount, destroying wherever they came, and burning a great number of dead bodies which crowded the streets and houses in every part.

The next proceeding of the insurgents was to advance to the royal palace, a place of great strength and security, in which treasure to an immense amount was deposited. From this palace the Romans routed the Jews, of whom they killed about eight thousand four hundred, and made prize of all the treasure to an immense amount. In the course of this engagement, two of the Roman soldiers were made prisoners, one of them of the cavalry, the other of the infantry. The latter was first put to death, and then dragged through the streets of the city, as if the intention had been to deride the whole nation by the insult offered to one unhappy wretch. The other prisoner, pretending that he had a circumstance of some consequence to disclose, was immediately conducted to Simon; but, on his arrival, he had nothing to mention that was deemed of the least consequence: wherefore Ardalis, one of Simon's officers, re-

ceived orders to put him to death. Hereupon his hands were bound behind him, a cloth was tied over his eyes, and he was conducted from Simon's presence to be beheaded within view of the Romans: but just in the instant that the executioner was drawing his sword to perform his duty, the prisoner slipped from him, and effected an escape to the Romans. This circumstance being made known to Titus, he considered the case, and would not adjudge him to death for deserting from the enemy in so critical a situation: but deemed it so disgraceful for a Roman soldier to be taken prisoner, that he ordered him to be disarmed and cashiered, a punishment even worse than death in the opinion of a man of honour.

On the following day it happened that the Romans routed the Jews from the lower town, on which occasion they set fire to all the buildings as far as Siloah, and were happy to see the destruction occasioned by the conflagration; but they acquired no treasure, for the insurgents had already safely deposited this in the upper town. It is worthy of remark, that the rebels were not of a disposition to lament any calamities their vices had occasioned; and they comported themselves with their accustomed pride, even when fortune appeared to be their determined foe. They seemed to behold the burning of the city with a degree of pleasure, and publicly said, that as affairs were then situated, the approach of death would not create in them the least degree of concern or regret. They had seen the destruction of the people almost to annihilation, they had been witnesses to the temple being burned to the ground, they had viewed the city in flames, and were now pleased that the Romans, who were to succeed them, could not take possession of any thing that might afford them satisfaction.

While affairs were in this situation, Josephus exerted his utmost endeavours for the preservation of the few remaining inhabitants of a ruined and almost depopulated city. He applied himself to the passions of the people, by every art of invective, complaint, advice, and encouragement: but all that he could say tended to answer no valuable purpose: the Jews were not only bound by the sacred obligations of their oaths, but almost subdued by the superior numbers of the Romans, exclusive of which they were inured to blood and familiar with destruction.

In this unhappy situation of affairs, they dispersed themselves throughout the city, searching all the ruins, vaults, and other places of secretion, for such as had deserted. Great numbers of these being seized, they were all put to death; for they were so weak that they could not seek their safety by flight, and the dead bodies were thrown to the dogs. Still, however, famine threatened a death more dreadful than any other. Many of the Jews now deserted to the Romans in mere despair; for they could not entertain any other expectation, than

that they might be immediately put to death to prevent the miseries of starving. The insurgents likewise shared the same fate, having been instigated by the same motives. There was not a single street but what was bestrewed with the bodies of the dead, some of whom had been starved, and the rest falling a sacrifice to the rage of the pestilence.

The insurgents placed their last hope in concealment. They sought every private place of retreat, vainly hoping that they might remain concealed till the contest should be at an end, and the Romans had abandoned their place: they then imagined that their escape might be safely effected, without reflecting that the all-seeing eye of justice could penetrate to the most secret recesses. The Jews who had taken possession of the subterraneous retreats were the authors of more calamity than the Romans in setting fire to the place. They first robbed and then murdered all who retired for safety to these places. The famine now raged to such a degree, that violent contentions arose respecting the coarsest and most loathsome food. I am of opinion, that if the famine had continued for any considerable time longer, they who survived would made no scruple of feeding on the bodies of the deceased.

Such was the situation of the upper town on crags and precipices, that Titus thought it would be an impossibility to get possession of it without the erection of new mounts: wherefore he ordered that these works should be commenced on the twentieth day of the month Lous. It has been heretofore remarked that carriage was very expensive and attended with great trouble; for to the distance of one hundred furlongs from the town, the materials had all been cut down for the construction of the works heretofore erected. The four legions now threw up a mount on the west side of the city opposite the royal palace; while the auxiliaries and the other forces threw up another mount near the gallery and the bridge, and fortified the place known by the name of Simon's tower, which had been constructed by Simon during his war with John.

At this period, some of the Idumean officers held a council together, concerting how their whole body should go over to the interest of the Romans. Having fixed on their plan, they despatched five deputies to Titus to make an offer of their services; and, by these, they sent a petition, imploring the emperor's mercy in the name of their whole people. It must be acknowledged that this application was made very late in point of time; but Titus, thinking that Simon and John would make no farther resistance after so capital a desertion, dismissed the deputies with an answer importing that he would grant the petitioners their lives; for the truth was, that he deemed the Idumeans to be the most formidable of his opponents.

The above-mentioned plot having been discovered, Simon gave orders that the five deputies should be instantly put to death,

and that imprisonment should be the lot of those from whom they had received their directions, of whom James, the son of Soas, was deemed to be the principal. As the leaders were now in subjection, no great mischief was apprehended from the common soldiers; notwithstanding which, a stricter guard was kept over the remainder of the Idumeans than had been heretofore thought necessary; but every effort that could be devised proved ineffectual to prevent their deserting to the Romans. It is true that many of them were slain in the attempt, but still greater numbers effected their escape, all of whom were received by Titus, who had so much generosity and benevolence, that he declined to press the rigorous execution of his former orders; while even the common soldiers, partly satiated with the blood that had been spilt, and partly in the hope of obtaining booty, began now to conduct themselves with more lenity and moderation than they had heretofore done.

By this time, there were none remaining but the inferior kind of people; and these, together with their wives and children, were publicly sold like beasts in the market; and at very low prices too, for the purchasers were but few in number. Titus, now reflecting on this circumstance, and on the proclamation which he himself had issued, directing that no more of the Jews should desert to him singly, thought it his duty, as a man of humanity, to preserve as many of them as possible; and therefore determined to revoke his former order, and to receive as many of them as should come to him separately; but he would not receive any number together. He appointed proper persons to inquire into their characters, to discriminate between the worthy and the unworthy, and to treat every man according to his deserts.

At this period, there was a priest named Jesus, the son of Thebut, who compounded for his life with the emperor, on the condition of his delivering up several of the ornaments belonging to the temple, with some vessels and other articles that had been presented thereto. In pursuance of this contract, he conveyed out of the temple and handed over the wall several tables, goblets, and cups, with a pair of candlesticks, all made of the finest gold. He likewise presented the emperor with a considerable number of the vessels used in sacrifice, with precious stones, veils, and the habits used by the priests.

About this time, likewise, Phineas, the keeper of the sacred treasure, being taken prisoner, he gave up a vast number of the habits and girdles belonging to the priests, together with scarlet and purple stuffs which had been carefully laid by for future use. He likewise made a discovery of a quantity of cinnamon, cassia, gums, and perfumes, which were used for the incense daily offered, together with a number of sacred ornaments and effects which were the property of private persons. Now though Phineas was a lawful prisoner, regularly taken in open war, yet,

in consideration of these discoveries, he was treated with as much lenity as if he had made them through the mere effect of his own inclination.

After the expiration of eighteen days, the erection of the mounts was completed on the seventh day of the month Gorpæus, (answering to September,) at which time the Romans advanced with their engines for battery. Many of the insurgents, now despairing to hold possession of the place any longer, abandoned the walls and retired to the castle, while others concealed themselves in vaults and subterraneous passages. Still, however, there were some more obstinate than the rest, who were determined to oppose those who had the management of the batteries. In the mean time, the enemy was greatly superior to them in numbers and strength; and the Romans had the farther advantage, that their troops were in full health and spirits, and animated with the success they had obtained over an enemy that, having been unfortunate in their undertakings, were dejected by their losses, and almost abandoned to despair.

As often as any of the Jews observed a flaw in the wall, or that any of the turrets yielded to the impression made by the battering engines, they sought their safety by immediate flying from the place of apprehended danger; till, at length, even Simon and John were terrified even to the borders of despair, and fled before the Romans were advanced within such a distance as to be able to do them a personal injury; for their fears operated to such a degree, that they were frightened at danger whether real or apprehended. Though these men were some of the most abandoned of the human race, yet the extreme calamity they endured could scarcely fail of exciting pity in the breasts of those who so lately knew them boasting of their imagined consequence, and triumphing in all the height of presuming arrogance. The change in their affairs was, indeed, very great, and distressing in the highest degree.

John and Simon now made an attempt on the wall which had been erected round the city by the Romans. They succeeded, in fact, so far in this attempt, as to make a breach in the wall; and their intention was to have attacked the guards, and by that means to have effected their escape. But when they expected to have been properly supported in this attack, they found that all their friends had abandoned them: wherefore they retreated in confusion, as they were led by their fears and apprehensions.

In this distracted state of affairs, every man told such a tale as was inspired by his own apprehensions. While one brought intelligence that the whole of the wall to the westward was overthrown, others asserted the Romans were at the foot of this wall; and a third party declared that they had entered the city, and that some of them were in actual possession of the towers. Their imaginations appeared to realize their fears: they fell

prostrate on the ground, lamenting their unhappy fate, bewailing their follies, and remained in a state of desperation of which no language can convey an idea.

The goodness and the power of God were remarkable and likewise equally conspicuous on this singular occasion: for the tyrannical leaders of the opposition were eventually the occasion of their own destruction, by abandoning those forts of their own accord which could never have been taken unless the besieged had been starved out; and this they did after the Jews had in vain spent much time on other erections of inferior strength. By this providential turn of affairs, the Romans became masters of three impregnable forts, which they could never have acquired in any other manner; for the three towers were absolutely proof against battery of every kind.

No sooner had Simon and John, influenced by the impulse of a judicial frenzy, abandoned the towers above mentioned, than they hurried away to the vale of Siloah, where they reposed themselves for a short time after the fatigue they had undergone. Having refreshed themselves and recalled their scattered ideas, they assaulted the new wall at the above-mentioned place; but their efforts were so feeble, that they were easily repulsed by the guards; for their misery, despair, and fatigue, had so reduced them, that they had no strength remaining, and were glad to creep away with their adherents, and conceal themselves in vaults and caverns.

The walls being now in possession of the Romans, they hoisted their colours on the towers, and exulted with the most cheerful acclamations at the happy conclusion of a war which promised so little in the commencement: for they were compelled to believe that the war was at length ended, unless they had been disposed to discredit the evidence of their own senses.

By this time the soldiers had spread themselves into every part of the city, ranging through the streets with drawn swords, and sacrificing to their rage every one they saw without distinction. They set fire to the houses, and burnt them and all their contents to the ground. In many houses into which they entered in search of plunder, they found every person of the families dead, and the houses in a manner filled with the bodies of those who had perished through hunger: wherefore, shocked at such a sight, they frequently returned without seizing their intended booty. Yet, notwithstanding this apparent respect they showed to the deceased, they gave no proofs of their humanity to the living; for they put every man to the sword who fell in their way, till at length the bodies of the dead filled up all the alleys and narrow passes, while their blood flowed to such a degree as to run down the channels of the city in streams. Towards night they gave over the practice, but renewed their depredations by means of fire.

The conflagration of the city of Jerusalem ended on the eighth

day of the month Gorpæus. Jerusalem was a city that must undoubtedly have been the envy of the universe in all the prosperity that attended it from its original foundation, had it borne any proportion to the misfortunes and calamities which befell it in the course of the siege above mentioned; and what aggravated these judgments was, that her own sons proved her destruction, and that she had nursed a race of vipers to prey on the body of the parent.

Titus employed himself in taking a survey of the ruins of this distinguished city: while admiring the works and fortifications, and particularly the fortresses which the usurpers, in the extravagance of their folly, had abandoned—while he was contemplating the situation, dimensions, and elevation of the towers, with the elegance of the structures, the curiosity of the design and workmanship, and the masterly execution of the whole, he expressed himself in the following manner: ‘If our military operations had not been aided by the immediate interposition of heaven, it would have been impossible that we should ever have possessed ourselves of these fortresses. In a word, it was God who fought for and aided us against the Jews; for a deed has been accomplished, which the hands of men or the force of engines could never have effected.’

Titus having delivered himself to this effect, and said much more to the same purpose, his next business was to restore to liberty all those prisoners whom the oppressors had left in the towers. This being done, and the razing and demolition of the city completed, these towers alone excepted, he gave orders for the sparing them as a memorial of his good fortune and success; for unless they had been abandoned, this success could never have arisen.

By this time the soldiers were perfectly fatigued with the work of slaughter, notwithstanding much appeared yet to be done. However, Titus commanded his men to desist so far as to the sparing all who should not be found in arms, or offer to make resistance: yet, notwithstanding these directions, the soldiers exceeded their orders, and put to death the sick and the aged without pity or remorse. They who appeared to be in full health, and fit for service, were imprisoned in the temple and in that quarter heretofore destined to the use of women. Fronto, one of the freed-men and friends of Titus, was deputed to inquire into the cases of the prisoners, and to treat them according to their deserts. The abandoned, the seditious, and those who mutually charged each other with crimes, were put to death without mercy: but Titus preserved the young and healthy, particularly those of a comely appearance, to grace his triumph on his entrance into Rome. All those who remained after this selection, and were above seventeen years of age, were sent in chains into Egypt to be employed as slaves; and those who were under seventeen exposed to sale, some only ex-

cepted, who were sent into the various provinces of the empire to be engaged as gladiators in the several theatres.

In the interim, no less than eleven thousand of the prisoners, who were under the care of Fronto, were starved to death; partly owing to their own obstinacy in the refusal of provisions, and partly to the severity of their overseers, who neglected to supply them in a proper manner: but one great cause which aggravated this calamity, was the want of sufficient provisions for such an immense number.

Thus ended the important melancholy siege; and the Roman soldiers having no living object on which to wreak their further vengeance, (for if they had, the vengeance would have been continued,) Titus gave orders that they should reduce the city and temple to a level with the ground, and not to leave any building standing, except the three distinguished towers so often mentioned, which bore the names of Hippocos, Phasaël, and Mariamne; and a part of the wall to the westward of the city, on which he intended to erect a garrison. The towers were ordered to remain as an evidence to future times of the skill and power of the Romans in becoming possessed of them. This order was executed with the utmost strictness, and the rest of the city totally demolished and razed even to the ground; so that it scarcely appeared to have been the residence of human creatures. Thus the factious multitude, whose seditions had created all the misfortunes, were reduced; and thus, likewise, was reduced the most distinguished city on the face of the earth.

About this period, Simon, the son of Giaras, was made a prisoner, in consequence of the following singular circumstance: When Jerusalem was so closely besieged, that Simon was compelled to take refuge in the upper town, and when the Romans had actually got into the city, he was almost distracted to know how to dispose of himself; and at length he adopted the following plan. Having sent for a number of stone-cutters, miners, smiths, and persons well skilled in iron works; and having provided a great number of tools and materials proper for their purpose, and provisions for a considerable time, they descended all together into a dark and private vault. In this place, they worked their way as far as they were able; but, finding the passage too narrow to answer their intentions, they began to dig and mine, with a view to open a passage through which they might effect their escape; but though they managed their provisions in the most frugal manner possible, they fell short before they had made any considerable progress in their work, by which means the whole plan failed. Reduced to the utmost necessity, Simon had recourse to a singular device to terrify the Romans. In pursuance of his plan, he dressed himself in a white garment, which was buckled round him, over which was thrown a purple cloak. Thus habited, he ascended

from the ground, under the ruins of the late temple, to the astonishment of the soldiers, and others who beheld the apparition. As he advanced towards them, the soldiers assumed sufficient courage to demand his name and business: but Simon refused to answer their questions, and demanded to speak with the captain of the guard. Hereupon, they immediately sent to Terentius Rufus, who at that time had the command; and he soon discovered who Simon was, ordered him to be immediately put in chains, and then related all the particulars of the affair to Titus.

Simon was presented to Titus bound in chains: whereupon he gave orders that he should be detained a prisoner to grace his triumphant entry into Rome. Some short time after his arrival, he appointed a day for the celebration of the nativity of his brother Domitian with the utmost grandeur and magnificence: on this occasion, a great number of condemned persons were sacrificed to the splendour of the ceremony; for of those who were destroyed by beasts, by fire, or in combats with each other, it was calculated that not less than two thousand five hundred perished; yet such was the inveteracy of the Romans against the Jews, that they thought even this number too small.

Some time after this, Titus went to Berytus, a city of Phœnicia, and one of the Roman colonies. In this place he continued some time, and there celebrated the anniversary of the birth of his father Vespasian, even with a greater degree of pomp and splendour than he had done that of his brother, both with respect to the article of expence, and the public shows exhibited.

From Berytus, Titus proceeded to Antioch, where he rejected some frivolous accusations which were brought by the citizens against the Jews. Thence he continued his journey to Egypt, and embarked at Alexandria for Rome, having previously to his embarkation despatched the two legions that had attended him to their former stations, that is, the fifth was sent to Mysia, and the tenth to Hungary. Simon and John, with seven hundred of the most comely of the prisoners, were ordered to be sent into Italy, that they might dignify the triumph of Titus on his entry into Rome.

Titus had a most favourable and agreeable voyage, and was received with as great honour and respect as his father had been before him; and, exclusive of this general respect from the people, Vespasian went out in person to meet and congratulate him; a circumstance highly grateful to the public, who now beheld the father and his two sons meeting together in circumstances of the most auspicious nature.

In a short time after this, the senate passed a decree for two separate triumphs, the one in honour of the father, the other in that of the son; but notwithstanding this determination, Ves-

pasian and Titus resolved that the solemnity to their mutual honour should be jointly celebrated. When the day was fixed on which it was to take place, there was hardly a single person in the city who did not attend as a spectator ; so that when the whole multitude was assembled together, there was scarcely room enough left for the emperor and his son to pass. Before the break of day, the soldiers marched to the palace gates, near the temple of Isis, in regular order, preceded by their officers, to wait the arrival of the princes, who had lodged the preceding night in the temple above mentioned. Soon after the dawn of the morning, Vespasian and Titus came forward, being clothed in purple robes, according to the custom of their country, and having on their heads crowns of laurel. They proceeded to the Octavian walks, at which place the senate, nobility, and knights of Rome, waited for their arrival. Before the portal there was erected a tribunal, on which they ascended, and reposed themselves on seats of ivory, which had been placed there on the occasion ; and being thus situated, orations were made in their praise, while the surrounding multitudes testified their joy by the loudest acclamations. On this occasion, the princes wore no arms ; and while the orators were rapidly declaiming in their praise, Vespasian made a signal for silence, which being strictly obeyed by every person present, he stood up ; and having thrown his robe over a part of his head, he offered up certain prayers agreeable to the custom on such occasions ; and in this Titus followed his example. This being done, Vespasian addressed the company in a concise speech, and then dismissed the military people to regale themselves at his expence. In the next place, Vespasian and Titus proceeded to the triumphal gate, which received its name on account of the grand procession passing that way. Here they took some refreshment : and, being arrayed in their triumphal habiliments, they offered up sacrifices at the gate, and then proceeded in great pomp and solemnity through the midst of the crowd, that all the people might be gratified by a sight of them.

It is impossible for language to convey any adequate idea of the splendour and magnificence of this public exhibition, whether the expence and contrivance of it, or the novelty of its ornaments be considered. On this occasion, all the most valuable curiosities which the Roman nation had been collecting through a long succession of ages, were combined to furnish the splendid triumph of one day, and displayed as a monument of the national grandeur. So great a number of curious performances in gold, silver, and ivory, equally valuable for their cost and their admirable contexture, were now exhibited to the public view, that they seemed rather a confusion than a regular display of riches. There likewise appeared such an amazing variety of purple garments and Babylonian embroideries, together with jewels and other stones of great value, which were dis-

posed into the forms of crowns, and other devices, that what used to be accounted curious was now no longer deemed so. Images of the gods of the Romans were carried in procession, which were extraordinary for their size and constructure; and besides these, there were resemblances of various sorts of living creatures, which were dressed so as to answer their characters.

A great number of people dressed in cloth of gold and purple carried these pageants through the streets; and they who were more immediately appointed to attend the pompous train were habited in garments of a singularly splendid appearance. Even the very prisoners that made a part of the train were dressed with unusual decency, to hide the misery of their condition, and conceal the marks of slavery that appeared in their countenances: but in all the procession, nothing was so extraordinary as the carrying of the machines, many of them were three or four stories in height, so that it is astonishing how the bearers could support them. The expence of these was proportioned to the contrivance of them; for the furniture and hangings were embroidered with gold, ivory, and other things of high value.

In the procession were likewise the most lively and picturesque representations of war and all its attendant circumstances. In one place was to be seen the appearance of a fruitful country totally laid waste; in another, the destruction of armies; some being killed, some flying, and others taken prisoners: there were the resemblances of walls levelled with the ground, forts destroyed, fortified cities entered through breaches, towns taken by surprise, and streets streaming with blood, while the vanquished were imploring for mercy. Houses appeared to be falling on the heads of their owners, while temples were apparently in flames, and rivers found their course through the conflagrations instead of supplying water to man and beast, and refreshing the fields and meadows with their streams. Nor was this any other than an admirable representation of the sufferings of the Jews, so finely contrived by the ingenuity of art, that to those who were acquainted with the fate of Jerusalem, it might seem to be a well told story of the destruction of that celebrated city.

On each of the pageants was a representation of the manner in which some town or city was taken, with a figure of the governor of the place. To these succeeded a view of the shipping, and then were exhibited the spoils that were taken in various places, of which the most considerable were the golden table and the golden candlestick which were found in the temple at Jerusalem. The first of these weighed several talents, and the latter was never applied to the use for which it had been designed. This candlestick consisted of a large foot, from which there ascended a sort of pillar, and from that pillar, as from the body of a tree, there arose seven branches, the top

of each branch resembling a lamp; and the number was seven, in reference to the esteem in which the seventh day is held by the Jews. The next, and indeed the last trophy exhibited of the conquest which the Romans had made, was the code of Jewish laws, which was followed by figures of ivory and gold, intended as an emblematical representation of victory; and the procession was closed by Vespasian, Titus, and Domitian, all mounted on horses elegantly caparisoned, and appearing with a dignity becoming their high rank; and in this splendid manner they proceeded together to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, and thus put an end to the procession.

When they had arrived at the temple, they remained there for a short time, in conformity to an ancient custom, which rendered it necessary that they should stay in that place till they received advice of the death of the general who had commanded the army of the enemy. The general on the present occasion was Simon Gioras, (who had been led in triumph through the streets,) round whose neck a rope being fixed, he was drawn through the market-place, those who drew him putting him to death, agreeable to the laws and usages of the Romans in the case of notorious offenders. Intelligence being brought that Simon was dead, the very air was rent with the shouts and acclamations of the multitude.

The people then offered up vows and sacrifices; and this solemn business being discharged, Vespasian and his sons returned to the palace, where they gave a most magnificent entertainment on the occasion. Indeed the whole city exhibited one general scene of joy and festivity, and public thanks were every where offered for the final victory which had now been obtained over their enemies; a victory which seemed to promise a lasting tranquillity, while it redounded to the immortal honour of the heroes who had acquired it.

As soon as the triumphs were ended, and the peace of the empire was secured, Vespasian caused a temple to be erected and dedicated to Peace. This edifice was remarkable for its richness and elegance, and still more so for the short space of time in which it was constructed. It was adorned with a great abundance of curious pieces of painting and sculpture, which had been collected at an immense expense; and it was, on the whole, so magnificent and elegant a building, that persons came from all parts of the world to obtain a sight of it. The golden table and the candlestick, as articles of inestimable value, Vespasian caused to be placed in this temple. With regard to the code of Jewish laws, and the purple vestments of the sanctuary, they were deposited with the utmost care in the royal palace.

The emperor having granted a commission to Lucilius Bassus, appointing him to be lieutenant-general of Judea, he thereupon succeeded Cerealis Petilianus in the command of

the army, and soon rendered himself master of the castle of Herodion by treaty. This being done, he collected his troops which were stationed in different parts of the country, proposing, by the assistance of the tenth legion, to reduce Machæras, as a work of indispensable necessity, since that place was so remarkably strong, that it was a kind of incitement to acts of rebellion; and its situation was such as to inspire those in possession of it with fresh courage, though on the other hand, it was calculated to repress the ardour of an assailant.

Machæras is situated on a mountain of immense height, and is of so strong a nature, that it is rendered almost impregnable. It is likewise, in a manner, inaccessible; for nature has surrounded it with vallies that are almost impassable and cannot be filled up. These vallies are of such a depth as not to be surveyed from the mountain without horror. The mountain stretches sixty furlongs to the west, and approaches almost close to the lake Asphaltites, and the castle commands a very extensive view of the district on that side. To the north and south the vallies are very extensive, and appear to be equally well calculated for the defence of the place. On the east, the depth of the valley is not less than a hundred cubits; and opposite Machæras is a mountain to which this valley extends. This place was originally fortified by Alexander, king of the Jews, who built a castle on it: but this castle was afterwards destroyed by Gabinius, when he made war on Aristobulus: but Herod the Great, thinking this mountain well worthy of his attention, particularly in case of any dispute with the Arabians, who were remarkably well situated to annoy him, he caused a strong wall, fortified with turrets, to be built round it, and erected a handsome city, in which he placed a colony of inhabitants; and from the city he made a passage up to the castle. Round the castle, at the top, he built another wall, at the angles of which were turrets sixty cubits in height; and, in the midst of the inclosure, he caused a large and elegant palace to be erected, which was supplied with water from a variety of cisterns; so that the situation and conveniences of this place seemed to have arisen from a happy conjunction of nature and art, each contributing in a liberal manner to its improvement. Herod likewise deposited in the castle an immense store of military arms, engines, arrows, &c.; and stocked it with a great quantity and variety of provisions; so that there could be little danger of the garrison being reduced either by famine or force.

When Bassus had taken a careful survey of Machæras, he came to a determination to besiege the place; and, for this purpose, he intended to have filled up the valley to the eastward of the town, and to make his approach from that quarter. His first proceeding was to throw up a mount opposite the castle with all possible expedition, as the readiest way to en-

sure success. The Jews, who were natives of the city, now divided themselves from those who were strangers, whom they dismissed as persons who were unworthy a connection with them, and sent them into the lower town to sustain the first shock, themselves taking possession of the castle, which, from its strength, they thought would be most defensible, and a place from which, in case of necessity, it was probable that they might make the best terms with the Romans. In the mean time, they exerted their utmost industry to repel the attacks of the besiegers. There was not a day passed in which the Jews did not sally forth in a determined manner, when violent skirmishes ensued, and both parties lost a considerable number of men. The advantage lay sometimes on one side and sometimes on the other; the Jews being successful when they attacked the Romans by surprise, and the latter being the victors when they were properly advised of the advance of the enemy, and had time to prepare for their reception. But it appeared evident that the siege was not to end in this manner, since a most singular accident reduced the Jews to the disagreeable necessity of surrendering the castle.

In Machæras there was a young man of a spirit remarkably bold, daring, and enterprising. His name was Eleazar, and he exerted himself in a very extraordinary manner, both by advice and example, to check the progress of the Romans, and encourage his countrymen to oppose their proceedings. This Eleazar frequently sallied forth in a most determined manner, and was constantly the first man to begin an encounter, and the last to retreat when retreat became absolutely necessary. Now it happened, after the conclusion of a skirmish, on a particular day, when both parties were retired, that Eleazar determined to evince his utter contempt of danger; and to prove that he was incapable of fearing any man, stopped without the gate of the city, and entered into an idle conversation with some of the Jews that were on the walls, seeming to pay no kind of regard to any thing that might pass around him.

Eleazar being now within view of the Romans in their encampment, an Egyptian soldier named Rufus, took an opportunity to run to him unnoticed, and scizing him with all his accoutrements, conveyed him to the enemy. The prisoner was no sooner brought, than Bassus directed that he should be stripped, laid on the ground, and publicly whipped within view of those in the city. The distressful situation of this youth afflicted the Jews to such a degree, that the generality of them burst into tears, and lamented his unhappy fate. Bassus finding how exceedingly concerned the people in general were for the misfortunes of this one man, a thought struck him that he hoped to improve it to his advantage; for he conceived that if he could but increase the ardour of their passions, they might be induced to purchase the life of Eleazar by a surrender of the place.

The scheme succeeded to the height of his expectation : a cross was erected, on which it seemed to appear that Eleazar was to be immediately crucified ; but no sooner was this cross fixed, than the whole garrison exclaimed, as with one voice, that they could no longer bear their sufferings. Immediately hereupon, Eleazar entreated them to consider their own situation, and that of himself, who was sentenced to an ignominious death ; and conjured them to desist from contending against the superior courage and success of the Romans, to whose dominion all the world had submitted.

Eleazar being of a distinguished family, and having many friends and relations in the castle, their interest was exerted in support of his earnest supplication ; so that, in the end, the besieged, compassionating his case in a high degree, despatched deputies to the Romans, who were commissioned to offer the surrender of the castle on the condition that Eleazar's life and liberty should be granted him, and that the garrison should be permitted to dispose of themselves as they thought proper.

Bassus readily consented to these terms ; but the people in the lower town, enraged to think that they had not been consulted before the agreement was made, determined to secure themselves by privately retreating in the night. Those who were in the castle gave notice of this to Bassus as soon as the gates were opened, partly lest themselves should be suspected to have been concerned in the plot, and partly through envy of their associates. Hereupon Bassus attacked them ; but the most gallant of those who first got out made their escape, while the rest, in number no fewer than seventeen hundred, were slain, and their wives and children made slaves. Notwithstanding the above-mentioned circumstance, Bassus gave Eleazar his liberty, and dismissed the garrison agreeably to his contract.

The transactions above mentioned being at an end, and Bassus having received information that great numbers of the Jews who had effected their escape during the sieges of Jerusalem and Machæras, had assembled together and retired to the forest of Jardus, he marched with his army immediately to that place ; and, on his arrival, found that the intelligence which had been brought him was true : wherefore he issued orders that his cavalry should instantly surround the whole wood, which were so punctually obeyed, that not a single Jew could make his escape. In the mean time, the infantry were employed to cut down the trees and bushes which formed those thickets under which the Jews had taken shelter ; so that by this means they were deprived of all possibility of concealment, and had no hope of safety but in cutting their way through the forces of the enemy. Being reduced to the alternative of perishing or taking this desperate step, they united in a body, and made a violent attack on those who surrounded them, who received the assault with the utmost bravery. In a word, the rashness excited by despair

on the one side, and determined courage on the other, combined to render the engagement equally obstinate and violent. In the end, however, the Romans obtained the advantage, with the loss of only twelve men slain, and a small number wounded; whereas every man of the Jews was killed in the action, amounting in the whole to the number of three thousand. Among these was the commander in chief, named Judas, the son of Jair, of whom mention has been made in a former part of this work. This Judas was an officer during the siege of Jerusalem, from whence he effected his escape through a subterraneous passage.

At this juncture, the emperor sent a letter to his officer Tiberius Maximus, commissioning him to expose the lands of the Jews to sale: and declaring that he would not rebuild any of their cities, but seize them all to his own use. Tiberius was directed to leave eight hundred soldiers in Emmaus, which is situated about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem. The emperor likewise issued orders that the Jews should pay a poll-tax of two drachmas annually; and this money was to be paid into the capitol, as similar taxes had been formerly paid at the temple.

The death of Bassus, which happened in Judea, made room for the advancement of Flavius Silva, who succeeded to his government. Silva being informed that all the country was in due subjection, one castle only excepted, he collected all the forces he was able, with a determination to make an attack on it. The name of this castle was Massada, and it was under the command of Eleazar, the leader of the Sicarii, who had obtained possession of this fortress.

The Roman general, Silva, now marched to lay siege to Massada, in which was a garrison of the Sicarii, commanded by Eleazar, who was the chief of the people bearing that name. Silva soon possessed himself of the adjacent country, and with very little difficulty: he then disposed of his troops in the most commodious manner possible, and ran up a wall round the castle, at once to secure his soldiers, and to prevent the escape of the enemy. He now looked out for a place the most convenient for the station of his camp, which he found to be on the spot where the adjacent mountain communicated with the rock on which the castle stood. One great inconvenience now attended Silva; for the provisions with which his army was supplied by the Jews were brought from a very great distance; and, as there was no fountain near the place, the procuring of water was likewise attended with very great difficulty.

As soon as the above-mentioned disposition of affairs had taken place, Silva prepared to commence the siege, which, as will appear from the situation of the castle, was likely to cost much time, and to be attended with great difficulty. This castle was situated on a large and high rock, which was surrounded by deep and craggy precipices. They who stood at the top could not see the bottom, on account of the higher rocks hang-

ing over those that are beneath. Even the beasts could not climb this rock, so difficult was the access, except by two passages; one of which is from the east side from the lake Asphaltites, and the other from the west side, the former being much more dangerous than the latter. One of these passages bears the name of the Snake, from the number of turnings that there were in the ascent; for in many parts of it the stones so intersected each other, that passengers were obliged to go backwards and forwards to pass them; and the road was so narrow that the traveller could not keep both his feet on the ground at the same time. Exclusive of all things, one false step would have plunged a man to the bottom of a most horrid precipice. This road was deemed thirty furlongs from the bottom to the top of the mountain; and on this eminence there was a plain, on which the high-priest Jonathan caused a castle to be built, to which he gave the name of Messada, and claimed the honour of being the founder of this castle, which was afterwards fortified and adorned, with immense labour, and at a large expense, by Herod the Great; a wall being also built round it by Herod, eight cubits in breadth, and twelve in height, with white stones of considerable value. Herod likewise caused seven and twenty turrets, each of fifty cubits high, to be erected; and made a communication between these turrets and the buildings on the interior side of the wall. The nature of the soil of the plain being found to be extremely rich, Herod gave orders that it should be well cultivated, with a view that those who might in future times have occasion to take refuge in the castle, might be certain of being supplied with the necessaries of life. Within the limits of the castle, he caused a sumptuous and magnificent palace to be erected for his own accommodation. The entrance of this palace was situated so as to front the north-west; the walls of it were of great strength, and remarkably high; and at each of the four corners was a tower of the height of sixty cubits. The variety, decorations, ornaments, richness, and splendour of the several apartments, baths, and galleries, exceeded all description. The whole was supported with pillars, each of one entire stone, and so disposed as to give proof of the strength of the structure and the judgment of the architect. The pavement and the walls were diversified with stones of a variety of colours. A great number of large cisterns, hewed out of the rock, for the preservation of water, were dispersed in the different quarters of the palace to the castle, which was quite invisible from the outside, and, as hath been heretofore observed, the other passage was rendered altogether impassable; and, with regard to the western passage, it was totally blocked up by a tower that was erected in the narrowest part of it, at about the distance of a thousand cubits from the castle. This will serve to show how strongly the place was fortified by art as well as

nature, and how difficult the conquest of it must have been even with the slightest opposition.

Thus fortified, this castle had the appearance of being proof, not only against force, but was unlikely to be subdued by famine; for, when it was surprised by Eleazar and the Sicarii, there were found in it great treasures of corn, wine, oil, pulse, dates, &c. equal to the consumption of many years; and these articles were said by Josephus to be as fresh as if they had been but newly deposited, though they had been treasured up a hundred years. Perhaps this circumstance might be owing to the extreme purity and salubrious quality of the air in so elevated a situation. Agreeable to the king's order, there was likewise laid up a magazine of various kinds of arms for the accommodation of ten thousand men, and also an immense quantity of unwrought iron, brass, lead, and other articles, which, it is presumed, were intended for some capital enterprise.

The Jews being now so closely pent up within the walls of Massada, that it was utterly impossible that they should effect an escape, Silva advanced with his machines to the only place which he could find up, in order to raise a mount. Beyond the tower which blocked up the western passage to the palace and castle, there was a large rock, which bore the name of Leuce; this rock was larger than that on which the castle of Massada stood, but not so high by about three hundred cubits. Silva had no sooner taken possession of this rock, than he issued orders to his solders to raise a mount upon it; and they were so diligent in this business, that they soon got it up to the height of two hundred cubits; but finding that it was not of sufficient strength to support the machines, they raised on it a kind of platform composed of large stones, fifty cubits in height, and of the same breadth. On this platform they built a tower of the height of sixty cubits, which they fortified with iron. Exclusive of their common machines, they had another kind which had been invented by Vespasian, and were afterwards improved by Titus.

From the tower above mentioned, the Romans assailed the besieged with such impetuous showers of stones and flights of arrows, that they were afraid to appear on the walls. In the interim, Silva directed his battering-rams against the wall, till at length it was damaged in some places. In consequence hereof, the Sicarii instantly ran up another wall behind it, which was composed of such materials as to deaden the shock, and sustain no kind of damage. This wall was built in the following manner: A row of large pieces of timber was mortised into another of equal size, and a space was left between them equal to the thickness of the wall. This space was filled with the earth of the nature of clay, and boards were nailed across the frame to prevent the earth from falling. Thus prepared, it was

as strong as the wall of a house; and the more violently it was battered, the stronger it became, the earth being more firmly closed by each stroke it received.

Silva, finding that the battering with his machines did not produce the consequence he expected, ordered his soldiers to provide themselves with fire-brands to destroy the works of the enemy. The new wall being hollow, and chiefly composed of timber-work, it immediately took fire, and the flames raged with the utmost violence; but the wind being in the north, it drove the fire with such rapidity on the Romans, that they expected the almost instant destruction of their machines: but, just at this juncture, the wind veered to the south, and beat so violently on the wall, that the whole of it was in flames in a moment. The Romans, grateful for this providential stroke in their favour, returned to their camp full of spirits, and with a fixed determination to attack the enemy by break of day on the following morning; and, in the mean time, to place strong guards, that their opponents might not escape in the night.

However, Eleazar had no idea of departing himself, or of permitting any of his people to evacuate the place; but as the wall was now totally consumed, and there appeared to be no longer any chance either of relief or security, it became necessary to consider how their wives and children might be most effectually preserved from the violences to be expected from the Romans on their taking possession of the place. Having seriously reflected on this affair, Eleazar determined in his own mind, that a death of glory would be greatly preferable to a life of infamy; and that the most magnanimous resolution they could form would be to disdain the idea of surviving their liberties. His own sentiments being thus formed, he resolved to endeavour to inspire others with the same; and, for that purpose, he summoned a number of his friends and associates, whom he addressed in a speech strongly recommending suicide.

This was received in a very different manner by his different auditors, some of whom were charmed with his proposal, and ready to execute it, deeming death an object of desire in their present situation; while others, from the tenderness of their nature, were equally terrified at the thought of destroying their friends, or becoming their own executioners. They regarded each other with looks of the utmost anxiety, while their flowing tears testified the sentiments of their minds. Eleazar was greatly chagrined at what he deemed a weakness, that degraded the dignity of his plan, and might tempt those who had appeared to be determined to abandon their resolutions. He therefore pursued his plan of exhorting the people, but in a different manner; for he now discoursed on the immortality of the soul, addressing himself particularly and with the utmost earnestness to those who were weeping.

Eleazar would have proceeded long on this subject, but that

the people interrupted him with the warmest expressions of their readiness to adopt the plan he had recommended, each being ambitious to excel the other in giving this distinguishing proof of his wisdom and courage; thus passionately were these people devoted to the destruction of themselves and their families. It was very extraordinary, that when they came to give proof of their resolution, not a man of them failed in the arduous trial. They retained their kindest affections for each other to the last moment, conceiving that they could not render a more acceptable office, or give a more perfect proof of their regard. While they embraced their wives and children for the last time, they wept over and stabbed them in the same moment, rejoicing, however, that this work was not left to be performed by their enemies. They considered the necessity of the action as their excuse, and reflected that they only destroyed their dearest friends to prevent their falling by the hands of the Romans. In a word, there was not one man who wanted the necessary courage on the occasion, and they killed their dearest friends and relations without distinction: and they thought the destruction of their wives and children far preferable to the evils to which they would otherwise be exposed.

They who had been the principal agents in the slaughter above mentioned, penetrated as they were with grief for the necessity that had occasioned it, resolved not to survive those they had slain; and immediately collecting all their effects together, set them on fire. This being done, they cast lots for the selection of ten men out of their number to destroy the rest; and these being chosen, the devoted victims embraced the bodies of their deceased friends, and then ranging themselves near them, cheerfully resigned themselves to the hands of the executioners. When these ten men had discharged the disagreeable task they had undertaken, they again cast lots which of the ten should kill the other nine, having previously agreed, that the man to whose lot it might fall should sacrifice himself on the bodies of his companions; so great was the trust that these people reposed in each other. The nine devoted victims died with the same resolution as their brethren had done; and the surviving man, having surveyed the bodies, and found that they were absolutely dead, threw himself on his sword among his companions, but not till he had first set fire to the palace.

This melancholy scene, which happened on the fifteenth day of the month Xanthicus, was now concluded; and the deceased had imagined that not a single Jew would fall into the hands of the Romans; but it afterwards appeared that an old woman, and another woman who was related to Eleazar, together with five children, had escaped the general massacre by concealing themselves in a common sewer. Including women and children, no less than nine hundred and fifty persons were slain on this occasion.

On the dawn of the following morning, the Romans prepared their scaling-ladders in order to make an attack ; but they were astonished in the highest degree on not hearing any noise but the cracking of the flames, and were totally at a loss what conjecture to form. On this they gave a loud shout, (such as is customary when a battery is played off,) in expectation of receiving an answer. This noise alarmed the women in their place of retreat, who, immediately coming out, related the truth to the Romans as it really had happened. The story, however, appeared so extraordinary, that they could not give credit to it ; but they exerted themselves in extinguishing the fire ; and being employed in this service till they came to the palace, there they found the bodies of the deceased lying in heaps. Far, however, from exulting in the triumph of joy that might have been expected from enemies, they united to admire what they deemed the steady virtue and dignity of mind with which the Jews had been inspired, and wondered at that generous contempt of death by which such numbers had been bound in one solemn compact.

The temple and holy city thus destroyed and levelled with the ground, and the whole nation either miserably buried under its ruins, or dispersed into other countries, might, one would think, have opened the eyes of the poor remains of that once favoured people, and crushed at once all hopes and expectations of any other deliverer but him whom they had rejected and crucified. Many of them were indeed moved ; but the far greater part remained in their infatuated state, and, according to Christ's own prediction, have been dispersed ever since over all the world, to attest his truth and their own obdurate blindness, till the happy time comes when the veil shall be taken off their eyes. When that will be, is one of those secrets which God has been pleased to leave as yet unrevealed, and which it would be vain and presumptuous to search too curiously after.

After the reduction of Jerusalem and Judea, Agrippa and his sister retired to Rome, probably with Titus, who was excessively fond of both, but especially of Berenice. We have seen, through the course of this last war, how serviceable the brother had been to that general, accompanying him in person, and assisting him with men and ammunition, for which we were told Titus got his kingdom enlarged by the emperor, and procured him prætorian honours. But his extraordinary friendship for that prince flowed chiefly from his special fondness for his sister, as if she had been his real wife. Titus, nevertheless, had promised her marriage, and would in all probability have kept his word, had he not found that the Romans were wholly averse from it, partly on account of her being a Jewess, and partly on that of her royal descent. To pave himself, therefore, the way to the empire, he was forced to discard her, in opposition to both

their inclinations. What became of her afterwards is not worth enquiring. As for Agrippa, he was the last of the Herodian race that bore the royal title, and is supposed to have died at Rome about the seventieth year of his age, and in the ninetieth of Jesus Christ. Josephus has this remarkable saying on the Herodian line, that they all failed within a hundred years, though they were at first so numerous, as we have seen them in the genealogy of Herod the Great.

We have already had occasion to mention the number of the slain, as well as of the prisoners, according to Josephus. A curious author has since taken the pains to make a fresh computation out of him of all that perished in the several places throughout that kingdom, and out of it from the beginning to the conclusion of the war, in which we believe our readers will be glad to see the whole amount of the several bloody articles, as it were, at one view. They are as follows :

At Jerusalem, by Florus's orders	630
By the inhabitants of Cæsarea in hatred to the Jews	20,000
At Scythopolis in Syria	30,000
By the inhabitants of Ascalon in Palestine	2,500
By those of Ptolemais	2,000
At Alexandria in Egypt, under Alexander, the apostate Jew	50,000
At Damascus	10,000
At the taking of Joppa	8,400
In the mountain of Cabulo	2,000
In a fight at Ascalon	10,000
In an ambush	8,000
At the taking of Aphec	15,000
Upon mount Gerazim	11,600
Drowned at Joppa by a sudden storm	4,200
Slain at Taricheæ	6,500
Slain or killed themselves at Gamala, where none were saved but two sisters	9,000
Killed in their flight from Gischala	2,000
At the siege of Jotapata, where Josephus commanded	30,000
Of the Gadarenes, besides a vast number that drowned themselves	13,000
In the village of Idumca	10,000
At Gerasium	1,000
At Macheron	1,700
In the desert of Jardes	3,000
Slew themselves at Massada	900
In Cyrene, by the governor Catulus	3,000
Perished at Jerusalem by sword, famine, pestilence, and during the siege	1,100,000

According to this account, the whole amounts to 1,337,490 ; besides a vast multitude that died in the caves, woods, wildernesses, common sewers, in banishment, and many other ways, of whom no computation could be made ; and ten thousand that were slain at Jotapata more than our author has reckoned. For Josephus mentions expressly forty thousand, but he only thirty thousand.

THE END.

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